



Wild Salmon Defenders Alliance

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Office of Premier John Horgan
PO BOX 9041 STN PROV GOVT
VICTORIA, BC V8W 9E1

Subject: Removal of Open Net Pen Atlantic Salmon Farms from Broughton Archipelago

Dear Premier John Horgan:

January 15, 2018

The Wild Salmon Defenders Alliance (WSDA) is part of a united front that includes concerned BC citizens, scientists, artists, environmental groups, Indigenous governments and other organizations dedicated to the protection of wild salmon as food security, as an essential climate regulator, as a keystone species that supports biodiversity, and a valuable contributor to the cultural, spiritual, physical, and economic wellbeing of all British Columbians. We acknowledge and support the constitutional obligation of governments to seek the consent of Indigenous titleholders on any and all industrial activity that may bring harm to wild salmon and its habitat in their respective unceded territories. We expect you to comply with the United Nations Declarations on the Rights of Indigenous people (UNDRIP), including Article 32.2 which clearly applies to the exploitation of ocean habitat for industrial salmon farming when it says: "States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the Indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent to the approval of any projects, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources."

As you are aware, the Namgis, Musgamagw and Mamalilikala people have never given their consent to have fish farms in their territory over the past 31 years. These Indigenous people bear witness to the cumulative damage open net pen fish farm practices have caused to their wild fish and its marine habitat. We acknowledge and thank you for meeting with them last year to listen to their grave concerns. Since then, issues of conflict of interest in provincial labs and the release of blood water being pumped into the Pacific Ocean have surfaced, and we understand that your government will soon report on the investigations into these serious matters. We are hoping that you will release these reports before your expected follow-up meeting with those Indigenous Nations involved with the fish farm occupation at the end of this month.

Although studies and investigations are important and needed, the application of the precautionary principle calls for an immediate removal of all farms in the migration routes of wild salmon, and a moratorium for renewals of tenures for Marine Harvest and Cermaq by your government, until it is proven that the negative impacts of these farms on wild salmon can be prevented. It is essential to have such precautionary action from your government free from biased science that would be blatantly in favor of aquaculture interests and at the expense of wild fish and its habitat. Wild salmon stocks are fading away with alarming rapidity and are now on the endangered species list. It is imperative to protect them from the diseases, parasites and pollution of open net pen aquaculture practices.

British Columbians are watching Marine Harvest and Cermaq act like rogue corporations by choosing to restock their fish farms **despite** Minister Lana Popham's directive not to do so, as she warned them there is no guarantee their tenures will be renewed when they come up in June 2018. There is a better and safer way

forward which is a transition from ocean aquaculture to land-based aquaculture. We trust that your government will support, encourage and support this way forward as led by the 'Namgis Kuterra fish farm operation.

We applaud your government's commitment to true, lasting reconciliation with First Nations of British Columbia by fully adopting and implementing UNDRIP and Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. By the proper application of the precautionary principle as outlined above, and by honouring the eviction notice served to Marine Harvest and Cermaq by Indigenous governments in the Broughton Archipelago, your government has a real opportunity to live up to your commitments to UNDRIP and make meaningful progress on the road to reconciliation with Indigenous people.

We look forward to your response to this letter, as well as the results of your government's investigations, and the outcome of your follow-up meeting with the representatives of the 'Namgis, Musgamagw and Mamalilikala Nations.

Sincerely yours,

Eddie Gardner
President, Wild Salmon Defenders Alliance

Cc The Honourable Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture
 The Honourable George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change
 The Honourable Scott Fraser, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation
 The Honourable Lisa Beare, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture
 The Honourable Claire Trevena, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure
 Andrew Weaver, MLA Oak Bay-Gordon Head & Leader of the BC Green Party
 Chief Willie Moon, Musgamagw Dzawada'enuxw Tribal Council
 Chief Don Svanvik, 'Namgis First Nation
 Chief Bob Chamberlin, Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis First Nation
 Chief Bob Coombes, Skwah First Nation
 Chief Robert Gladstone, Skway First Nation
 Chief Susan Miller, Katzie First Nation
 Chief Marilyn Gabriel, Kwantlen First Nation
 Chief Michelle Lee Edwards, Sek'wel'was First Nation
 Chief Judy Wilson, Neskonlith Indian Band
 Chief Dalton Silver, Sumas First Nation
 Chief Alice McKay, Matsqui First Nation
 Hereditary Chief George Quocksister Jr., Laichwiltach Nation
 Chief Ernest Alfred, 'Namgis Nation
 Fin Donnelly, NDP MP for Port Moody-Coquitlam
 Carla Voyageur