



FIRST NATIONS
FISHERIES COUNCIL

Toward Collaborative Management for First Nations in B.C.

**Presentation to the Fisheries Assembly
Chehalis October 30, 2009
Brenda McCorquodale**

The Fisheries Council is not the co-management process.

Mandate of the Council:

The First Nations Fisheries Council works with and on behalf of B.C. First Nations to protect and reconcile First Nations rights and title as they relate to fisheries and the health and protection of aquatic resources. The Council will achieve this mandate by working to:

- Advance and protect First Nations title and rights related to fisheries and aquatic resources, including priority access for food, cultural and economic purposes;***
- Support First Nations to build and maintain capacity related to fishing, planning, policy, law, management, and decision-making at a variety of scales (local, regional, national, international); and***
- Facilitate discussions related to the development of a British Columbia-wide First Nations-based collaborative management framework that recognizes and respects First Nations jurisdiction, management authority and responsibilities.***

why now?

- **Obligation of government to deal with asserted rights and title**
- **First Nations interest in looking at rights and reconciliation**
- **Wild Salmon Policy implementation & changes in aquaculture management**
- **Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative – Co-management component**
- **Integrated ecosystem-based management**
- **Scarcity**

why now?

- From a legal and policy perspective, the manner in which First Nations will meaningfully participate as decision makers in the modern governance surrounding fisheries and aquatic resource management is both complex and fundamental to the accommodation of s. 35 rights, and the reconciliation of Crown sovereignty.

definitions

- **We need to start work to define what co-management means.**
- **Visions can range from a variety of participants all providing input to a government decision-maker to delegation of authority.**
- **There is no common vision among First Nations or between First Nations and government.**

