



The Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance – PRESS RELEASE
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Aquaculture Committee Recommendations Ignore Scientific Research

The BC Special Committee on Sustainable Aquaculture today recommended that the entire BC salmon aquaculture industry be moved to closed containment production systems within the next five years. This recommendation threatens to undo 30 years of research dedicated to ensuring the sustainability of BC's salmon aquaculture industry.

“The Committee was well informed of how this industry has been built upon world class ‘made-in-Canada’ scientific research,” says Ruth Salmon, Executive Director of the Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance, “Yet – rather than recognizing the excellent work of Canadian scientists - it is endorsing a production system that science has shown to be environmentally unjustifiable.”

From its beginnings in the 1970's, salmon aquaculture has grown to become BC's largest agricultural export. To support this growth, the aquaculture industry, the Canadian scientific community, and the federal and provincial governments have worked hard to reduce aquaculture's overall environmental impacts. Through their collaborative efforts, scientifically-sound knowledge and innovation have been adopted by government to create the most stringent regulatory regime of any aquaculture producing country. And industry has striven to meet or exceed all regulatory standards.

The industry's environmental commitment was recognized by Agriculture and Lands Minister Pat Bell in August 2006. In releasing the 2004 & 2005 Annual Inspection Reports on Marine Finfish Aquaculture Sites, Bell announced that the reports reflected “an industry that is committed to ensuring it protects wild stocks and the environment... and this is proof that the regulatory regime is working.”

Aquaculture innovations resulting from Canadian research and development activities have now created the possibility for environmental and economic sustainability to go hand-in-hand. No longer forced with the choice of economic expansion versus environmental protection, other regions of Canada – such as Newfoundland – are moving ahead with sustainable aquaculture development as a way of stimulating the economies of rural communities. Newfoundland's recent budget announced an investment of millions of dollars in its aquaculture industry.

Other aquaculture producing countries – like Chile - are also capitalizing on Canadian innovation to expand their aquaculture industries.

“While other aquaculture producers flourish, this committee seems intent on allowing BC aquaculture to stagnate,” says Salmon, “And – if BC adopts the closed containment

recommendation – it will become the only major aquaculture producing region in the world that is proceeding along a scientifically unproven – and unjustifiable - path.”

The Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance (CAIA) is a national industry association, headquartered in Ottawa. It represents the interests of Canadian aquaculture operators, feed companies and suppliers as well as provincial finfish and shellfish aquaculture associations. CAIA is dedicated to promoting a responsible and healthy Canadian aquaculture industry that follows sound environmental practices and showcasing the health benefits of a wide variety of nutritious seafood products.

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