

Marine Harvest Canada Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform November 2006



CAAR/MHC Dialogue

The Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform (CAAR) is a coalition of ENGOs and First Nations concerned about salmon aquaculture. Members include:

- The David Suzuki Foundation,
- Friends of Clayoquot Sound,
- Georgia Strait Alliance,
- Living Oceans Society,
- Raincoast Conservation Society,
- Raincoast Research,
- T. Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation,
- Watershed Watch Salmon Society,
- Musgamagw Tsawataineuk Tribal Council.



CAAR/MHC Dialogue

Marine Harvest Canada Inc. (MHC) has more than 250 full time BC employees. Operations extend from Duncan to Klemtu on the central coast. The majority of Marine Harvest Canada Inc. facilities are located in five operational zones — Campbell River, Kyuquot, Quatsino, Broughton, and Klemtu.



Why a Dialogue?

- Continuing conflict was not a solution.
- Piling sandbags wore us out.
- New thinking was needed.



Background

- June 2004—MHC and CAAR begin to explore mutual interest in a dialogue to improve public discourse on salmon aquaculture in British Columbia.
- Initial discussions evolved into structured dialogue supported by both parties.



Background, cont.

Elements discussed included:

- Scope of issues to consider
- Priorities
- Principles
- Research priorities
- Precautionary measures



Background, cont.

- December 2005—Agreement reached on key elements of a *Framework for Dialogue*.
- Province supports the initiative.



Framework for Dialogue

Purpose:

- Support interest-based results that address CAAR, MHC interests
- Increase knowledge of environmental, social, and economic factors
- Reduce conflict
- Change practices based on best available information



Framework, cont.

- The Framework does not fulfill duties of accommodation and consultation owed to First Nations nor is it intended to create legal rights or obligations.



Framework—key elements

MHC and CAAR agree:

- Ecological, cultural, economic, and social value of wild salmon is central to the well-being of many BC communities.
- Salmon farming contributes to the economy of coastal communities, as do commercial, aboriginal and recreational fisheries, tourism, and recreation.
- Environmental impacts associated with salmon farming need to be reduced, mitigated, or eliminated.
- CAAR and MHC have both invested in research, but more research is required.



Key elements, cont.

Guiding Principles:

- Interest-based dialogue
- Respectful dialogue
- Access to information
- Value of collaborative research
- Willingness to change



Key elements, cont

Research Priorities:

- Interaction between wild salmon, farmed salmon, sea lice.
- Feasibility of commercial-scale closed containment.
- Wild salmon migration routes.



Key elements, cont

- Cooperative sea lice monitoring in spring, 2006.
- MHC proposes restructuring its operations in the Broughton to create “migration corridors” while maintaining continuity of operations.



Challenges

- Hard work—meetings, prep, calls
- New thinking, new skills
- Government role
- Managing expectations—internal and external
- Building support for this new approach
- Ongoing environmental concerns



Benefits, so far

- Improved debate dynamic
- Increasing understanding of each others' perspectives
- Improved communications
- Better place for problem solving
- Strong value proposition



2007 Research specifics

- Five sea lice research ToR agreed to
- Critical literature review commissioned
- Closed containment ToR agreed to



What's next?

- Dialogue and communication ongoing
- Research support
- Planning for 2007-2008
- Expanded partnerships?



We Believe

- Conflict resolution is key to securing sustainable salmon farming in BC.
- Collaboration between First Nations, ENGOs, business, Province, and federal government is required for success.
- Ecological, social, cultural, and economic factors need to be addressed concurrently.