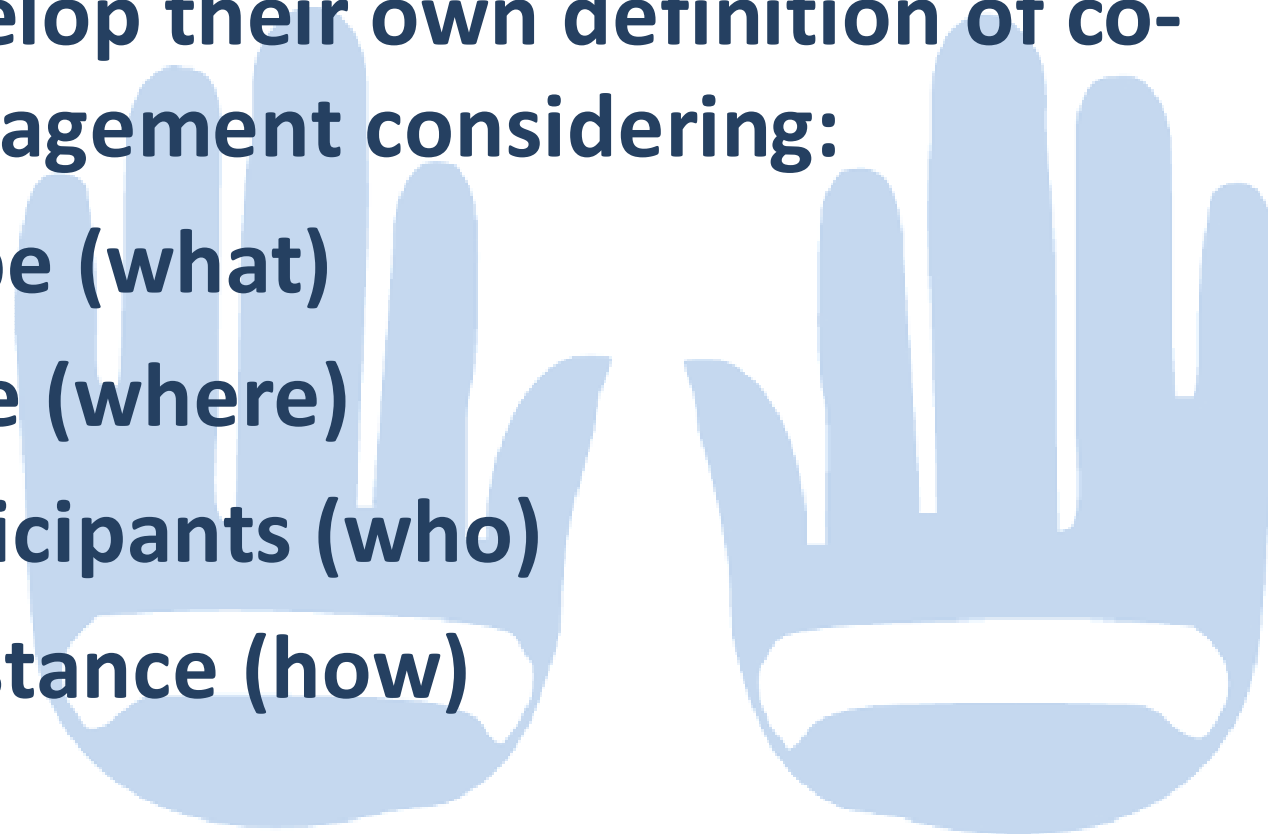
First Nations context

- no one Vision among B.C. First Nations as to what co-management will look like in B.C.
- rights reside at the Nation scale
- Need to respect rights including FSC, economic harvest and decision-making/management role
- system will need flexibility
- effective Tier 1 process is necessary to support Tier 2 or Tier 3

there is no “right” definition

First Nations at the community level need to develop their own definition of co-management considering:

- scope (what)
- scale (where)
- participants (who)
- substance (how)



what could co-management mean?

- 
- projects
 - technical/ science
 - local management
 - habitat protection
 - monitoring and enforcement
 - regional/ B.C./ national policy and management
 - partnership
 - engagement by government of others in decision-making
 - shared responsibilities
 - shared capacity
 - funding
 - human resources

