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www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,25938854-5006787,00.html

INVESTORS in an aquaculture company whose abalone breeding programs were hit by mortality rates of up to 100 per cent have launched a bid to keep the venture going.

Abalone investors refuse to take dive

Pia Akerman and Gavin Lower | August 17, 2009

Article from: [The Australian](#)

INVESTORS in an aquaculture company whose abalone breeding programs were hit by mortality rates of up to 100 per cent have launched a bid to keep the venture going.

A group of the growers has made a \$250,000 deposit so they can assess the state of Australian Bight Abalone's finances and its failed crops.

John Alford, one of the original investors in ABA, told The Australian: "The growers, as far as we're concerned, have put \$45million into this company, and it's their company. If we can take over the company... then we will.

"We look at it as a company with a pile of assets that has a cash-flow problem. If we can fix the cash-flow problem, that company can go forward."

The \$250,000 deposit will not become binding until Wednesday week.

A spokeswoman for administrators McGrath Nicol said the company would no longer speak to The Australian, since it obtained a copy of a confidential report detailing mortality rates of up to 100 per cent among the abalone. Target rates between 14 and 21 per cent were published in ABA's product disclosure statements to potential investors.

The company went into voluntary administration last month, leaving 1200 people who invested \$43.8m in the company in limbo.

Opponents of the company's plan to farm abalone on South Australia's Eyre Peninsula claimed the site was unsuitable, while industry insiders have raised specific concerns about the way ABA's aquaculture licences were approved for commercial production.

The state opposition has called for a select committee to inquire into ABA.

But the Rann government has rejected the calls, with Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Minister Paul Caica saying he saw no need to review decisions relating to the grant and conversion of ABA's leases.

ABA's woes dragged the South Australian government into the national debate on the influence of lobbyists after it was revealed that former Labor senator and party fundraiser, Nick Bolkus, was headhunted to become a director of ABA.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/08/14/2656189.htm>

The South Australian Greens say a total rethink is needed on licensing aquaculture in the wake of the failure of a west coast venture.

Greens urge 'total rethink' on licensing aquaculture

Posted 1 hour 18 minutes ago

- **Map:** [Port Augusta 5700](#)

The South Australian Greens say a total rethink is needed on licensing aquaculture in the wake of the failure of a west coast venture.

Australian Bight Abalone is in voluntary administration with a series of investor meetings ending in Perth yesterday.

Elliston residents have questioned issues including how the business was allowed to establish in a sensitive environmental area.

Greens leader Mark Parnell says the company's problems should trigger a rethink on the entire aquaculture industry.

"I think we do need to go back to the drawing board and have a look at how the aquaculture industry is managed," he said.

"The trend over the last 10 years has been to provide less and less opportunities for members of the community to engage in the debate.

"It's now no longer possible for anyone to challenge aquaculture."

But the Government says all stakeholders are involved in the development of new and existing aquaculture zones.

A statement from Food and Fisheries Minister Paul Caica says this includes members of the public and groups such as local government and industry.

He says he understands all transactions by Australian Bight Abalone were in accordance with the law, including public notification where required.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/08/11/2652020.htm>

The Opposition is demanding a parliamentary inquiry into a failed west coast aquaculture company in South Australia.

Aquaculture inquiry call rejected by SA Govt

Posted 3 hours 8 minutes ago

- **Map:** [Port Lincoln 5606](#)

The Opposition is demanding a parliamentary inquiry into a failed west coast aquaculture company in South Australia.

Australian Bight Abalone is in voluntary administration and a series of meetings of investors is being held.

Elliston residents have questioned issues including how the business was allowed in a sensitive environmental area.

SA Opposition fisheries spokesman Adrian Pederick says there may be nothing untoward, but the company's establishment and operation warrant a select committee inquiry.

"Certainly this does not warrant just slipping under the carpet. I think there needs to be an investigation how Australian Bight Abalone has been structured," he said.


"I think there should be just an independent inquiry into the whole program, whether it's government or lobbyists, just to see what has happened in the program and see if there is any murkiness that comes out."

SA Fisheries Minister Paul Caica has rejected the call for a select committee.

He says he is confident that the processes for granting and conversion of leases and licences under the Aquaculture Act are rigorous and transparent.

On that basis, he says he is also confident that all transactions involving Australian Bight Abalone have been in accordance with the Act, including public notification where required.

<http://www.sunjournal.com/node/102245>

 Sun Journal | Connecting you with your Community

Tuesday, 11 August 2009 11:09 AM

Billions of jellyfish destroy salmon farm

By
Published: Nov 22, 2007 5:00 am
[E-mail and share](#)

DUBLIN, Ireland (AP) - The only salmon farm in Northern Ireland has lost its entire population of more than 100,000 fish, worth some \$2 million, to a spectacular jellyfish attack, its owners said Wednesday.

The Northern Salmon Co. Ltd. said billions of jellyfish - in a dense pack of about 10 square miles and 35 feet deep - overwhelmed the fish last week in two net pens about a mile off the coast of the Glens of Antrim, north of Belfast.

Managing director John Russell said the company's dozen workers tried to rescue the salmon, but their three boats struggled for hours to push their way through the mass of jellyfish. All the fish were dead or dying from stings and stress by the time the boats reached the pens, he said.

Russell, who previously worked at Scottish salmon farms and took the Northern Ireland job just three days before the attack, said he had never seen anything like it in 30 years in the business.

"It was unprecedented, absolutely amazing. The sea was red with these jellyfish and there was nothing we could do about it, absolutely nothing," he said.

The species of jellyfish responsible, *Pelagia nocticula* - popularly known as the mauve stinger - is noted for its purplish night-time glow and its propensity for terrorizing bathers in the warmer Mediterranean Sea. Until the past decade, the mauve stinger has rarely been spotted so far north in British or Irish waters, and scientists cite this as evidence of global warming.

Russell said the company, which bills its salmon as organic and exports to France, Belgium, Germany and the United States, faces likely closure unless it receives emergency aid from the British government.

"It's a disaster," he said.

On the Net:


Mauve stingers, <http://www.glaucus.org.uk/Jelly.htm#Pelagia>

Northern Salmon Co., <http://www.niseafood.co.uk/members/northernsalmon.asp>

AP-ES-11-21-07 1407EST

www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,25906811-5006787,00.html

THE South Australian Liberal Party has become embroiled in the collapse of Australian Bight Abalone, after the local MP revealed her husband had been contracted to supply stock to the embattled aquaculture company.

 Liberals caught up in sinking of abalone group | The Australian

Monday, 10 August 2009 10:49 AM

Liberals caught up in sinking of abalone group

Verity Edwards | *August 10, 2009*

Article from: [The Australian](#)

THE South Australian Liberal Party has become embroiled in the collapse of Australian Bight Abalone, after the local MP revealed her husband had been contracted to supply stock to the embattled aquaculture company.

Liz Penfold, who has held the state seat of Flinders since 1993, taking in ABA's base at Elliston, said yesterday that she had also met the company's chief executive several times and had supported its application to set up an offshore abalone farm.

"I met with Andrew Ferguson and said I would do all I could (to help) because we needed the jobs very badly, and the business was badly needed for Elliston," Ms Penfold told The Australian. "I went to one of their initial functions in Adelaide to show support ... Since then I haven't been to anything, haven't been invited to anything."

Geoff Penfold, a former accountant, now manages Port Lincoln-based onshore abalone growing company Southern Australian Seafoods, which has had contracts to supply ABA.

Ms Penfold, a shareholder in SAS, said the company had been contracted to supply \$200,000 worth of stock to ABA but had not yet handed it over.

