

New federal government regulation proposes to kill wild fish to protect fish farms
This proposed regulation would impact all coastal provinces; Federal regulation of fresh water aquaculture ignored

(OTTAWA, ON, Oct 22, 2014) Proposed regulations for the aquaculture industry do not deliver on the responsibilities of Department of Fisheries and Oceans' (DFO) to protect wild fish, fish habitat and Canadian fishery waters from the negative impacts of aquaculture, according to Friends of the Earth Canada (FOE Canada), the Conservation Council of New Brunswick and independent biologist, Alexandra Morton. In their [joint submission](#), the groups take the unusual measure of providing re-drafted text for a regulation that protects wild fish and their habitat from aquaculture.

The proposed regulation would have re-assigned a DFO priority, the conservation and protection of the wild fishery to another agency, the President of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, by allowing the President to decide to kill wild fish and authorize deposit of deleterious substances outside aquaculture facilities.

“The Minister of Fisheries and Oceans must not abdicate her clear responsibility for the sustainability and on-going productivity of commercial, recreational and aboriginal fisheries,” says Beatrice Olivastri, CEO Friends of the Earth Canada. “It is her job to protect fish, fish habitat, Canadian fisheries waters and the public from deposit of deleterious substances. This regulation should be all about protecting the wild fish from the polluting activities of fish farming.”

FOE Canada, the Conservation Council of New Brunswick and Morton are concerned with the proposed regulation's lack of limits and accountability for the huge amount of fecal matter released at aquaculture facilities per day, per farm. These nutrients include nitrogen and phosphorus that trigger algae blooms and the increasingly noxious drugs required to remove sea lice which are also toxic to other crustaceans, such as lobster, Canada's biggest fishery.

“We want the regulation to ensure that owners and operators of an aquaculture facility using drugs and pesticides avoid harm to the environment and carefully document and report their use, effect and clean-up,” says Inka Milewski, Science Advisor at Conservation Council of New Brunswick. “Aquaculture owners and operators must be required to take all reasonable measures to minimize harm to wild fish. A typical salmon farm raising 500 metric tonne (mt) of fish will discharge some 110 mt of waste (this is 110,000 kg or about the weight of 100 Toyota Prius C cars). Our submission provides recommendations for improving accountability and enforcement.”

Morton says, “We are shocked that DFO would even consider this proposed regulation, setting up a mechanism to kill wild fish to protect farmed salmon. Canada is blatantly ignoring its own federal [Inquiry into the Decline of Sockeye Salmon in the Fraser River](#). The Cohen Commission's recommendations clearly state that DFO must step away from promoting salmon farming and act in accordance with its paramount regulatory objective to conserve wild fish. An industry that refuses to deal with its manure, needs to release chemicals that kill fish and has asked the government to kill wild fish does not belong in Canada's most valuable fishing grounds.”

A graphic representation of the waste production for an average salmon farm can be found [here](#).

For more information or to schedule interviews, please contact:

Beatrice Olivastri, CEO, Friends of the Earth Canada at beatrice@foecanada.org or 613 724-8690

Inka Milewski, Science Advisor at Conservation Council of New Brunswick at milewski@nbnet.nb.ca or 506 622-0314

Alexandra Morton, independent biologist, alexandramorton5@gmail.com or 250-974-7086

***Friends of the Earth** is the Canadian member of Friends of the Earth International, the world's largest grassroots environmental network campaigning on today's most urgent environmental and social issues. For almost four decades, Friends of the Earth Canada has contributed to the development, administration and enforcement of Canada's pollution laws. www.foecanada.org*

***Conservation Council of New Brunswick** is one of Canada's oldest environmental organizations founded by citizens working for environmental responsibility. For almost three decades, CCNB has been pursuing a new framework for sustainable aquaculture, one that respects the limits of nature, does not degrade the ecosystem and is in harmony with other economic, social and cultural activities that use the same natural resource. www.conservationcouncil.ca*

***Alexandra Morton** was a participant and witness at the Cohen Commission, was featured on 60 Minutes episode on salmon farming, and is awaiting federal court decision on whether the salmon farming industry can continue to transfer diseased fish into net pens in the marine environment. www.alexandramorton.ca*