



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Indigenous-Led Plan Calls for Federal Funding and Support Amid Miramichi Salmon Crisis**

**MIRAMICHI, NB** – Atlantic salmon in the Miramichi River are in crisis – and a new plan from the North Shore Mi'kmaq Tribal Council (NSMTC) offers a path forward.

Plamu – the Mi'kmaq word for Atlantic salmon – have declined sharply due to predation and climate change. Once abundant, salmon populations in the Miramichi now number in the thousands. In response, the *Plamu First 2024 | Five-Year Strategic Plan (2025–2030)*, developed with watershed conservation partners, calls for long-term federal support and shared decision-making. It urges immediate action to prevent the collapse of a species critical to the Miramichi's ecosystem, economy, and Indigenous cultural identity.

### **Alignment with Canada's National Salmon Strategy**

The *Plamu First 2024 | Five-Year Strategic Plan (2025–2030)* responds directly to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)'s national salmon strategy with clear regional priorities and Indigenous leadership at the helm. The plan was submitted to DFO for review on April 17, 2025, alongside a \$38 million budget request to support core operations and on-the-ground conservation projects. It presents a framework for a First Nations-led council to guide restoration and decision-making in the watershed, using a Two-Eyed Seeing approach that brings together Mi'kmaq knowledge and Western science.

### **A Need for Federal Parity in Atlantic Salmon Investment**

In a March 2025 statement, New Brunswick Minister of Natural Resources John Herron underscored the need for federal investment in Atlantic salmon recovery. “We need transformative investments in the areas of conservation, stewardship, salmon enhancement and stock rebuilding,” he said, calling for parity with the federal government's Pacific salmon strategy. The Plamu First plan lays out a clear path forward, with practical solutions and a framework for Indigenous-led action in the Miramichi.

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## Developed Through Collaboration

The plan was shaped by feedback from the Plamu First 2024 conference and developed in collaboration with watershed conservation partners: the Atlantic Salmon Federation, the Miramichi Salmon Association, the Miramichi Watershed Management Committee, the New Brunswick Salmon Council, the University of New Brunswick, and the Canadian Rivers Institute. All partners have expressed their strong support for the plan.

## Quotes

*“We have a clear strategy for moving forward – one that is Indigenous-led, culturally relevant, and built on values that resonate with all partners across the watershed. What we need now is the authority and funding to implement it. DFO holds all the cards. They have the resources and decision-making power to grant us the autonomy we need to restore salmon populations. Our communities are ready, and we have the capacity to make it happen. What’s missing is the support to act.”*

— Jim Ward, General Manager, North Shore Mi’kmaq Tribal Council

*“The Miramichi Salmon Association and the New Brunswick Salmon Council fully support the Plamu First 2024 | Five-Year Strategic Plan (2025-2030). This approach recognizes the critical role of Indigenous leadership and local stewardship in Atlantic salmon conservation. It also aligns with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans’ recently released Restore, Maintain, Thrive: Canada’s national strategy to ensure the future of Atlantic salmon, offering a coordinated, place-based and forward-looking framework to help rebuild salmon populations in the Miramichi. We encourage DFO to support this management plan and provide the necessary funding for its implementation.”*

— Butch Dalton, President, Miramichi Salmon Association and the New Brunswick Salmon Council

## About Plamu First 2024

Plamu First is an Indigenous-led initiative focused on the protection and restoration of Atlantic salmon in the Miramichi watershed. The North Shore Mi’kmaq Tribal Council, alongside planning partners including the Atlantic Salmon Federation (ASF), the Miramichi Salmon Association (MSA), the New Brunswick Salmon Council (NBSC), the Miramichi Watershed Management Committee (MWMC), and UNB’s Canadian Rivers Institute (CRI), hosted the inaugural Plamu First conference in 2021. This event brought together rightsholders,

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stakeholders, and knowledge holders from 14 organizations – including First Nations, government, academia, and conservation groups – to lay the foundation for a recovery plan. In 2024, a second conference built upon this work, leading to the development of a comprehensive salmon strategy for the Miramichi River, with a focus on collaboration, data-sharing, ecosystem balance, and long-term sustainability.

## About the North Shore Mi'kmaq Tribal Council

The North Shore Mi'kmaq Tribal Council (NSMTC) is a not-for-profit organization committed to advancing the health, sustainability, and economic prosperity of its Member Nations. The NSMTC primarily serves the Ugpi'ganjig (Eel River Bar), Oinpegitjoig (Pabineau), Natoaganeg (Eel Ground), Metepenagiag (Red Bank), L'nui Menikuk (Indian Island), Tjipōgtōtjig (Buctouche), and Amlamgog (Fort Folly) while extending support to 25 additional First Nations across Atlantic Canada. The council provides service delivery, technical support, and capacity-building in water and waste management, housing and infrastructure, post-secondary education funding, training and employment, community development, clean energy opportunities, environmental stewardship, and health service coordination.

## Read the Full Five-Year Strategic Plan

To read the *Plamu First 2024 | Five-Year Strategic Plan (2025-2030)*, visit:  
<https://nsmtc.ca/plamu-first-2024-five-year-strategic-plan-2025-2030/>

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