Yesterday she admitted to initially having concerns about ABA's plans to farm abalone offshore, including its funds being sourced through a managed investment scheme, and the viability of growing abalone in rough open seas.

Opponents to the company setting up at Elliston were concerned about the impact of any breakdown in equipment on the environment, how it would affect the nearby Australian sea lion colony and whether it would impede the migratory path of whales.

"When Australian Bight Abalone came along and proposed to do in-sea abalone, while it's rough out there I certainly didn't have any concerns about the sea lions or the whales," Ms Penfold said. "(But) we were all hopeful that the technology was there and we would see a successful in-sea aquaculture industry."

ABA went into voluntary administration last month and sacked 27 staff, leaving 1200 people who invested a total \$43.8 million in limbo.

The Australian last week revealed the company's extensive contact with the Labor Party, thrusting the South Australian government into the debate over the growing influence of lobbyists and cash for access to premiers and ministers.

ALP fundraiser and lobbyist Nick Bolkus is a director of ABA, and Premier Mike Rann was a one-time guest speaker at an ABA function. Mr Ferguson has also met several senior state ministers.

ABA is continuing to operate its aquaculture leases and licences.

A Primary Industries and Resources SA spokesman said yesterday that the administrators were hoping to sell the operations to keep the company running.

www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,25906811-5006787,00.html

THE South Australian Liberal Party has become embroiled in the collapse of Australian Bight Abalone, after the local MP revealed her husband had been contracted to supply stock to the embattled aquaculture company.

Liberals caught up in sinking of abalone group | The Australian

Monday, 10 August 2009 10:45 AM

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Verity Edwards | August 10, 2009

Article from: [The Australian](#)

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www.stuff.co.nz/southland-times/news/2732130/Salmon-farm-upgrade-ca...

News - The Southland Times

Salmon farm upgrade catches minister's eye | Stuff.co.nz

Sunday, 9 August 2009 4:32 PM

Salmon farm upgrade catches minister's eye

By MICHAEL FORBES - The Southland Times

Last updated 05:00 08/08/2009

Southland now has a salmon farm facility to rival its international competitors, according to a visiting marine construction expert.

The \$7 million upgrade of Sanford Ltd's Stewart Island salmon farm was officially opened yesterday by Fisheries Minister Phil Heatley in front of about 60 guests and dignitaries at the site in Big Glory Bay.

The upgrade included eight 30x30m storm-strength cages, an underwater camera system, a computerised feeding system, and a vacuum system to automatically remove dead fish from the tanks.

Sanford Southland manager Tommy Foggo said the cage technology from Norway and Chile was consistent with "the world's best farming practices."

Marine Construction general manager Tore Hakon Riple, whose Norwegian company built the cages, said they rivalled the technology used in Europe, Canada, and Australia.

"Fish farming in Norway is a \$4 billion industry and its technology is reflected in 30 years of research and development."

"There's approximately 270 tonnes of steel in those cages. They are built to stand open water conditions and can handle waves of 2m."

Mr Foggo said the cages could house about 450,000 fish and would increase production from 1900 tonnes to over 3000 tonnes of salmon a year. The 12-month upgrade also included the conversion of a mussel farm site to salmon.

"There will eventually be more processing jobs created at our factory in Bluff because more fish means we will be able to extend our nine-month

processing season by a month."

Mr Foggo was unsure how many jobs would be created.

One of the pleasing elements of the upgrade was that its closely monitored feeding system was less harmful to the environment, he said.

However, the upgrade had not been without incident, as the old Sanford cages broke free of their anchors one night when moorings were transferred to the new facility, he said.

"The cages didn't get far, we had the boats out and everything towed back into place within 24 hours."

Mr Heatley said Sanford's move towards sustainable farming should be held up as an example to the entire New Zealand marine farming industry

www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,25894325-5013871,00.html

WARNINGS about the risks of abalone farming at sites on South Australia's remote Eyre Peninsula were ignored by Australian Bight Abalone, of which ALP fundraiser and lobbyist Nick Bolkus is a director, in a rush for profit that has led to the company's collapse.

☰ No heed to risk in failed abalone farm | The Australian

Sunday, 9 August 2009 4:20 PM

No heed to risk in failed abalone farm

Pia Akerman and Verity Edwards | August 07, 2009

Article from: [The Australian](#)

WARNINGS about the risks of abalone farming at sites on South Australia's remote Eyre Peninsula were ignored by Australian Bight Abalone, of which ALP fundraiser and lobbyist Nick Bolkus is a director, in a rush for profit that has led to the company's collapse.

Environmentalists and concerned residents of the community at Elliston have questioned why the company was allowed to proceed with a multi-million dollar aquaculture project, and whether it should have been expected that mortality rates among the abalone would stifle investors' returns.

The company has gone into administration, leaving 1200 people who invested \$43.8 million across four sites in limbo.

The Australian has this week revealed several high-level connections between ABA and the ALP, chiefly linked to Mr Bolkus, a former ALP senator, and Labor-aligned lobbyist firm Hawker Britton, whose state director Stephen Halliday is a former chief of staff to SA Premier Mike Rann. One source close to the company said yesterday corporate greed had been allowed to take over, stimulating an "out of control" growth rate.

"If the environmental concerns were listened to, we probably wouldn't be in this situation now," an industry source said. "Elliston is just too rough; it's just not suitable for that method (of farming). It's a good location for growing wild abalone but not for growing them in a sea cage." John Haagmans fought the company in court after the Rann government granted development approval for the state's first offshore abalone farm at Elliston, 640km west of Adelaide.

Mr Haagmans and the Friends of Elliston claimed that Anxious Bay was unsuitable for aquaculture and the development would affect a colony of sea lions on nearby West Waldegrave Island.

The court ruled against the Friends of Elliston in January 2007. ABA has since taken Mr Haagmans to court in an effort to recover costs. Mr Haagmans yesterday claimed that he had seen broken baskets from the abalone farm on West Waldegrave Island earlier this week.

"Our concerns at the time were the environment around the Waldegrave Conservation Park and the effect it may have on the Australian sea lion colony," Mr Haagmans, a former abalone diver, told The Australian. "The other concerns were the area runs through a migratory path of whales as well as the sea lions."

ABA went into administration last month after its managed investment scheme attracted only enough applications to meet 20 per cent of the company's costs. The company had been trying to raise \$20m-\$25m.

Mining giant BHP Billiton also suffered a hit yesterday. After close to 12 months of consultation, the state parliament's Environment, Resources and Development Committee recommended an alternative site be sought for BHP's desalination plant in the Upper Spencer Gulf.

www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,25877629-5013871,00.html

ONE of Australia's top political lobbyists, former Labor senator Nick Bolkus, was headhunted because of his connections with the Rann government to be a director of an aquaculture company that has gone into administration.

☰ Lobbyist Nick Bolkus headhunted for connections | The Australian

Sunday, 9 August 2009 4:03 PM

Lobbyist Nick Bolkus headhunted for connections

Michael Owen, SA political reporter | August 04, 2009

Article from: [The Australian](#)

ONE of Australia's top political lobbyists, former Labor senator Nick Bolkus, was headhunted because of his connections with the Rann government to be a director of an aquaculture company that has gone into administration.

The collapse of Australian Bight Abalone -- the nation's largest holder of abalone farming leases and licences -- has left 1200 people who invested \$43.8million in limbo.

Mr Bolkus, who is a business partner with Howard government foreign minister Alexander Downer in Adelaide-based lobbyist firm Bespoke Approach, also chairs the state Labor fundraising body SA Progressive Business.

