UNION OF B.C. INDIAN CHIEFS
43RD ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SEPTEMBER 14TH –SEPTEMBER 16TH, 2011
WHISTLER, B.C.

Resolution no. 2011-37

RE: Support for the First Nations Fisheries Council`s proposal to DFO "Fishing For a Better Future" for renewal of the PICFI program

WHEREAS the First Nations Fisheries Council (FNFC) has been actively pursuing increased economic access to fisheries as supported by the BC First Nations Fisheries Action Plan (2007) and the Commitment to Action that the FNFC and DFO signed in June 2011 and the work of the Economic Access Work Group made up of First Nations and DFO members;

WHEREAS the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* sets out:

> **Article 18**: Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own indigenous decision-making institutions.
>
> **Article 32: 1.** Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources;

WHEREAS in 2007, Fisheries & Oceans Canada introduced the Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (PICFI), a $175 million investment in the Pacific fisheries over a five-year period (2007-2012) for economic access, enhanced accountability, capacity building and co-management. PICFI is a sunset program due to end on March 31, 2012. The economic access component of the program that has a budget of $115 million currently supports 25 First Nation commercial fishing enterprises in the province, encompassing 90 First Nations. The need for accelerated economic access transfers was identified by the First Nations Panel on Fisheries in 2004 and was supported by DFO through Pacific Fisheries Reform policies in 2005 resulting in PICFI;

WHEREAS PICFI transfers access and allocations to First Nations on an interim basis prior to reconciliation or agreement processes, but as acknowledged in UBCIC Resolution 2009-50, PICFI is not an adequate response to the asserted Title, Rights and Treaty Rights of First Nations with respect to their interests in economic aspects of the fisheries. Additional First Nations transfers are needed, as well as continued funding to continue to address food security, fisheries sustainability, and meaningful First Nation involvement in fisheries management and multi-tier advisory processes;

WHEREAS at a FNFC Community Dialogue Session in Richmond on June 7-8, 2011 the Economic Access Working Group presented a draft document, "Fishing for a Better Future," that outlined a business case for renewal of PICFI from 2012 – 2017 on behalf of British Columbia First Nations. At this session First Nations delegates urged the FNFC to continue to advocate for an increased share of commercial fisheries for First Nations. A revised document was adopted by the First Nations Fisheries Council in July 2010;

WHEREAS at the Dialogue Session, First Nations recommended the continuation of the PICFI program for a second five-year term. The current proposal requires $450 million to support the following activities:

- **Economic Access** is the largest component ($405 million) and will focus on additional transfers of communal commercial licenses or allocations to First Nations. The target is an additional 20 percent of licenses and quota, especially for fisheries of high value and profitability. The goal is to bring the First Nation communal share of commercial fisheries to 33 percent. A portion of the funds will be used to explore alternative management and access strategies to enhance benefits for communities and businesses. The transfers will result in stronger and more diversified business opportunities for First Nations.

- **Capacity Building** will support training, such as safety, navigation, mentorships, and harvesting and processing certifications, to assist the expansion of communal commercial fishing opportunities in First Nation communities. Funds for ongoing business operations, management and development for commercial fishing enterprises will also be provided. This enhances First Nations financial and administrative stability, an important element in fostering enduring relationships with government, stakeholders and investors.

- **Joint Management** will support strategies, recommendations and projects that improve First Nations engagement in the integrated management of fisheries and aquatic resources.

- **Enhanced Accountability** will support current initiatives related to the development of standards for the monitoring and traceability of fish and new initiatives related to compliance and enforcement within all fisheries, including aboriginal, recreational and commercial.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCIC Chiefs-in-Assembly support the First Nations Fisheries Council in continuing to advocate for the economic aspects of the fisheries, and in the interim, to advocate for an increased share of commercial fisheries for First Nations;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the UBCIC Chiefs-in-Assembly support-in-principle the attached document, "Fishing for a Better Future" the First Nations` business case for renewal of the Pacific Integrated Commercial Fishing Initiative (PICFI) from 2012 – 2017, and will communicate this support to Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo, senior DFO officials, and key federal Cabinet Ministers including the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development;

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the UBCIC Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the UBCIC Executive to meet with First Nations Fisheries Council representatives to review a strategy for building support for renewal of PICFI before the end of September 2011, and to participate in implementation of the strategy including participating in meetings with key federal government decision-makers and policy-makers or others as required.

Moved: **Chief William Rebang, Shxwhá:y Village**
Seconded: **Chief Rick Denault, Skeetchestn Indian Band**
Disposition: **Tabled**
Date: **September 15th, 2011**