

Alisha Gauvreau, Summary of MA Research Findings: **“Everything revolves around the herring”: The Heiltsuk–herring relationship through time.**

The findings of this research address the third core FishWIKS questions: **Can various IKs be used to inform and enhance an ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management in Canada and internationally, given the complexities of ecosystems and additional uncertainties posed by climate-induced changes?**

A brief introduction on the specific issue being addressed: My masters research, conducted in collaboration with the Haítzaqv Integrated Resource Management Department (HIRMD), documents some of the social, ecological, and cultural aspects of Haítzaqv First Nation’s relationship with Pacific herring and how this relationship has changed over time. This research was initiated following Haítzaqv identification of a lack of adequate consultation between DFO and HIRMD in the past, declining herring stocks on the central coast of British Columbia, and concern over the loss of knowledge (IKs) associated with managing and harvesting herring.

Why it was important to address this issue: It was important for us to work collaboratively to address this issue as the loss of TEK and IK associated with resource management for at-risk species is a global phenomenon, and few examples of effective integration of IKs into ecosystem-based fisheries management plans exist. By working in close partnership with Haítzaqv decision-makers, and by conducting interviews with Haítzaqv knowledge holders, we ensured that the data gathered would be relevant, applicable, and valuable to the Haítzaqv community. Our research therefore serves as an example of how state fisheries agencies could improve relationships with indigenous communities by engaging in more collaborative data collection, and our results suggest the potential for joint learning and improvement in fisheries management through collaboration during the design of management and harvesting plans. We identify some of the steps that may be taken to help overcome

institutionalized inertia and attain more equitable power relationships for sustainable fisheries management.

What are the key findings from the research?

Our results reveal (1) how Haítzaqv social institutions, local and traditional ecological knowledge, and worldview have informed herring management strategies from pre-contact times until present, and (2) how post-contact changes in state-led herring management and other social and institutional developments in British Columbia have affected the role and transmission of Haítzaqv local knowledge and management of herring. **Key outputs:** documented observations of ancient and more recent IKs of Pacific Herring, including specific management strategies employed by Haítzaqv members through time.

What are some of the main policy Implications arising from the findings (e.g. for the government, for indigenous nations (as a whole, or individually), for other relevant stakeholders, etc.)?

The results of my MA research, combined with the results of the excellent publication produced by Sue von der Porten¹ and team (2016) were considered by DFO and HIRMD in the development of a Joint Fisheries Management Plan. This plan resulted in the suspension of the 2018 commercial roe fishery on the central coast in order to allow the stocks to the recover.

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¹ Von der Porten, S., D. Lepofsky, D. McGregor, J. Silver. 2016. Recommendations for Marine Herring

policy change in Canada: Aligning with Indigenous legal and inherent rights. *Marine Policy* 74: 68-76.