Inquiries by The Australian reveal ABA chief executive Andrew Ferguson is a regular at SA Progressive Business events, where those in attendance pay up to \$1500 each for intimate dinners and special briefings with South Australian Premier Mike Rann and his senior cabinet ministers.

SA Progressive Business documents show that between September and November, Mr Rann is scheduled to personally host eight Labor fundraising events, charging people between \$110 and \$1500 to attend.

Mr Ferguson told The Australian he had met Mr Rann, Deputy Premier Kevin Foley and Infrastructure Minister Patrick Conlon and "certainly have had a meal with all of those guys". He also met with Fisheries Minister Paul Caica about six weeks ago and "he (Caica) agreed to catch up (again) at a later date", Mr Ferguson said.

However, Mr Rann's office denied the Premier had ever met Mr Ferguson.

"Having searched through the office records, we have no record of the Premier having any meetings with Mr Ferguson," a spokesman said in an emailed statement.

"I'm sorry, but I'm unable to answer for every minister."

In a statement last night, Mr Conlon said: "I have met with people from Australian Bight Abalone many times and discussed issues concerning their business."

Mr Caica said he had a "brief, informal conversation" with Mr Ferguson, and "no state government money has been provided to ABA from Primary Industries and Resources SA".

When approached outside state parliament yesterday, Mr Rann refused to speak to The Australian about the matter, saying he had "covered" it in other interviews.

Mr Rann came under renewed pressure yesterday to take a stand on regulating political donations and the role of lobbyists, and to acknowledge the benefits of an independent anti-corruption body, after Queensland Premier Anna Bligh instructed all state MPs that "they are no longer allowed to attend any fundraising dinners, lunches or breakfasts with businesses".

This came after former Queensland anti-corruption commissioner Tony Fitzgerald told a conference in Brisbane last week that access to government could be bought, Labor mates were appointed to high-paying positions and retired politicians were exploiting their political connections for "success fees".

Following Tasmania's announcement a fortnight ago that it would set up an independent anti-corruption commission, South Australia and Victoria became the only states without such a body. SA has also left lobbying activity unregulated, unlike most of the rest of the country, which has moved to establish registers of lobbyists or codes of conduct.

Mr Ferguson yesterday refused to disclose how much Mr Bolkus was paid as a director of ABA, saying the information was "confidential", but said he had not been paid at any point as a lobbyist. But he said he had attended SA Progressive Business functions organised by Mr Bolkus, including boardroom lunches hosted by Planning Minister Paul Holloway, and was a regular at the Premier's annual end-of-year drinks.

"We do this because we operate on government leases and it is important to us to know what the government is doing and it is important for the government to know what we are doing," Mr Ferguson said. "I don't think there is anything improper in it. We do not expect any favours, but we put it down to doing business in SA."

Mr Ferguson, a former Sydney lawyer who was appointed chief executive of ABA in February 2005, said he was "tasked to put together a list of possible independent directors" a few years ago and settled on Mr Bolkus.

A former South Australian Labor senator and federal minister, Mr Bolkus is a close factional ally to state minister Patrick Conlon, the parliamentary leader of the Left.

Mr Bolkus was appointed as a director of ABA on July 1, 2007, because "Nick is very well respected and you tend to look for well-respected people to sit on your board", Mr Ferguson said. "Certainly you always choose directors who have a good network -- that never hurts (in doing business)."

ABA was placed into voluntary administration on July 1 and administrator Sam Davies of McGrathNicol has called the next creditors meeting for September 9. ABA in May had hoped to raise \$20m to \$25m by selling shares in its farmed abalone venture near Elliston on South Australia's Eyre Peninsula, but had been forced instead to make 27 employees redundant.

Sources close to the administration process said that while people had invested millions into four sites, no projects were ever harvested. Administrators are now investigating a grower-funded solution, recapitalisation or whether to wind up the schemes and sell the assets.

ABA directors have blamed several factors for the company's problems, including deteriorating business conditions and "issues surrounding the managed investment scheme industry".

Mr Bolkus, speaking from Greece yesterday, said he remained a director of the company and refused to comment on any aspect of the political donations or lobbying issues.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/200907/s2640933.htm>
Coverage of rural industries and issues.

📄 Prawn farmers ponder industry regulation - 30/07/2009

Saturday, 1 August 2009 2:35 PM

Prawn farmers ponder industry regulation

Thursday, 30/07/2009

The impact of regulation on seafood production is one of the issues being tackled at the Aquaculture into the Future conference in North Queensland.

Farmed seafood continues to increase its market share, as wildcatch fishery areas become increasingly regulated.

Australian Prawn Farmers Association president Trevor Anderson says while farmed seafood is subject to governmental regulation, it doesn't have the same issues as wildcatch.

"Well, aquaculture's also highly regulated. But at least in aquaculture, they can't take our area away from us; all they can do is make it hard to get new area," he says.

"So the issue for us is getting new licences, new investors, into the industry and building our industry."

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/200907/s2642077.htm>
Coverage of rural industries and issues.

📄 Aquaculture cleared of damaging North Queensland mangroves - 31/07/2009

Saturday, 1 August 2009 2:34 PM

Aquaculture cleared of damaging North Queensland mangroves

Friday, 31/07/2009

A scientist who has been studying the effects of sediment runoff from prawn and barramundi farms in North Queensland says the environmental impact on neighbouring mangroves is minimal.

Speaking at the Aquaculture into the Future conference in Townsville, Dr David McKinnon, from the Australian Institute of Marine Science, said mangrove environments were well equipped to deal with the kinds of run-off coming from these industries.

"Aquaculture effluents are very rapidly assimilated, because these environments are pre-adapted to high levels of organic loading that come from the mangrove forests themselves," he said.

"What happens in other environments, in the coastal zone, and coral reefs and so on, we don't know so much about."

www.economist.com/world/americas/displaystory.cfm?story_id=14140617
A bankrupt industry faces reform

📄 Chile's stricken salmon farms: Dying assets | The Economist

Saturday, 1 August 2009 2:32 PM

Dying assets

Jul 30th 2009 | SANTIAGO
From *The Economist* print edition

A bankrupt industry faces reform

THIS time two years ago some 300m Atlantic salmon were being fattened in farms off the coast of southern Chile. Now its sheltered bays contain just a tenth of that number. Many fish have died of infectious salmon anaemia (ISA), a virus, whereas others have been prematurely harvested for fear they would catch it too. Coho salmon and trout, which Chile also produces, are not susceptible to ISA. Even so, output of the country's fish farms this year is expected to be down by at least 40%. The industry faces a long road back to health.

This blow comes after 15 years of meteoric growth that saw exports rise more than tenfold to \$2.3 billion in 2007, turned Chile into the world's second-biggest salmon producer after Norway, and brought prosperity to a far-flung area with few other jobs.

Salmon farms in Norway, Scotland and Canada have all suffered ISA too. Even so, Chile seems to have been unprepared for the virus when it turned up, apparently in imported salmon eggs. The farmers seem to have been blinded by booming profits. The National Fisheries Service, the industry's regulator which is more used to policing catch quotas at sea, lacked both a plan and the powers to deal with ISA. The resulting disaster has bankrupted the industry, which had piled up \$1.8 billion in bank debts by last December.

With over half of salmon farms now empty of fish, the industry has the chance to restock and start again, says César Barros of SalmonChile, the industry association. He reckons output will be back to its 2007 level within four years. It could take longer. Congress is, slowly, debating a bill to regulate the industry more tightly. The fisheries service will have to be strengthened. And the farms need working capital to restock. The banks may not oblige, although they have renegotiated much of the debt.

