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## **Canadian Aquaculture Industry Remains Committed to Protecting Wild Salmon Stocks and the Environment**

**Ottawa:** A new study published in the Public Library of Science Journal that correlates the decline of wild salmonids on both coasts of Canada to the incidence of salmon farming takes a very narrow perspective on a complex issue.

“There are many threats and challenges facing the survival of wild salmon, such as urbanization, forestry, agriculture, mining, transportation and climate change, says Ruth Salmon, Executive Director of the Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance (CAIA). “To bring it down to one issue, such as salmon aquaculture, is far too simplistic.”

While this study cites salmon farming as a significant cause for concern to wild stocks, there are many other studies that support a different view. For example, recent findings of the BC Pacific Salmon Forum’s 2007 research program show adult pink salmon returns to the Broughton Archipelago in 2007 were similar or slightly improved relative to 2005, showing salmon aquaculture and the wild fishery can co-exist harmoniously.

And according to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans website, there is little evidence to support the suggestion that the presence of salmon farms increases the risk of disease in wild stocks.

This is, in part, due to the fact that all aquaculture operations in Canada must meet rigorous federal, provincial and international environmental standards. In fact Canada has established some of the most stringent environmental standards of all aquaculture-producing countries. These standards, based on the best available scientific research, are in place to minimize and manage any potential risks associated with aquaculture operations.

“The Canadian aquaculture industry does not take the issue of declining wild salmon stocks lightly. We recognize the concerns of interactions with wild fish populations and work with government, scientists, and others to actively address them.” said Ruth Salmon. “Both wild and farmed salmon share the same environment – so it is in everyone’s best interest to collaborate on preserving the health of our marine resource. In fact, the aquaculture industry has become a partner in many conservation and protection programs. Farmers

in New Brunswick work directly with groups such as the Atlantic Salmon Federation to promote the conservation of wild salmon stocks in the Bay of Fundy. And in BC, the industry has been working in partnership with the Pacific Salmon Forum to address potential wild/farmed fish interactions.”

The Canadian aquaculture industry has consistently demonstrated its commitment to protecting wild stocks and the environment. It's time to stop the accusations and begin recognizing the importance of enhancing wild salmon stocks **and** supporting a sustainable salmon farming industry.

*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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