

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Maw-lukutijik **Saqmaq**
Assembly of Nova Scotia
Mi'kmaw Chiefs

Livelihood Traps Returned to Pictou Landing First Nation

Today 223 traps seized this fall from Mi'kmaw Harvesters authorized under Pictou Landing First Nation's Netukulimk Livelihood Fishery Plans were returned by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) Conservation and Protection (C&P) branch.

"Having the harvester's gear returned today was a welcomed sight," said Chief Andrea Paul, Pictou Landing First Nation. "Our people have the Right to fish for a livelihood and they just want to exercise their Treaty Rights. Having DFO try to stop that is frustrating and completely wrong."

While the Netukulimk Livelihood Fisheries are managed by the Mi'kmaw communities, all fishing gear, equipment and supplies are purchased and owned by the harvesters who are undertaking and exercising their Supreme Court affirmed Treaty Right. The Assembly maintains that Treaty protected fisheries are not applicable to the *Fisheries Act*, and question what authority DFO C&P Enforcement has to seize Netukulimk lobster traps from any authorized Mi'kmaw harvester.

"Since the first Mi'kmaw community launched their Netukulimk Livelihood Fishery, we have been asking why traps were even being seized by C&P," said Chief Gerald Toney, Fisheries Lead for the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs. "Over the past few months, many of our communities have come a long way in their discussions with Canada on our Constitutionally protected Right to fish for a moderate livelihood. Returning of these traps is another sign that we are moving in the right direction. Today is a good day for all our harvesters and we celebrate with the community of Pictou Landing."

The Assembly has offered to work with DFO C&P to develop a collaborative approach to enforcement for Treaty protected harvesting activities.

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