The industry has also come up with a voluntary plan to reduce the use of antibiotics to control disease—a practice which has harmed the image of Chilean salmon in the United States. Hitherto, lower production costs allowed Chilean salmon to compete in the United States against less distant rivals. The reforms might erode that advantage—but perhaps not if they work: salmon farmers hope that fewer dead fish will compensate for the cost of cleaning up their act.

<http://www.news.com.au/business/story/0,27753,25854315-462,00.html>

CLEAN Seas Tuna expects to declare an after-tax loss of \$6m for the second half of 2008-2009 after inventory changes.

 Tuna king scrubbing the decks | Business | News.com.au

Saturday, 1 August 2009 2:27 PM

Tuna king scrubbing the decks

The Daily Telegraph

July 30, 2009 12:01am

CLEAN Seas Tuna expects to declare an after-tax loss of \$6 million for the second half of 2008-2009 following a decision to "clear the decks" by selling its excess inventories of kingfish and mullet.

The move paves the way for Clean Seas to refocus its business priorities towards commercial southern bluefin tuna, in which considerably better margins are available.

The after-tax loss compares to \$6.6 million in the first half.

The forecasts come as the first tuna fingerlings from Clean Seas' 2009 trials reach 30cm at 125 days of age. It has retained about 40 fingerlings to continue its research at the Arno Bay Hatchery.

Clean Seas chairman Hagen Stehr said yesterday its increasing focus on tuna involved writing down its kingfish inventories by \$4.9 million to their carrying value of \$38.2 million.

It was also writing down mullet inventories by \$2.2 million to their carrying value of \$4.3 million.

Mr Stehr said the second-half result would include as expenses \$3.7 million in tuna development costs in accordance with accounting standards.

It also plans to divert resources that would have been used in kingfish production and mullet farming to its tuna business.

This will involve lowering kingfish fingerling production from 1.25 million to 1 million fish to ensure the tuna division operates without capacity limitations.

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PA0907/S00339.htm>

Fisheries Minister Phil Heatley and Environment Minister Nick Smith today announced the appointment of the Aquaculture Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to provide expert input to the aquaculture reform process. Encouraging aquaculture development is an ...

 Scoop: Aquaculture advisory group named

Saturday, 1 August 2009 2:24 PM

Aquaculture advisory group named

Wednesday, 29 July 2009, 8:56 am

Press Release: New Zealand Government

Hon Phil Heatley
Minister of Fisheries
Hon Dr Nick Smith
Minister for the Environment

29 July 2009 Media Statement
Aquaculture advisory group named

Fisheries Minister Phil Heatley and Environment Minister Nick Smith today announced the appointment of the Aquaculture Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to provide expert input to the aquaculture reform process.

Encouraging aquaculture development is an important part of the government's economic programme.

"The government is committed to helping the aquaculture industry reach its economic potential and supports its goal of generating \$1 billion in sales by 2025," Mr Heatley said.

Dr Smith said Aquaculture reform was part of Phase II of the government's wider Resource Management Act reform programme.

"The RMA is not working for the aquaculture industry. The changes made by the previous government have stalled the industry and need to be revisited. Resource law in the coastal environment is complex and that is why extra export support is needed to find a durable solution," Dr Smith said.

The Aquaculture TAG will report to ministers by the end of September 2009. The ministers will report back to cabinet by the end of November with recommendations for improving the aquaculture regime, and a bill will be introduced to Parliament as soon as possible after that.

The advisory group will be chaired by Hon Doug Kidd, a former Minister of Fisheries. The other members are Tasman District Council Environment and Planning Manager Dennis Bush-King, Aquaculture New Zealand Chief Executive Mike Burrell, Te Ohu Kaimoana Manager of Fisheries Policy and

Development Kirsty Woods, New Zealand Seafood Industry Council Policy Manager Nici Gibbs, Northland Regional Council Chair Mark Farnsworth and Iwi Development/Resource Management Consultant Keir Volkerling.

The government is currently proceeding with the Aquaculture Legislation Amendment Bill (No 2) 2008 as an interim measure to improve the current legislation. These amendments address some technical problems with the current aquaculture regime.

The Bill is currently being considered by the Primary Production Select Committee, and is expected to be passed later this year. The terms of reference and biographies of group members are listed below.

Aquaculture Technical Advisory Group terms of reference

The broad functions of the TAG are to:

- * generate proposals for reform of aquaculture legislation
- * review any advice or proposals Ministers may choose to provide them
- * report directly to Ministers through written recommendations and meetings as required.

The TAG is to provide recommendations in a written report to Ministers by 30 September on proposals for aquaculture reform.

TAG members will be available until 30 October 2009 to provide oral advice to Ministers on their report.

Hon Doug Kidd (chair of group)

Doug Kidd was a Member of Parliament from 1978 until 2002. He was appointed to cabinet in 1990 and held various portfolios, including Fisheries and Maori Affairs. He was Speaker of the House of Representatives from 1996 until 1999. He has been a member of the Waitangi Tribunal since 2004.

Dennis Bush-King

Dennis Bush-King is Environment and Planning Manager at Tasman District Council. Before this he was a Manager at the Ministry for the Environment and Project Manager of the Resource Management Law Reform that led to the Resource Management Act in 1991. He was a member of the Resource Management Review Phase I TAG.

Mike Burrell

Mike Burrell is Chief Executive of Aquaculture New Zealand, the industry body for the aquaculture sector. He was previously with consultants LECG Ltd, where he led the development of the aquaculture industry's sector strategy. He has advised industry, government, and international agencies on industry development, strategy, and public policy.

Kirsty Woods

Kirsty Woods is Manager of Fisheries Policy and Development for Te Ohu Kaimoana. She worked on aquaculture reform from 2001 and on the Maori commercial aquaculture settlement from 2005. Her current focus is on fisheries management. Previously she worked for the Ministry for the Environment and the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment.

Nici Gibbs

Nici Gibbs is Policy Manager of the New Zealand Seafood Industry Council Ltd. She has over 20 years' policy and resource management experience in central government, regional government and the private sector. She has participated in aquaculture legislation and reforms since 1999 and has experience in both planning and environmental policy.

Mark Farnsworth

Mark Farnsworth is Chair of the Northland Regional Council and a member of the Local Government New Zealand National Council. He has worked in both the public and private sectors and in a consulting capacity.

Keir Volkerling

Keir Volkerling is an iwi development/resource management consultant. He has extensive experience and knowledge in iwi fisheries and aquaculture issues, a particular understanding of aquaculture as an economic development opportunity for Maori, and the role of Maori in the exercise of kaitiakitanga. He has advised government, iwi and community organisations on a range of natural resource issues.

www.patagoniatimes.cl/index.php/20090727858/News/Salmon-News/CHILES...

The Patagonia Times - Pto. Montt and Valdivia News, CHILE'S GOVT CONFIRMS ANTIBIOTICS "ABUSE" IN SALMON INDUSTRY

The Patagonia Times - Patagonia News - CHILE'S GOVT CONFIRMS ANTIBIOTICS "ABUSE" IN SALMON INDUSTRY

Saturday, 1 August 2009 2:16 PM

CHILE'S GOVT CONFIRMS ANTIBIOTICS "ABUSE" IN SALMON INDUSTRY

Written by Patagonia Times Staff

Monday, 27 July 2009



Salmon producers use heavy doses of antibiotics, report reveals

A recently declassified government document confirms what critics of Chile's farmed salmon industry have suspected for years: that producers here use far more antibiotics than their counterparts in Norway.

