



Union of
British Columbia
Indian Chiefs



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BC Government Must Support Final Report of Special Committee on Sustainable Aquaculture

(Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver, May 17, 2007) Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs stated today, "The UBCIC fully supports the immediate implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Sustainable Aquaculture, in particular we agree that First Nations must be fully consulted in all aspects of the decision making process of the aquaculture industry. It's time for the BC Government to live the commitment of the New Relationship at the First Nation community level."

The recommendations include:

- Permanent ban on salmon farms on the North Coast of British Columbia, north of Cape Caution.
- For existing open-net caged salmon farms on the South Coast of British Columbia a transition to closed containment within 5 years, with a biological barrier separating the farmed salmon from the marine environment
- Moratorium on any new salmon farms until transition of existing farms to closed containment is complete
- Fallowing the salmon farms on migratory routes during young wild salmon migration from the rivers to the sea
- Move away from industry self-policing and have government staff conduct random checks without any notice to salmon farm operators

Geoff Senichenko, Research Director of the Wilderness Committee stated, "We are witnessing the highly destructive impacts of fish farms on indigenous salmon species in the Broughton Archipelago. The damage due to fish farms has been clearly documented by the work of Alexandra Morton and Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council."

"The UBCIC Chiefs Council has consistently opposed fish farms and will continue to do so until such time as the destructive and deadly impacts to the indigenous salmon and shell-fish harvesting areas are fully addressed. The UBCIC is urging the BC Government to support the report" said Grand Chief Phillip.

"The Wilderness Committee does not support any type of salmon farming as it is unsustainable, even if using closed containment technologies. Salmon are carnivores and the world's oceans are being depleted to provide the protein necessary for salmon farm feed. Salmon farming should be phased out completely and instead we should invest into restoring wild salmon stocks and look at raising herbivore fish sustainably on land as has been done in Asia for thousands of years." said Geoff Senichenko. "The recommendations of the Special Committee on Sustainable Aquaculture, however, are a good first step to address the negative impacts of fish farms on wild salmon and the marine environment and need to be adopted by the BC government to move us forward."

The Union of BC Indian Chiefs and Western Canada Wilderness Committee shall continue collaborating and supporting their mutual efforts on the vital issue of fish farms.

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