Challenge of Developing Effective Engagement at a B.C.-Wide Scale for Fisheries

First Nations Geographic Scales

Strength of authority

high

Local

Area/ Region

Provincial

Government Organization

Strength of authority

low

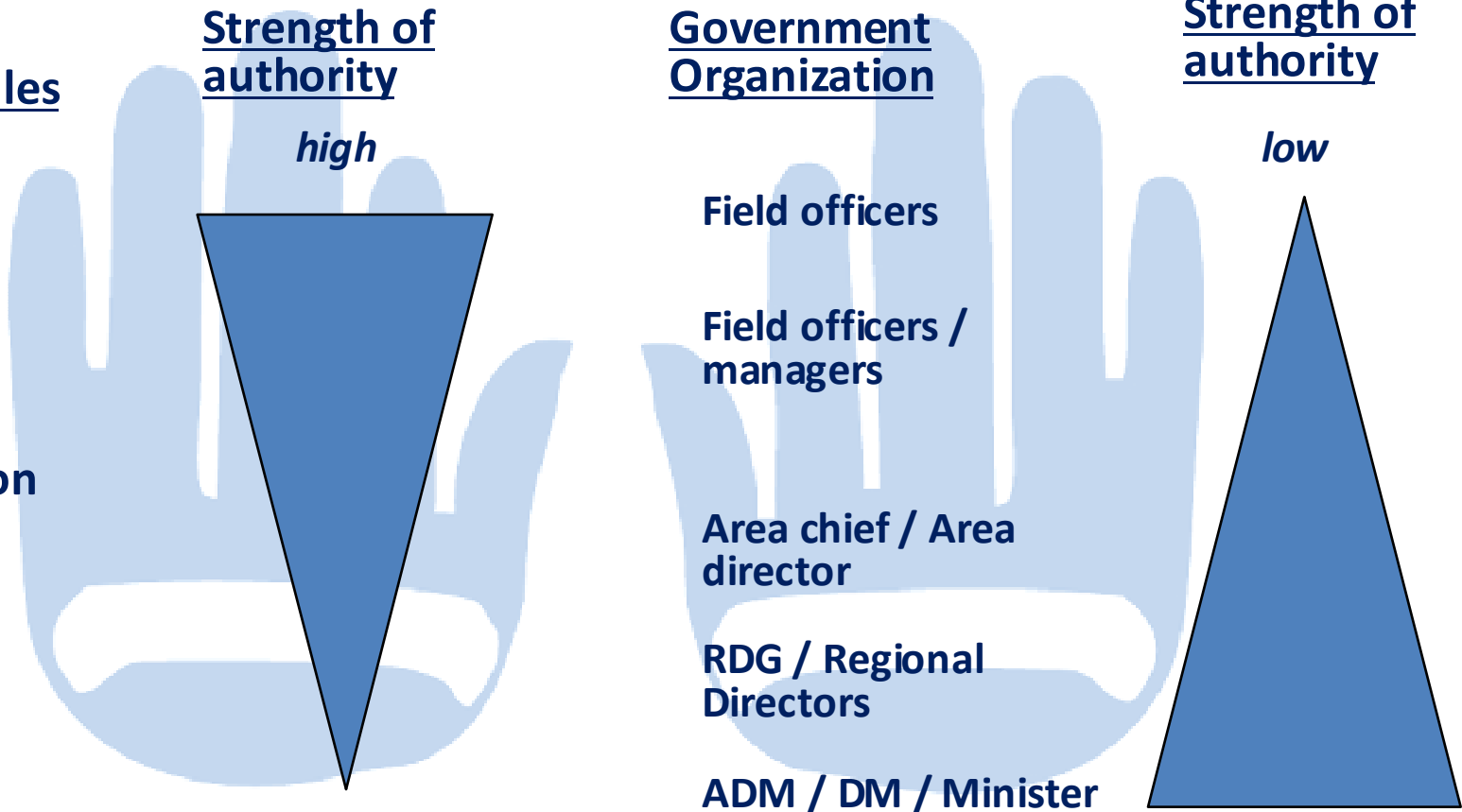
Field officers

Field officers /
managers

Area chief / Area