Through Chile's new public information act, the international environmental NGO Oceana received a Ministry of the Economy report last week detailing that between 2007 and 2008, the Chilean farmed salmon industry used on average 355,000 kilograms of antibiotics per year. The 325,616 kilograms of antibiotics applied last year was almost 350 times the amount used in Norway, Chile's primary competitor in the farmed salmon market. In 2007, Chilean producers used even more antibiotics: 385,636 kilograms compared to just 600 kilograms in Norway, the document revealed.

The report also suggested that approximately one third of the drugs used in Chile are of the quinolone variety, a type of synthetic antibiotic whose use in food production is outlawed in the United States and other countries that buy Chilean salmon.

"In this report, the government confirms that the Chilean salmon industry abused the antibiotics irresponsibly," said Alex Muñoz, executive director of Oceana in Chile.

"Here the public's health is at stake because the abuse of these antibiotics in salmon aquaculture may reduce the effectiveness of their treatment on other diseases affecting humans," he added. "It's the duty of the state to protect the fundamental rights of the people and in particular, to not simply ensure the profitability of a business sector."

Chilean salmon producers have defended the use of antibiotics as a necessary tool in their fight against illnesses such as rickettsia, a bacteria that is transmitted to salmon via sea lice. Also known as caligus, sea lice – tiny parasitic crustaceans – are a common problem in Chile and other countries that farm salmon.

In an interview with Diario Financiero, Chile's economy minister, Hugo Lavados, argued that Chile and Norway cannot really be compared as they have very different production methods. He also pointed out that Chilean producers lay off the antibiotics for a period prior to harvesting the fish. The salmon, in other words, go to market drug-free, according to Lavados.

The economy minister's assurances aside, this latest revelation does little to help the struggling industry's already battered image. Top U.S. supermarket chains Safeway and Walmart have already backed off Chilean salmon. Others could follow suit, especially given the negative attention the industry has received over the past year by the influential New York Times, which has run several related stories.

The industry's current woes extend far beyond its tainted international image. Chilean salmon producers have been pummeled over the past two years by a lethal fish disease called Infectious Salmon Anemia, or ISA. First detected here in 2007, ISA has spread throughout Chile's salmon farming south, forcing the closure of numerous salmon farms and processing factories. The industry, as a result, has shed as many as 15,000 jobs by some estimates.

To avoid the contagion, salmon producers have been prematurely harvesting their fish, something that helps explain why industry earnings actually rose last year – to a record US\$2.4 billion.

In the past few months, however, a long-anticipated production drop has finally begun taking shape. Industry leader Marine Harvest, a Norwegian-owned company, suffered a huge decline in April, with shipments falling by a whopping 64 percent. Chilean-owned Cultivos Marinos Chiloé suffered as well. The company exported US\$7 million worth of salmon and trout in April, down 42 percent compared to the same month last year.

By Patagonia Times Staff

www.stuff.co.nz/nelson-mail/news/2681430/Sounds-sale-will-benefit-T...

The Nelson Mail: Get the latest local news from Nelson's daily newspaper

☰ Sounds sale will benefit Tasman Bay | Stuff.co.nz

Saturday, 1 August 2009 2:14 PM

Sounds sale will benefit Tasman Bay

The Nelson Mail

Last updated 13:00 28/07/2009

Nelson-based Sealord plans to develop more aquaculture in Tasman Bay with some of the proceeds from its \$23.4 million sale of marine farms in the Marlborough Sounds to seafood company Sanford.

Sealord is selling a package of marine farms to the Auckland-based Sanford, which includes about 240 hectares of water space and equipment for growing mussels and spat.

The deal is the largest single purchase of water space for marine farming in New Zealand and is expected to be settled within 10 days.

Sealord said the sale of its farms throughout the Pelorus, Kenepuru and Port Underwood areas of the Marlborough Sounds freed up capital for investment in other areas.

It would concentrate on developing its mussel-farm holdings in Tasman Bay and in the Coromandel.

Sealord chief executive Graham Stuart said Sealord was still optimistic about the mussel industry, but it was "running down" in Marlborough and building up its operations in Tasman Bay, which were closer to its Nelson processing plant, and in the Coromandel.

Mr Stuart could not be contacted today to elaborate on Sealord's plans for Tasman Bay.

Marine Farming Association president Rob Pooley said "without a doubt" it was the largest ever purchase of water space for marine farming.

Mr Pooley said Nelson people should "embrace and support" the development of aquaculture in Tasman Bay, as "quite clearly they (Sealord) will be targeting Nelson as a base".

"It heralds the beginning of a new era of aquaculture in New Zealand," he said. There was much to do yet to sort out the infrastructure for marine farming in Tasman Bay, but early indications from small staged development there by various companies "suggests they're on to a winner", he said.

"The early indications are quite encouraging."

Sanford operates a large mussel-processing factory in Havelock and said the marine farms it is buying will add to its existing 400 hectares of marine farms in the Marlborough Sounds.

Sanford managing director Eric Barratt said in the current environment the deal was reasonable for both companies.

The company hoped the new space would produce about 5000 tonnes of mussels, which would be processed with up to 12,000 tonnes from other farms around the top of the South Island in Havelock.

More jobs were unlikely, because an automated mussel-opening machine line had been installed at the Havelock factory.

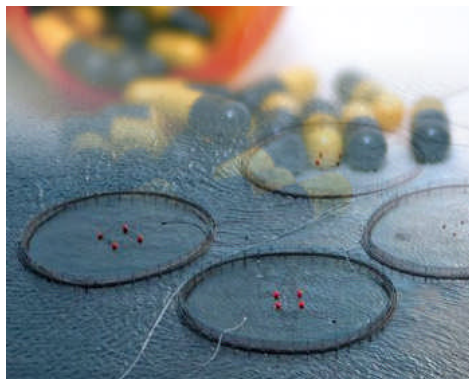
Throughput on the line was expected to almost double within three years.

"More mussels may be opened by the same number of people," Mr Barrett said.

Sealord and Sanford said the deal reflected a closer working relationship between them.

☰ <http://www.fis.com/fis/worldnews/worldnews.asp?l=e&country=&special=&monthyear=&day=&id=33216&ndb=1&df=0>

Saturday, 1 August 2009 2:10 PM



Norway uses a much lower amount of antibiotics in its farmed salmon production than Chile. (Photo: Stock File/ FIS)

Salmon farmers used more than 300 tonnes of antibiotics



CHILE

Monday, July 27, 2009, 08:40 (GMT + 9)

Oceana, an international marine conservation organisation, presented a report drafted by the Ministry of the Economy that indicates the national salmon farming industry used 325.6 tonnes of antibiotics over the past year, and 385.6 tonnes in 2007.

According to the official report, florfenicol (used in 56.7 per cent of the total, or 184 tonnes) and flumequine (in 9.9 per cent, or 32.2 tonnes) were the antimicrobials most used in 2008, among others.

Two years ago, florfenicol had been used in 37 per cent (143 tonnes) of the stock; and oxytetracycline in 23.1 per cent (89.3 tonnes), among other antimicrobials.

The Ministry report does not detail the names of the companies that used them because it claims not to have the necessary information.

For the vice-president of Oceana South America, Alex Munoz, the number clearly demonstrates "the bad practices of the salmon farming industry."

Although the total number of antibiotic use is within the abuse margins anticipated by the organisation, the amounts are "definitively" greater than those thought and "sufficiently scandalous to warrant that urgent measures be taken," Munoz asserted.

