

November 13, 2009

The Honourable Gail Shea, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Fisheries and Oceans
200 Kent Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0E6

Dear Minister:

In October, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce concluded its 80th Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Victoria. One of the highlights of Chamber's AGM is the Policy Session. It is during the Policy Session that resolutions submitted by local chambers of commerce and boards of trade from across the country are debated and voted on by accredited delegates. Once approved, these resolutions become the policy position of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce for three years. This year, our delegates issued a clear and decisive national policy mandate that we intend to pursue vigorously with the federal government over the coming months.

Beyond those issues we have already brought to your attention, our renewed national policy mandate includes an issue that falls within your portfolio.

National Marine Conservation Areas

There is a great deal of confusion about the responsibilities of various agencies and their planning processes and regulatory authorities for the marine environment. The federal government needs to put one agency in charge of the stewardship and sustainable management of the marine environment in Canada and that agency should be the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Should you wish to discuss these issues further, I would be pleased to do so.

Sincerely,

Perrin Beatty
President and Chief Executive Officer

Attachments

CC: Claire Dansereau, Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Minister of
Fisheries and Oceans



Ministre des
Pêches et des Océans

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0E6

DEC 22 2009

The Honourable Perrin Beatty, P.C.
President and Chief Executive Officer
The Canadian Chamber of Commerce
Suite 420 - 360 Albert Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1R 7X7

Dear Mr. Beatty:

Thank you for your correspondence of November 13, 2009, in which the Canadian Chamber of Commerce makes two policy recommendations.

The first recommendation pertains to the manner in which the Parks Canada Agency manages activities within National Marine Conservation Areas. As this falls under the authority of my colleague, the Honourable Jim Prentice, Minister of the Environment, I will defer to him to respond to your concerns.

I will address the recommendation that Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) be the federal government department that leads on the stewardship and sustainable management of the marine environment.

The suggestion that DFO be given broad authority over oceans management in order to reduce complexity has already been considered by the federal government. In its 2001 review of the *Oceans Act*, the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans recommended that the Government affirm that the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans has the primary responsibility for all matters relating to the management of Canada's oceans. The federal government responded to the Standing Committee by stating that both DFO and the *Oceans Act* fully respect the existing mandates, responsibilities and authorities of other federal departments and agencies. This is important because there are several federal departments and agencies with various levels of responsibility related to Canada's oceans, and they therefore have a legitimate and necessary role to play in the future of oceans management. This is not unlike the terrestrial case where every ministry at the federal and provincial level exercise responsibilities.

.../2

As the lead federal department tasked with the development of a strategic approach to manage Canada's oceans, the challenge for me as Minister is to coordinate the activities of the other federal and provincial entities to ensure the effective and efficient regulation of our oceans. To date, DFO has done this by leading and promoting an oceans management approach, which results in the development of an integrated plan for activities conducted in a defined area.

The process to develop these marine spatial plans involves all concerned parties, providing them with science-based information to inform decision making and an assessment of impacts of various management options. The socio-economic development of integrated oceans management plans is key to the long-term sustainability of the resource and to creating efficiencies wherever possible. As with any process, we are working toward continuous improvement so that our efforts underscore the long-term economic and social prosperity for Canadians.

I am also leading national efforts to establish networks of marine protected areas as part of our domestic and international commitments. This involved collaboratively working with federal, provincial and territorial authorities to develop an overarching Framework and guidance documents designed to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of marine conservation efforts while at the same time promoting multiple and sustainable use of our ocean resources.

I believe that our effective integrated oceans planning can strengthen coherence and address the legitimate concerns you raise. I would be pleased to have departmental staff brief you in more detail on this matter if you wish.

I appreciate you bringing your concerns to my attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gail Shea". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gail" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Shea".

Gail Shea, P.C., M.P.

c.c.: The Honourable Jim Prentice, P.C., M.P.