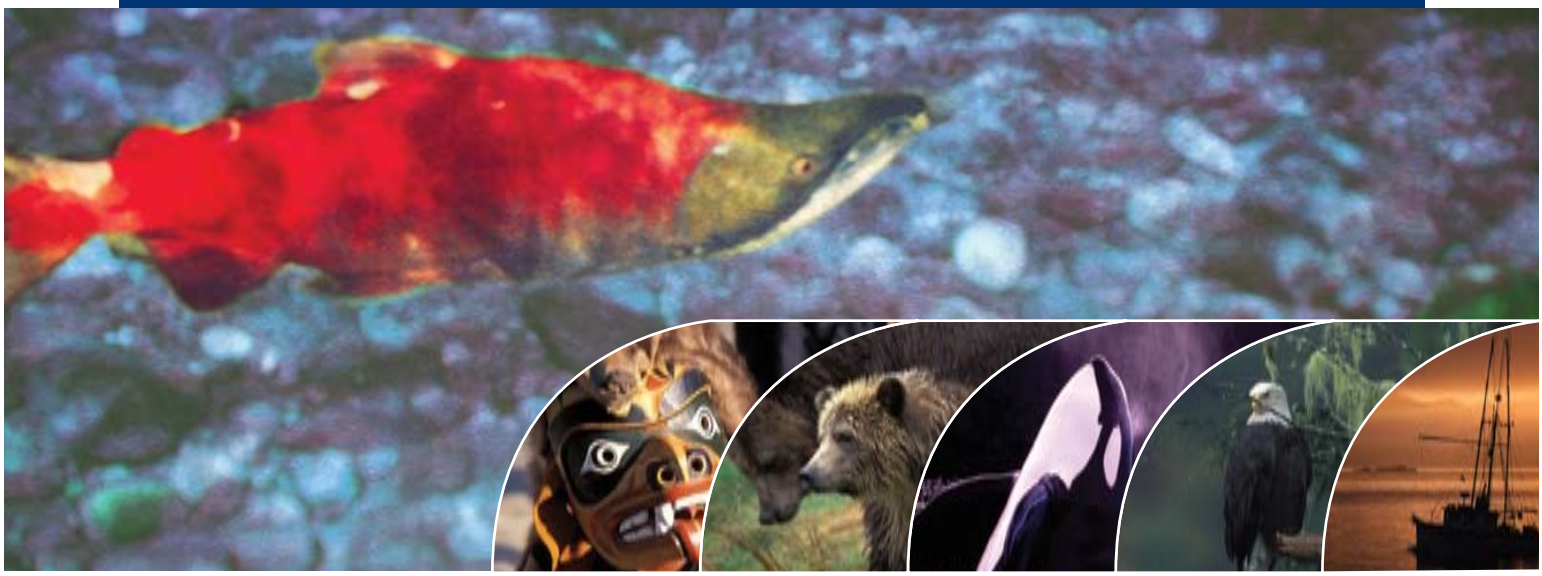

fishing for feed

global food security impacts

Salmon farmers often claim their industry is helping to "feed the world." In truth, the salmon farming industry accelerates the depletion of wild fish stocks, strains the food supply for people in poorer nations and removes massive quantities of small fish from the ocean food chain. Depending on the production region, two to eight kilograms of wild fish are needed to produce one kilogram of farmed salmon.[1]

This is because the mainstays of salmon feed are fishmeal and fish oil—concentrated products requiring much larger volumes of small ocean fish (such as anchovies, herring and sardines) than would be required if these were consumed directly. Most of the wild feed for BC farmed salmon is taken from the southern hemisphere, diverting local protein to raise a luxury product for northern consumers.

There are other problems with raising carnivorous marine species like farmed salmon. The economic incentive to speed the growth of farmed species has led to the use of an increasingly high-energy diet, which means farmed salmon have a higher fat content than their wild counterparts.

fishing for feed

global food security impacts

This makes them more vulnerable to contamination by fat-soluble pollutants (i.e., PCBs) that accumulate up the food chain.[2] And, since feed ingredients are sourced from fisheries all over the world, "local" farmed salmon can contain contaminants from distant seas.

Attempts to shift salmon feed away from marine sources because of rising costs and reduced availability has introduced a new set of concerns. In Canada, farmed salmon can be given feed that includes byproducts from poultry processing such as feathers, necks and intestines as well as genetically modified soy and canola.[3] Long-term testing on the human and environmental health impacts of eating products containing genetically modified organisms has not been conducted in Canada.

Whether you're making purchasing decisions for your retail store, your restaurant or your family, don't buy farmed salmon until the industry cleans up their act. The salmon farming industry needs to drastically reform their feed and rearing practices before their product can be truly healthy and sustainable.

"With global [fish] catches declining since the late 1980s, continuation of present trends will lead to supply shortfall, for which aquaculture cannot be expected to compensate, and may well exacerbate." [3]

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[1]Terram Foundation. *Salmon Tipo Pirana: tasa de conversion de la salmoncultura chilena*. http://www.terram.cl/docs/APP_34.pdf

[2]Easton, M.D.L., D. Luszniak and E. Von der Geest. (2002). Preliminary examination of contaminant loadings in farmed salmon, wild salmon and commercial salmon feed. *Chemosphere*. 46:1053-1074.

[3]Tacon, A.G.J. (2005). *State of information on salmon aquaculture feed and the environment*. Prepared for the Salmon Aquaculture Dialogue, World Wildlife Fund.