Norway, the world's leading salmon producer, used only 649 kilograms of antibiotics – 600 times fewer than used by Chile.

On the issue, the minister of the Economy, Hugo Lavados, indicated that the comparisons between the Chilean industry and Norwegian are not fair because they have different forms of production.

One of the goals of the new General Fisheries and Aquaculture Law (LGPA), now in debate in the Senate, "is to determine the highest production standards for the industry," indicated the official.

In addition, he clarified that antibiotic use is not a health risk, since "companies do not medicate fish in the period before commercialising their products, and do not reach the consumer," *Diario Financiero* reports.

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) reveals that the majority of antibiotics that belong to the quinolone family are banned for their negative effects on human health when used in excess.

Related articles:

- [Report on salmon antibiotics advocates reasonable use](#)
- [Plan to limit antibiotics use in salmon industry underway](#)

By Analia Murias

news.asiaone.com/News/AsiaOne+News/Malaysia/Story/A1Story20090727-1...

Canal blamed for 20,000 freshwater fish deaths

Saturday, 1 August 2009 2:05 PM

Canal blamed for 20,000 freshwater fish deaths

Mon, Jul 27,
2009
The New Straits
Times

ALOR STAR: Farmer Mat Rejab Said had been hoping to make RM10,000 (S\$4080) in duit raya from selling his red and black tilapia.

However, his hopes were dashed when he found about 20,000 of the freshwater fish belly-up in his aquaculture farm in Kampung Tanah Lot Pondok Haji Majid, Guar Chempedak, near here on Wednesday.

"It is all gone now. I don't know what happened.

"For the past few weeks, the fish had been healthy."

The 69-year-old, who operates the aquaculture farm jointly with a friend, suspects that the irrigation canal, which houses his 46 fish cages, had been contaminated.

"I don't know the source of the contamination or poisoning or if it started from upstream.

"One thing for sure is that the colour of the water in the canal is different."

An officer from the State Fisheries Department visited the canal to collect samples of the water and dead fish for analysis.

www.grist.org/article/2009-07-24-chilean-salmon-industry-plunges-pe...

Environmental news and green living tips from Grist, the most recognizable voice in environmental journalism.

Chilean salmon industry plunges into an abyss of pesticides and antibiotics | Grist

Sunday, 26 July 2009 8:50 AM

Chilean salmon industry plunges into an abyss of pesticides and antibiotics 3



Posted 3:48 PM on 24 Jul 2009
by **Tom Philpott**

Ninety percent of the salmon consumed in the United States comes from factory-style farms—most of it imported. Until very recently, our biggest supplier was Chile—whose salmon industry is in a state of collapse, ravaged by a virus called “infectious salmon anemia.”

Like U.S. factory meat farms, Chile’s salmon cages veritably runneth over with antibiotics. Earlier this year, the Pew Environmental Group obtained some damning FDA documents about the Chilean salmon industry. The documents revealed that:

Three Chilean salmon farming companies, including the two largest producers of farmed salmon, used a number of drugs not approved by the U.S. government. These chemicals include the antibiotics flumequine and oxolinic acid and the pesticide emamectin benzoate. The documents further show that the farmed salmon containing residues of unapproved chemicals were destined for the U.S. market.

These operations are located in Chile, but Norwegian agribusiness giants largely control the trade. “The three largest producers in Chile have been Marine Harvest/Norway; Cermaq/Norway; and Aquachile/Chile,” Pew’s Andrea Kavanagh informs me. “These three represent more than 50% market share.”

Now Pew has obtained more information on the nature of the Chilean salmon industry. Note how Norwegian players are using much more in the way of harsh chemicals in their Chilean operations than they are in their domestic ones. I’ll be covering the salmon story more in the weeks to come; for now, here’s an excerpt from an email I received from Pew today:

Oceana Chile, a partner organization in the Pure Salmon Campaign, recently obtained data from the Chilean Ministry of Economy confirming excessive use of antibiotics in Chilean farmed salmon. According to the Minister’s report, Chile used 385,635 kg of antibiotics in 2007 while Norway only used 649 kg. This means that Chile used almost 600 times more antibiotics than the larger Norwegian industry. Chile in 2008 used 325,616 kg of antibiotics.

According to the data received by Oceana, there have been documented uses of at least four antibiotics not included on the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s Approved Drugs list during the past two years. The Chilean records state that, in 2008 alone, the drugs Oxolinic Acid (25,325.26 kg), Amoxicillin (348.93 kg), Erythromycin (7,980.82 kg) and Flumequine (32,293.36 kg) were used to treat fish produced in Aquaculture facilities. Drugs that are not included on the U.S. FDA’s Approved Drugs list are not permitted to be imported to or sold in the U.S. market.

These staggering figures raise even more questions about the sustainability of the Chilean farmed salmon industry.

The non-therapeutic use of antibiotics in fish destined for food production raises concerns about possible antibiotic resistant bacterial infections in humans. Until the Chilean industry collapsed from disease outbreaks in 2008, Chile was the largest source of farmed salmon for American consumers.

Previously, evidence of banned chemicals in Chilean farmed salmon was limited to individual cases and assertions by scientists. The new data from the Chilean Ministry of Economy provide the first official industry-wide figures confirming extensive use of specific antibiotics, including quinolones, which are prohibited by U.S. law.



Down

www.bclocalnews.com/vancouver_island_central/nanaimonewsbulletin/ne...

Nanaimo News Bulletin - VIU prof to lead three-year project studyig sea lice

Saturday, 25 July 2009 5:08 PM

VIU prof to lead three-year project studyig sea lice



Duane Barker received a \$413,000 federal research grant from NSERC to study sea lice. He’s hiring VIU undergraduates like Danielle Lewis to help with the research.

Published: July 24, 2009 8:00 PM

0 Comments

A Vancouver Island University professor has received a three-year \$413,000 research grant to study one of the most controversial topics in B.C. – sea lice and their impact on salmon farming.

It’s the largest single, non-equipment grant ever awarded to a Vancouver Island University researcher, and great news for students.

“I’m really proud of the fact that over 80 percent of this grant will go towards student salaries,” said Duane Barker, an expert in fish health diseases and fish parasites at VIU’s Fisheries and Aquaculture department.

"During the next three years, we'll train at least 12 VIU undergraduates, four graduate students [VIU alumni] and one post-doctoral researcher. Three undergrads are already working in our lab this summer."

A key part of the project, funded by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, is training students and fish health technicians how to diagnose salmon health using various techniques including biochemical and genetic tests, plus, disease modeling, said Barker.

Barker's co-investigators on the project include Simon Jones, Kyle Garver and Stewart Johnson, all of the Pacific Biological Station in Nanaimo.

Sea lice are one of the most hotly debated topics concerning farmed salmon in B.C. The controversy concerns the exchange of sea lice between wild and farmed salmon and the possible implications for B.C.'s wild salmon stocks.

"Right now, recent research data indicates higher levels of sea lice are found on wild salmon caught in the open ocean, away from farms," said Barker. "A lot of people think it's the other way around."

Sea lice are naturally-occurring parasites that live on the skin of wild fish, and are passed on to farmed fish, Barker said. "One variable that has not been addressed is the direct or indirect role of sea lice contributing to disease development," he added. "What's not clear is whether sea lice pass on pathogens (viruses, bacteria) to fish. Few reports have isolated viral and bacterial pathogens from sea lice, but actual pathogen transmission has never been tested."