director

RDG / Regional
Directors

ADM / DM / Minister



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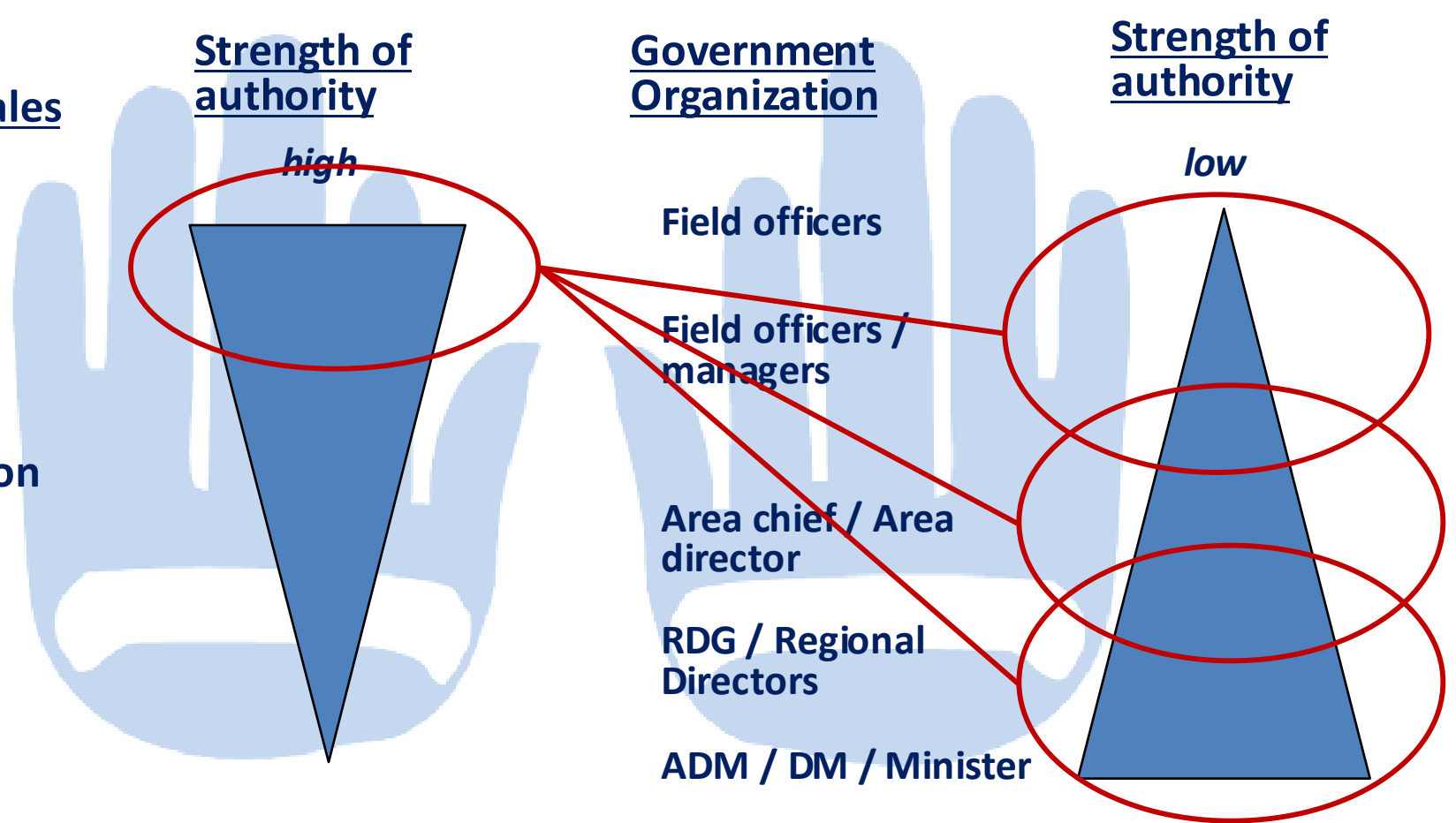
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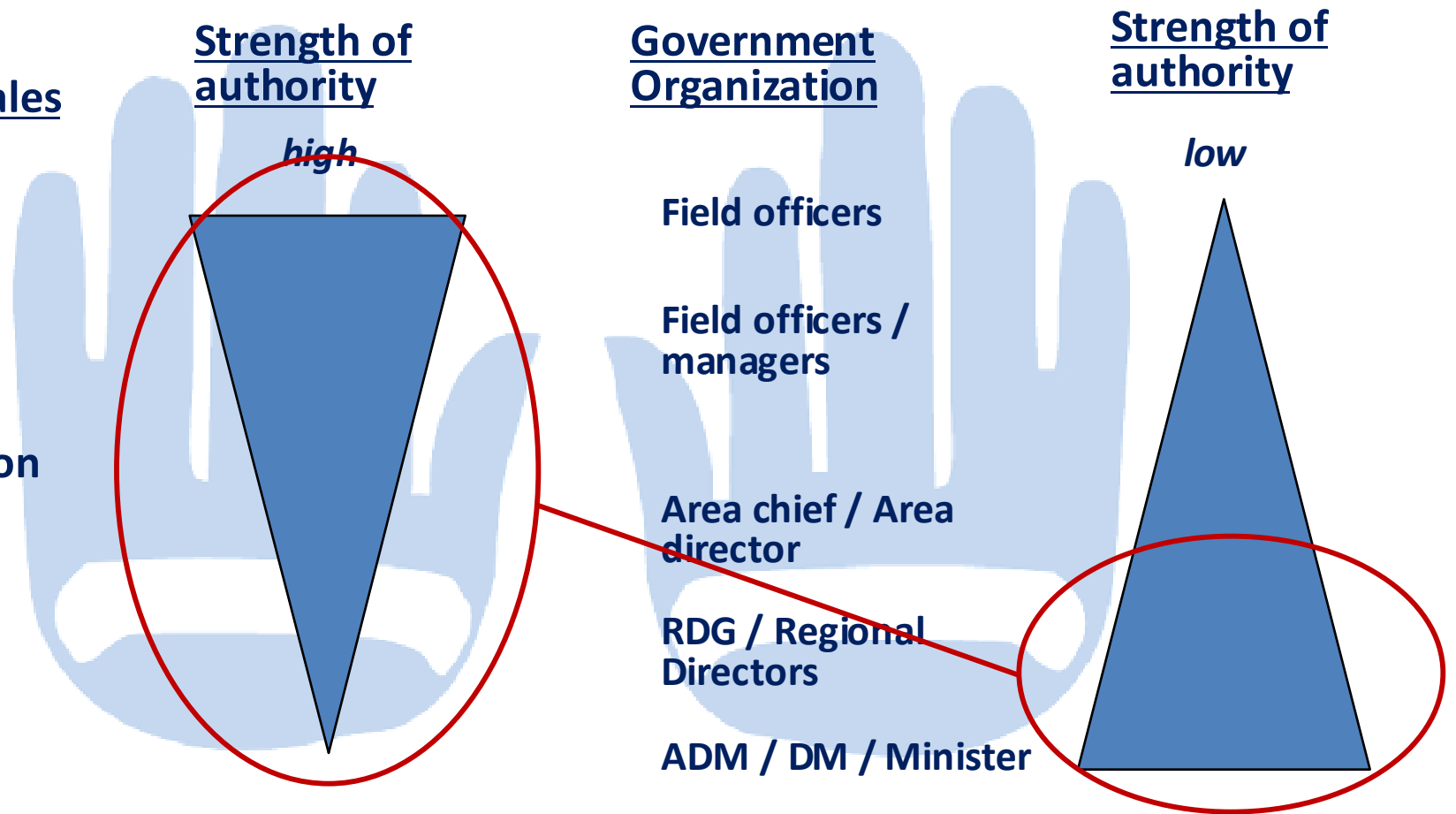
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role of the Fisheries Council

