

Canadian Independent Fish Harvester's Federation

Name: Elizabeth May

Riding: Saanich-Gulf Islands

Party Affiliation: Green

Are you familiar with Federation membership: Yes

Pacific

1. Do you support fishermen and fishing communities, including First Nations, regaining and retaining their fishing rights, now and in the future? YES

Absolutely. Greens support sustainable fishing and acknowledge that, for many Indigenous and non-Indigenous fishermen and communities, fishing is an important source of food, income, and cultural heritage. The Green Party supports fishermen and fishing communities regaining and retaining their fishing rights now and in the future. In particular, we recognize that fishing rights are an essential component of Aboriginal rights, and will never seek to minimize these rights.

The Green Party advocates for sustainable fishing practices to restore our wild fish populations and protect recreational fishermen with strictly enforced regulations governing gear types, fishing practices and catch limits. We are strongly committed to strengthening the Fisheries Act to protect fish habitats and populations.

We will give funding priority to small-scale projects to restore and enhance wild fish stocks, especially with Indigenous Peoples and traditional fishing communities using traditional technologies.

2. Do you support having fishing licenses and quotas held primarily by those who fish and their communities, and prevent them from becoming a speculative asset? YES

Yes. Fishing licenses and quotas should be held by fishermen and fishing communities. Licenses should be for fishing, not speculative activities. Fishermen and fishing communities should not have to compete with outside investors and corporations for licenses. We will work to embed this principle in our fisheries laws and regulations.

3. As MP would you encourage the growth, investment in, and regeneration of small boat fleets and coastal communities throughout Canada? YES

Small boat fleets are the heart of our fishing economy and we need to help them grow and regenerate, through investment in infrastructure for small boat fleets and coastal communities throughout Canada.

The Green Party is committed to the restoration and protection of small boat fisheries and we recognize the need to ensure that these fisheries have the infrastructure they need to operate. This is the responsibility of the DFO. Federal investment in marine infrastructure in past decades has been skewed towards the salmon aquaculture industry. Traditional fishing harbours are being ignored. The Green Party would correct this imbalance.

4. Does your party support such measures? YES

5. If elected do you promise to work to ensure a stronger regulatory framework to protect fishermen, small boat fleets and rural fishing communities? YES

I am committed to working to ensure a stronger regulatory framework to protect fishermen, small boat fleets and rural fishing communities. Small boat fleets are the heart of our fishing economy, and we need to protect them.

Atlantic and Quebec

1. Do you support strengthening the owner-operator and fleet-separation policies by enacting regulations to give these policies the force of law? YES

The Green Party supports strengthening the owner-operator and fleet-separation policies by enacting regulations to give these policies the force of law. As I said in [2012](#), "We have seen the same problem in BC with the halibut fishery and it has led to fishers having no access to quota and quota being held by buyers rather than fishers. We should learn from this lesson and do better on the Atlantic coast. Modernizing policy should not equate to giving big corporations free access. We should be concerned about protecting local jobs and local economies."

We need to protect local fishermen and fishing communities from the intrusion of multinational corporations and outside investors.

2. Does your party support such measures? YES

3. If elected do you promise to work to ensure that the owner-operator and fleet-separation policies are strengthened and given the force of law? YES

See question 1

4. Are you in favour of adopting new initiatives to provide loan guarantees for young people to finance licence transfers from retiring fish harvesters? YES

We need to work to ensure the continuity of fish harvesting. We will support new initiatives to provide loan guarantees for young people to finance licence transfers from retiring fish harvesters.

Final Questions and Comments

1. If elected will you work to ensure Canada's fisheries resources remain a publicly owned resource, managed sustainably in the best interests of coastal communities, while keeping current and future generations of fishermen in mind? YES

Fisheries are a public good. I am committed to keeping them public. We need to work to put policies in place that protect fisheries from unsustainable fishing practices. The future of coastal communities depends on it.

The Green Party will strengthen the Fisheries Act to:

1. Require evaluation of threats to fish stocks and include provisions to protect fish stocks and the marine environment;
2. Make protection of critical stocks and habitat mandatory;
3. Require that the management and conservation of wild fisheries take precedence over aquaculture, wherever there are conflicts;
4. Increase penalties for contravening the Fisheries Act;
5. Improve public participation in decision making, under the principles of the Oceans Act, in particular engaging coastal communities in local fisheries management.

2. Any final comments?

The Green Party will defend Canada's coastal communities from risky pipeline and tanker schemes. As I've said, "Every pipeline – whether it's Enbridge's Northern Gateway, Kinder-Morgan's expansion through Burnaby Mountain to the Burrard Inlet, Energy East, or Keystone XL, are all about one thing: getting raw, unprocessed bitumen to coastlines," said Ms. May. "These pipelines and supertankers are premised on a risky economic strategy. We have already seen how Harper's strategy of putting all our eggs in the bitumen basket has hurt our economy. On top of that, one accident could cripple the entire billion dollar fisheries and tourism industry upon which our coastal communities depend. It is time to think like a country again and develop a national approach to a diversified energy strategy."

The Green Party is committed to rebuilding the scientific research and monitoring capacity of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). We will immediately work to restore the Ocean Contaminants & Marine Toxicology Program of the DFO including in St. Andrews, NB. We will also restore funding to six major water pollution labs around the country, including those at Sidney, BC, Winnipeg, MB, Burlington, ON, Mont-Joli, QC, Moncton, NB, and Dartmouth, NS. We will restore support for research on the effects of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) including the sources, movement and fate of persistent environmental contaminants in marine

food chains, such as the work formerly conducted by Dr. Peter Ross. We note, with dismay, that the federal government closed the DFO contaminants program in spring 2012, dismissing Ross and 55 of his colleagues across the country including in St. Andrews.

There is a growing trend in our civil service: managers from other departments, without any policy strength or scientific background, are moved into key policy positions in departments like DFO. Greens want to restructure DFO into three separate branches: Management, Monitoring and Enforcement, and Research. This restructuring will reduce the potential for political interference in department programs and allow the department to better implement its mandate.