"The role sea lice as a vector (transmitter) remains undefined. In other words, when (seasonally) and where (geographically), could sea lice carry important pathogens to salmon? Such information is critical to the salmon farming industry in BC and elsewhere. The answers could lead to improved health management strategies for salmon farmers and fishery managers and better detection of pathogens in the environment. The research could also lead to a greater understanding of the ecological and immunological roles of sea lice in the interactions of disease between wild and farmed salmon."

The research will be conducted in two phases.

Initially, in a controlled setting, Barker's team will test the potential of sea lice to carry pathogens. If they are carriers, the researchers will describe and analyse patterns of when and where pathogen levels on sea lice are at their highest on farmed and wild salmon in the waters around Vancouver Island.

If the research shows sea lice are not pathogen carriers, they'll study the effect of sea lice feeding at the microscopic scale of the fish's skin and how it impacts the immune response at a genetic level.

"This research is topical, yet novel, in that it presents a unique opportunity to study the direct and indirect contribution to disease progression by a commercially important parasite of salmon."

VIU student researcher Danielle Lewis is excited about the opportunity to work with Barker and his prestigious team of researchers.

"This is my first experience working in a scientific research lab," said Lewis, who is about to start her fourth year in the Bachelor of Science (Biology) program at VIU. "My area of interest is microbiology so this is a perfect fit. I'll keep working in the lab once school starts, and the research will count as credit towards my senior Biology 491 research project."

Barker will supervise Lewis and two other undergrads, Amanda Stull and Marie Sandeman-Allen, as well as the master's students and the post-doctoral researcher who will be hired in September.

"This is the kind of experience that will basically lead our undergraduates straight into graduate school," Barker said.

VIU President Ralph Nilson said the institution is extremely proud of faculty researchers like Dr. Barker who attract major research grants.

"We are grateful to the funding agencies like NSERC who support our organization, faculty and students. This grant will enhance the quality of the learning experience for students through applied research and discovery, and allow VIU to contribute to the development of new knowledge for our region and global economy."

www.theprovince.com/Critics+seek+closure+five+salmon+farms/1707390/...

A series of open-net-cage salmon farms in key migratory routes in the northern part of Georgia Strait

critics seek closure of five B.C. salmon farms

Saturday, 25 July 2009 5:04 PM

Critics seek closure of five B.C. salmon farms

By John Colebourn, The Province June 18, 2009

A series of open-net-cage salmon farms in key migratory routes in the northern part of Georgia Strait need to be closed before fish stocks are killed off due to sea-lice infestation, say critics of the aquaculture practices.

The Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform warns that unless the five net-cage salmon farms operating off Quadra Island around Wild Salmon Narrows are shut down or moved, the entire stock of wild salmon is in peril.

"The Wild Salmon Narrows, along the east and north side of Quadra Island, is a significant migration route for juvenile wild salmon from local rivers, the Fraser River and, in all likelihood, Washington and Oregon runs as well," said Ruby Berry of the coastal alliance.

"It is imperative that the five open-net-cage farms be removed from this narrow migration channel as an emergency measure to protect these critical salmon runs from the unnecessary risk posed by the open-net-cage farms." Thousands of juvenile salmon could die from sea lice and other potentially fatal diseases, said Berry.

The Raincoast Conservation Foundation in partnership with the coastal alliance began sampling juvenile sockeye in the region east of Vancouver Island in 2007 as part of a larger study investigating sea-lice levels on juvenile pink and chum salmon near active farms.

Stan Proboszcz, a biologist with the Watershed Watch Salmon Society, said the problem needs to be addressed.

"Sea lice from salmon farms are causing serious problems for the wild salmon," he said.

But Mary Ellen Walling, executive director of the B.C. Salmon Farmers Association, said fish farms "have very low levels of sea lice." "We appreciate people are concerned about wild salmon, but we are well below the treatment threshold." Walling said sea lice on farmed salmon are monitored and managed in order to minimize possible transfer to wild populations.

Provincial authorities audit the farms' monitoring systems as a condition of holding a licence. Every farm is monitored monthly and, during the spring months when juvenile salmon may be travelling past the farms, fish are inspected at least once every two weeks, said Walling.

Walling also noted that, since the closest salmon farm is 110 kilometres away from the Fraser River's mouth, there is no opportunity for out-migrating Fraser River salmon fry to come into contact with farmed salmon during the early stages of their life cycle.

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www.theprovince.com/lice+levels+bring+hope+fish+farms/1818865/story...

A new sea-lice monitoring program in the waters off the north of Vancouver Island has offered a "glimmer

☰ [Sea-lice levels bring hope to fish farms](#)

Saturday, 25 July 2009 5:03 PM

Sea-lice levels bring hope to fish farms

Figures for wild salmon reveal drop in blight from previous years

By Stuart Hunter, The Province July 23, 2009 [Comments \(3\)](#)

- [Story](#)
- [Photos \(1 \)](#)



There have long been contamination concerns over farmed salmon.

Photograph by: Debra Brash file, Victoria Times Colonist

A new sea-lice monitoring program in the waters off the north of Vancouver Island has offered a "glimmer of hope" to the salmon fish-farming industry.

Early results from the program, which monitors juvenile pink and chum salmon migrating through the Broughton Archipelago, showed lower sea-lice levels than in previous years.

"It is a glimmer of hope — this seems to be the first year with a bit of breakthrough," Dr. Craig Orr, of Watershed Watch, said Wednesday.

"The results are very preliminary and most scientists will tell you the data needs to be [further] analyzed yet. But lice loads on wild fish are substantially reduced." Beginning three years ago, the landmark study is conducted jointly by Marine Harvest Canada — the largest Atlantic salmon farm company in B.C. — and the Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform, which seeks to ensure fish-farming standards are maintained.

The research collects sea-lice data from wild salmon and active farms in the Lower Knight and Tribune-Fife corridors.

According to the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, levels of sea lice on wild fish in March and April were relatively similar to 2008 and much lower than levels recorded from 2003 to 2007.

"These are very preliminary results but we are very pleased to see this," said Jennifer Lash, executive director of the Living Oceans Society, one of five member groups comprising CAAR. "This will take some of the pressure off the wild fish." Clare Backman, MHC's director of environmental relations, lauded the collaborative nature of the study in an industry rife with animosity in the past.

"These are good results — you see lice levels on wild fish are low," said Backman. "It's good news on every side. We are hoping to continue [lice levels remaining low] in the next few years." Salmon farming has long been a subject of concern due to fears over transferring lice and diseases to wild stocks, escape of non-native Atlantic salmon, pollution and possible human contamination.

There are about 130 fish-farm tenures in B.C., with about 80 currently in operation and producing nearly 73,000 tonnes last year.

Canada is the third-largest fish farming country in the world, behind Norway and Scotland.

Officials from Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the provincial Ministry of Agriculture and Lands didn't return calls from The Province.

Meanwhile, a new University of B.C. study indicates a reduction of as little as five per cent in fisheries' catches could result in up to 30 per cent of B.C.'s coastal ecosystems being protected from overfishing.

The study, called Project Seahorse, proposes modest reductions in critical areas, resulting in large unfished zones.

shunter@theprovince.com

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www.cairns.com.au/article/2009/07/22/53241_local-business-news.html

AUSTRALIAN aquaculture has proven to be strong survivor in the economic downturn following an eight per cent increase in its value and Far Northerns have joined the growth spurt.

☰ [Fish farmers tip the scales - Local Cairns Business | cairns.com.au](#)

Saturday, 25 July 2009 4:58 PM

Fish farmers tip the scales

Jennifer Eliot

Wednesday, July 22, 2009

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Gordonvale fish farmer Mark Fantin with eels he is exporting live to China.