B.C. First Nations Fisheries Action Plan

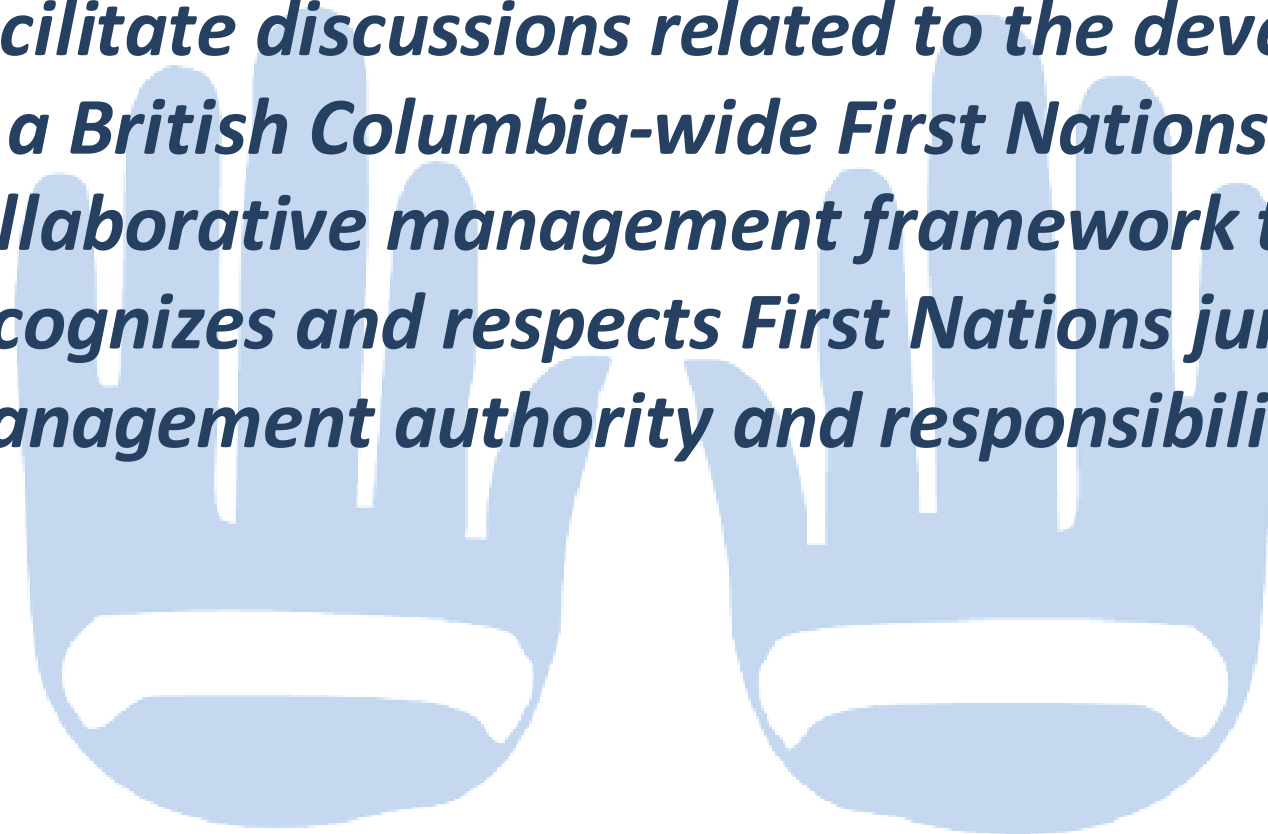
“First Nations need to decide how to best organize themselves to take advantage of these changes locally, regionally, and provincially.”

“First Nations in B.C. will together plan and manage sustainable fisheries in order to ensure fisheries conservation and position First Nations as active fisheries managers and decision-makers at regional and provincial levels.”

role of the Fisheries Council

- **Mandate**

- *Facilitate discussions related to the development of a British Columbia-wide First Nations-based collaborative management framework that recognizes and respects First Nations jurisdiction, management authority and responsibilities.*



role of the Fisheries Council

- **FNFC working to establish a B.C.-wide co-management & FSC working groups**
- **develop 14 community-based co-management coordinator positions (linked with the new structure with 14 Council members) that can both support work the community needs done and work as a team to develop resources and approaches**
- **FNFC is looking at hosting a Resource Centre for First Nations co-management to help support these activities and to summarize local approaches to promote B.C.-wide discussion**

role of the Fisheries Council

- **supporting the development of this work at the local and/or aggregate scale, helping to develop capacity and good analysis, and in supporting a broad emerging vision**



next steps

- **First Nations at a community scale need to be supported in the development of their vision and approaches**
- **Partners need to be supportive of the pace and respect the approaches of various discussions**
- **The Council will be working to support those discussions on a B.C.-wide scale**