LIVING OCEANS

Healthy Oceans.
Healthy Communities.

BRIEFING NOTE:
Food Security

Salmon Aquaculture and the question of Food Security

Care must be taken in understanding the role of aquaculture in food security. Considering aquaculture generally—everything from seaweed to mussels, clams, oysters, shrimp and some finfish--, there is broad agreement that it plays an important role in future food security for the planet. But this is not true of salmon aquaculture, because salmon need fish to eat.

Here are five reasons why salmon aquaculture actually reduces food security.

1. It takes 2.4 kilos of wild fish to make 1 kilo of farmed salmon, according to the largest feed manufacturer in the world, Skretting.[i]

2. This calculation does not factor in the premature deaths of farmed salmon, which represent a substantial proportion of the number actually being fed. Mortality rates are not published by DFO, but globally they are reported in the range of 10-30%. Newfoundland's farms have experienced losses in excess of 50%.[ii]

3. The fish that go into salmon farm feed would otherwise be available to artisanal fisheries that support food security in a number of countries. Increasingly, West Africa and Peru are fishing down their biomass of so-called 'forage fish' to feed the salmon farm industry, at the expense of the local population's food security.

4. Recently published science indicates that, in addition to the net loss of protein represented by salmon farming, the nutrients in the forage fish are not efficiently passed along into the farmed salmon. Six of 9 nutrients measured were actually at lower levels in the farmed salmon than in the forage fish.[1] In other words, the world would eat more, and eat better, by eating the forage fish.[iii]

5. In the context of BC fisheries and salmon farms, it is clear that the farms kill wild salmon. Wild salmon have supported food security in First Nations communities for millennia and represent an important food and economic resource for other coastal communities as well.

And it's mostly grown for export, anyway!

In any given year, 70-90% percent of the farmed salmon produced in British Columbia is exported to the US, China, Japan, Taiwan and South Korea[iv]. About 4-5000 MT is sold in Canada. There is no shortage of wild salmon available for sale in Canada, from both Canadian and US fisheries. In other words, **the food security of no-one in Canada is compromised for want of farmed salmon.**

This year, MOWI Canada East began exporting Canadian-raised salmon to Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, with plans to expand into China shortly.

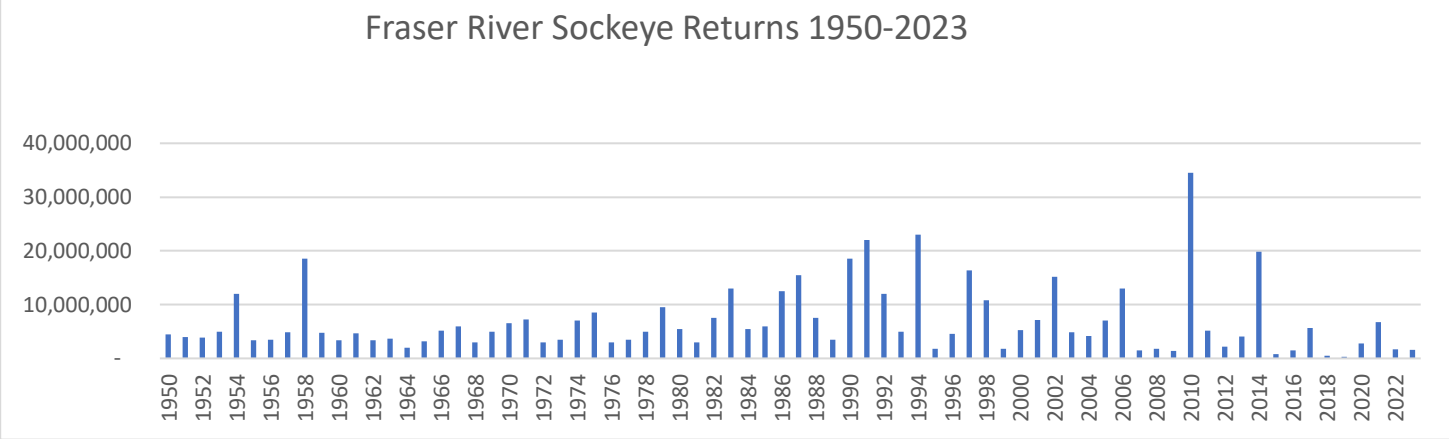
While this was going on, the industry's PR firm Weber, Shandwick, unleashed this ad campaign to decry the 'missing' Canadian salmon meals. It blamed the fictitious 'shortage' on the closure of BC salmon farms and urged the federal government to re-open the farms so that Canadian families could be fed.