AUSTRALIAN aquaculture has proven to be strong survivor in the economic downturn following an eight per cent increase in its value and Far Northerns have joined the growth spurt.

The Australian Bureau of Agriculture and Resource Economics has released a report on Australian fisheries and it showed the industry had increased in value by \$63 million in 2007-08.

The Queensland Aquaculture industry is valued at around \$85 million by Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries.

Sugarland Barramundi owner Mark Fantin has witnessed strong industry growth in his 18-year career and is optimistic about future growth.

Initially, the company specialised in barramundi but it has now entered the Hong Kong eel market with great success.

"We export live eels," Mr Fantin said.

"The market has a massive potential and at certain times of the year, such as Chinese New Year, we cannot keep up with demand."

Mr Fantin said the major obstacle facing the eel industry was that, at this stage, it was not possible to successfully breed them in captivity.

"Juveniles are caught in rivers from North Queensland to Brisbane and we grow them out," he said.

"Even the Chinese and Europeans, who have been doing it for a lot longer than us, haven't been able to breed them."

Agriculture Minister Tony Burke said aquaculture presented a great opportunity for Australian fisheries to be part of the solution to world food security.

Increases in aquaculture production contrast with an overall decline in production and value of wild caught fish, with Australia becoming a net importer of fisheries products in value terms.

"The fisheries sector faces a number of challenges - the appreciation of the Australian dollar, declining export volumes and falling prices for export species such as rock lobster and prawns all contributed to Australia becoming a net importer," Mr Burke said.

"Changing the way we manage our fish populations, , including a greater role for aquaculture, will help meet these new challenges."

http://www.naturalnews.com/026666_disease_farmed_fish_mad_cow.html

Farmed Fish Could Give Humans Mad Cow Disease, Farmed Fish Could Give Humans Mad Cow Disease

Farmed Fish Could Give Humans Mad Cow Disease

Saturday, 25 July 2009 4:45 PM

Farmed Fish Could Give Humans Mad Cow Disease

Tuesday, July 21, 2009 by: S. L. Baker, features writer

Key concepts: Disease, Farmed fish and Mad cow

(NaturalNews) There is probably no illness that has more terrifying symptoms, or a more ghastly outcome, than variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (vCJD) -- best known as mad cow disease. Abnormal proteins called prions found in brain tissue of cows suffering from bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) can cause vCJD in humans who eat meat from the animals. These mad cow disease-causing prions can literally result in people losing their minds because the infectious particles eat away at the brain, leaving tiny sponge-like holes. There is no treatment available and death always follows.

With government regulations notoriously lax when it comes to testing for BSE in the food supply, many people have given up eating beef in hopes of protecting themselves from exposure to mad cow disease. But an article just published in the *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease* suggests there may be another ticking time bomb source of vCJD -- farmed fish.

In a paper entitled *Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy and Aquaculture*, University of Kentucky neurologist Robert P. Friedland and colleagues point out that fish consumption is widely recommended because omega-3 fatty acids are known to reduce the risks of cardiovascular and Alzheimer's diseases. However, the scientists have doubts that the health benefits of farmed fish outweigh a potentially deadly danger. "We are concerned that consumption of farmed fish may provide a means of transmission of infectious prions from cows with bovine spongiform encephalopathy to humans, causing variant Creutzfeldt Jakob disease," they stated.

Dr. Friedland and his team point out that farmed fish are fed **byproducts rendered from cows** -- a totally unnatural source of food for fish. The risk of transmission of mad cow disease to humans who eat farmed fish would seem to be slim because there are often barriers between species that help prevent infections. But, according to the *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease* article, there are several reasons to be concerned about fish spreading mad cow to humans.

First, fish could be carriers of the disease from eating infected meat products, even though the fish themselves are not obviously infected or sick. In addition, it is possible that eating prion-infected cow parts could result in fish experiencing pathological changes that permit the prion infection to be transmitted between the two species. Based on these worrisome possibilities, the scientists are calling for government regulators to ban feeding cow meat or bone meal to fish until this common practice can be shown to be safe.

"We have not proven that it's possible for fish to transmit the disease to humans. Still, we believe that out of reasonable caution for public health, the practice of feeding rendered cows to fish should be prohibited. Fish do very well in the seas without eating cows," Friedland said in an interview with the *Kentucky Post* newspaper.

"The fact that no cases of Creutzfeldt Jakob disease have been linked to eating farmed fish does not assure that feeding rendered cow parts to fish is safe. The incubation period of these diseases may last for decades, which makes the association between feeding practices and infection difficult. Enhanced safeguards need to be put in place to protect the public," Friedland stated.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/200907/s2632862.htm>
Coverage of rural industries and issues.

📄 Aquaculture industry not surprised by boom - 22/07/2009

Saturday, 25 July 2009 4:43 PM

Aquaculture industry not surprised by boom

Wednesday, 22/07/2009

Queensland seafood farmers say growth in the sector was inevitable.

ABARE has reported the value of Australia's fishing industry declined by more than 20 per cent in the last decade, because of a drop in prices and increased regulation on the wild catch.

In contrast, the aquaculture sector boomed.

President of the Aquaculture Association of Queensland, Bruce Sambell, isn't surprised by the shift.

"The product's got to come from somewhere and wild catch is limited with all the management that's in there," he says.

"They're limited to what they're allowed to catch, where they're allowed to catch it, how often and what days even that they're allowed to fish.

"We can aquaculture 365 days a year."

www.portlincolntimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/aquaculture-boo...

THE State's aquaculture industry is booming with much of it farmed off Eyre Peninsula coastline. New figures reveal farmed fish is now generating more than half of South Australia's seafood product...

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Saturday, 25 July 2009 4:36 PM

Aquaculture booming

SOPHIE WANDEL

20/07/2009 11:30:00 PM

THE State's aquaculture industry is booming with much of it farmed off Eyre Peninsula coastline.

New figures reveal farmed fish is now generating more than half of South Australia's seafood production value, following a 25 per cent rise from the last financial year.

Almost 21,000 tonnes of seafood was farmed in 2007/08, up from around 19,000 the previous year, according to the Department for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries.

The industry is generating \$263 million annually at the farmgate, which is on top of \$71 million in processing and food service, plus \$322 million in flow-on effects.

It has been forecast the sector will continue to grow, with abalone and mussels predicted to be the strongest industries, followed by finfish and oysters.

Minister for Fisheries Paul Caica said a major positive was jobs created by the industry.

"More than 3000 South Australians are now employed by our aquaculture industry on farms and in associated industries ... even better, 66 per cent of those jobs are in regional areas," he said.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/200907/s2631991.htm>
Coverage of rural industries and issues.

Fishing earnings fall as aquaculture booms - 21/07/2009

Saturday, 25 July 2009 4:35 PM

Fishing earnings fall as aquaculture booms

Tuesday, 21/07/2009

The value of Australia's fishing industry has fallen more than 20 per cent in the last decade.

The Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics says it's mainly due to a \$600 million drop in the value of rock lobster, prawn, abalone and tuna.

Over the same period, there's been a boom in aquaculture production, with salmon overtaking tuna as Australia's most valuable finfish species.

But the Mayor of the West Coast of Tasmania, Darryl Gerrity, says the aquaculture boom isn't all good.

"A lot of the aquaculture people come in, work for 10 days, or for five, much like in the mining industry, whereas in the traditional fishing industry, the families actually lived in Strahan," he says.

"And now there's probably only five or six families fishing out of Strahan, where there used to be 10 or 15 families."

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Thursday, 16 July 2009 12:00 AM



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