

Urgent Action Required to Identify and Contain Spread of Infectious Salmon Anemia

Vancouver, B.C. - November 10, 2011

Wild salmon advocates are demanding the Governments of Canada and British Columbia take urgent action to discover the extent of the presence of Infectious Salmon Anemia virus (ISAv) in wild salmon, herring and trout in BC waters. The response given at a press conference held by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, BC and Canada, Monday November 8 was unsatisfactory in that the officials continue to send a message that “inconclusive” tests on wild salmon samples must be interpreted as “negative.” Officials also failed to confirm that they are sending workers out into the rivers and streams to collect more samples.

The following steps must be taken immediately by DFO (Canada) and British Columbia:

- 1) Test all Atlantic salmon farms for ISAv.
- 2) Test all pacific salmon hatcheries; the upcoming brood stock should be sampled at egg-take.
- 3) Test wild salmon, herring and other fish species for ISAv.
- 4) Applying the precautionary principle to the ISA virus – the most vulnerable part of the salmon farming industry, ban all imports of Atlantic salmon eggs.

Proper investigations into the prevalence of disease in these farms - which cannot be quarantined in any meaningful way from spreading infection to migrating wild fish stocks – combined with remedial actions based on the aquaculture evidence provided at the Cohen Commission of Inquiry into the Decline of Fraser Sockeye, must take place immediately.

This statement has been endorsed by the following salmon advocacy groups:

Salmon Talks Lillooet
Wild Salmon Circle
Salmon Are Sacred
Living Oceans
Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform
Georgia Strait Alliance/CAAR
David Suzuki Foundation/CAAR
T. Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation/CAAR
Irvin Figg, President, United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union
CAW - the Canadian Auto Workers
Wild Salmon First
Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture

During the week of December 12, a global day of action against salmon farming will take place with events in Norway, Scotland, Ireland, Chile, United States and Canada. Throughout British Columbia, wild salmon advocates will deliver statements to their local DFO representatives, as well as handing out baseline information on the Infectious Salmon Anemia virus.

The Cohen Commission has extended his formal hearings to hear evidence on the recent discovery of ISA virus in wild salmon – with a 2-day hearing scheduled for mid-December.

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