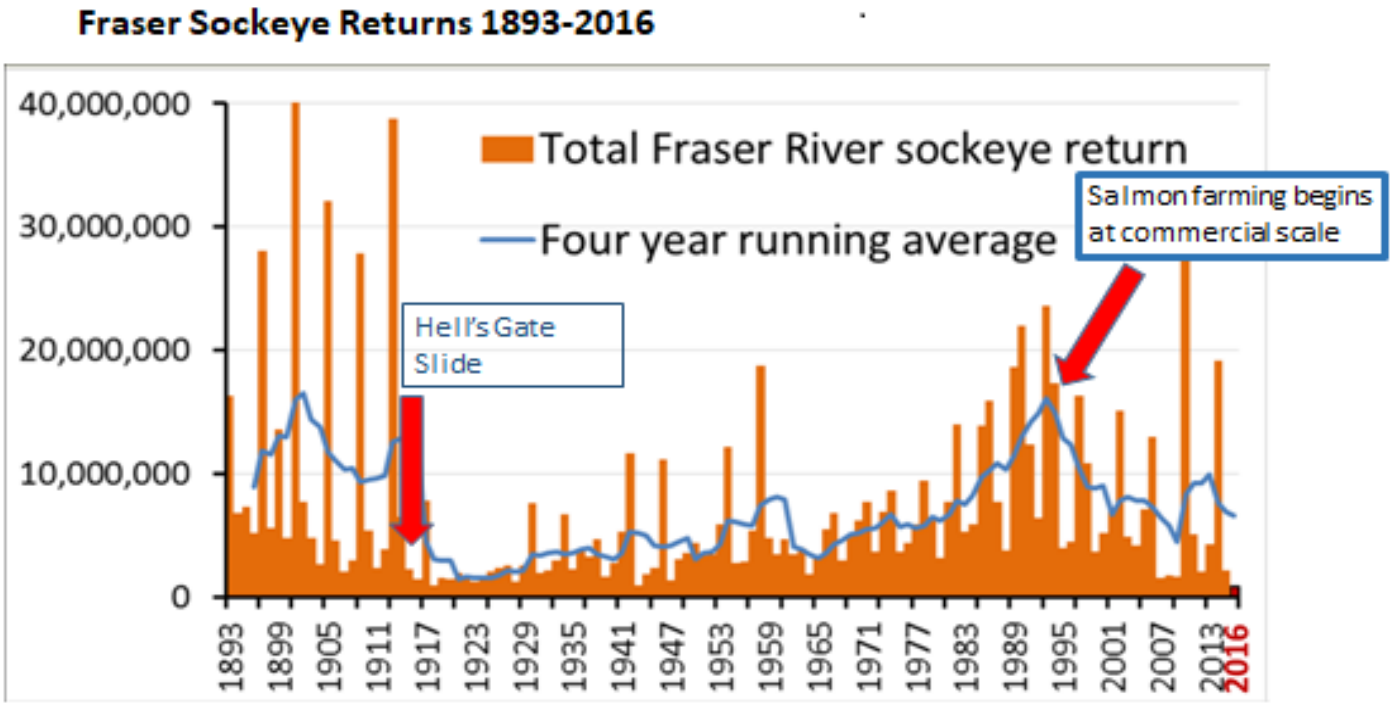
Weber, Shandwick has among its clients BIG TOBACCO, BIG OIL, BIG PHARMA, US AUTOMAKERS, NESTLÉ[v] and a host of other interests that we know are unlikely to let the truth get in the way of a good marketing story…like Canadians are somehow missing out on salmon meals.

True Food Security comes from Nature

When people can access affordable, nutritious and culturally appropriate food, they are described as 'food secure'. Both the First Nations of BC and those who came after have relied on the province's abundant salmon runs to provide that food security.

Today, wild salmon are depleted but they are incredibly resilient. For example, since salmon farm closures began in 2019 as a result of the Broughton Agreement, Fraser River sockeye have shown the potential for rebuilding even in the face of the Big Bar landslide that prevented access to spawning habitat for so many fish. Specific populations within the Fraser continue to hover on the brink of extinction, putting genetic diversity and future resilience at stake; but even they have the potential to recover and provide food security once again—if we stop allowing salmon farms to kill them.





WHOIS search results

The WHOIS data is displayed "as-is" from the corresponding Registry and/or 3rd party source. We do not have control over the data being displayed.

Domain Name: lovesalmon.ca
Registry Domain ID: 105682725-CIRA
Registrar WHOIS Server: whois.ca.fury.ca
Registrar URL: ca.godaddy.com
Updated Date: 2022-04-09T20:29:59Z
Creation Date: 2022-02-08T20:25:28Z
Registry Expiry Date: 2027-02-08T20:25:28Z
Registrar: Go Daddy Domains Canada, Inc
Registrar IANA ID: not applicable
Registrar Abuse Contact Email: abuse@godaddy.com
Registrar Abuse Contact Phone: +1.4806242505
Domain Status: clientDeleteProhibited https://icann.org/epp#clientDeleteProhibited
Domain Status: clientTransferProhibited https://icann.org/epp#clientTransferProhibited
Domain Status: clientUpdateProhibited https://icann.org/epp#clientUpdateProhibited
Registry Registrant ID: 105682723-CIRA
Registrant Name: Adam Bornstein
Registrant Organization: Weber Shandwick

Endnotes:

i. Cited from Page 224, "The New Fish" by Saetre and Ostli, Patagonia, 2023

ii https://www.saltwire.com/nova-scotia/business/death-of-26-million-salmon-in-newfoundland-reignites-debate-over-fish-farming-376777/; and Singh, G.G., Sajid, Z. & Mather, C. Quantitative analysis of mass mortality events in salmon aquaculture shows increasing scale of fish loss events around the world. *Sci Rep* **14**, 3763 (2024). https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-024-54033-9

iii. Willer, D.F., Newton, R., Malcorps, W. *et al.* Wild fish consumption can balance nutrient retention in farmed fish. *Nat Food* **5**, 221–229 (2024). https://doi.org/10.1038/s43016-024-00932-z

iv. https://www.fao.org/fishery/en/countrysector/ca/en?lang=en

v. https://tobaccotactics.org/article/weber-shandwick/#:~:text=Weber%20Shandwick's%20major%20clients%3A,-ALDI&text=Anheuser%2DBusch%20InBev,General%20Motors