



Kwicksutaineuk/Ah-Kwa-Mish First Nations

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Observations on closed containment fish farm in Norway

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There is a closed containment Atlantic salmon fish farm operating in Norway, just a little east of Bergen. And it is little surprise the developer/operator has received little if any support from the major fish Farm Companies whom call Norway home.

“It is difficult to put to words how I felt standing on an operating closed containment fish farm, watching Atlantic salmon swimming inside,” says Chief Bob Chamberlin, Kwicksutaineuk Ah-kwa-mish First Nation. “It was an amazing circumstance for me to speak with the owner of Preline who has developed the closed containment system, and both of us needing something to give hope for our individual yet intertwined dreams” says Chief Chamberlin.

This pilot project appears simple in design and has a low need for power, something which contradicts what the companies and governments alike, espouse when asked about closed containment as a means to save the dwindling wild salmon stocks of BC. “I urge the Gordon Campbell Government to move beyond words with the New Relationship and Aquaculture development and bring this emerging technology to British Columbia.”

This little discovery comes on the heels of another trip to Norway sponsored by Pure Salmon Campaign to attend the shareholder AGM’s of Marine Harvest and Cermaq, two companies with major operations in British Columbia. This year’s Canadian delegation included Chief Bob Chamberlin, Kwicksutaineuk Ah-kwa-mish First Nation, Chief Bobby Joseph, Musgamagw-Tsawataineuk Tribal Council, Shannon Gillies, Wilderness Tourism Operators and Alexandra Morton.

There were a good number of meetings with Sami Parliament, Norwegian Government, Company representatives, investors, environmental groups and concerned citizens of Norway.

Alexandra Morton met with leading government scientists to learn that in Norway there is a holding of breath going on, leading up to this summers sea lice season in the fjords. Sea lice resistance to chemical treatments are now at a critical stage with little if anything that looks like a plan B from government and companies alike, should this be the year the resistance is complete.

Chief Chamberlin asked an embarrassed Board of Directors why their companies are not acting in accordance with the Norwegian Governments support for the UN Declaration of Indigenous Peoples Rights. It appeared that very few knew anything about this support.

To this end Chief Chamberlin presented the Musgamagw-Tsawataineuk Tribal Councils Coordinated Area Management Plan, which includes an annual fallow plan to have farms empty during out migration times in the Broughtan Archipelago, as a means to act upon a number of components in the UN Declaration, ones pertaining to industry activity, environment and safeguarding of Indigenous peoples traditional food sources.

“The saddest part is that Canada doesn’t support this UN Declaration. And I need to travel to a foreign country to seek accommodation of our First Nations Titles and Rights, when the New Relationship is supposed to do these very things” concludes Chief Chamberlin.

The UN Declartaion has received support from BC First Nation groups. BC First Nation organizations, including BCAFN, FN Summit and UBCIC, provided letters of support calling on the fish farm companies to act according to Norway’s support on the UN Declaration of Indigenous Peoples Rights.

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For further information, and to schedule media interviews, please contact:
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