

## **Atlantic Coalition for Aquaculture Reform Basis of Unity**

### **Preamble:**

Open net pen aquaculture in Atlantic Canada and the north-east U.S. poses risks to the marine environment on which coastal communities depend. Applications for new sites, expansion of existing leases for much larger farm sites, attempts to control disease outbreaks with new, often more toxic, chemicals and a lack of transparency and public accountability regarding regulatory decision-making have created discord and conflict in local communities. To address these and other concerns, the **Atlantic Coalition for Aquaculture Reform** has formed to give a stronger, unified voice to concerns about the environmental and social impacts of net pen salmon farms.

The coalition is open to groups in Atlantic Canada and Maine. The coalition uses an internal email listserve for communications as well as holding conference calls and meetings as needed. All advocacy and public awareness activities carried out by the coalition are developed collaboratively by coalition members. Fundy Baykeeper/CCNB and Ecology Action Centre are currently serving as co-coordinators for the coalition.

### **Basis of Unity:**

**The Atlantic Coalition for Aquaculture Reform**, whose members include concerned citizens, fishermen, and conservation groups, understands sustainable aquaculture to be aquaculture that meets the following conditions:

1. It does not degrade the ecosystem in which it is located, or ecosystems on which it is dependent;
2. It is in harmony with economic, social and cultural activities that use the same natural resources;
3. Access to information and participation in decision-making is fair and equitable;
4. All costs are reflected in the cost of production, ensuring that costs are not externalized to the environment, other sectors, or individuals;
5. It does not diminish the ability of future generations to use the same natural resources.

Salmon aquaculture as it is practiced in Atlantic Canada and the Northeast U.S. fails to meet most of these conditions.

**The Atlantic Coalition for Aquaculture Reform** holds that open netpen aquaculture, including freshwater hatcheries, pose risks to marine and freshwater environments through nutrient pollution, habitat alteration and degradation, and chemical pollution through the use of pharmaceutical and biocidal chemicals. Open netpen farms can pose risks to a wide range of native species through disease and parasite transmission, through alteration of migratory, foraging and reproductive behaviours, and through escapements and genetic pollution (crossbreeding with native wild species).

**The Atlantic Coalition for Aquaculture Reform** further holds that:

- The status quo for managing aquaculture activity is not acceptable,
- Government agencies responsible for managing the aquaculture industry have failed to protect the marine environment and surrounding communities from the negative impacts of aquaculture due to the conflict of interest that is inherent when regulatory agencies are responsible for both conservation and development;
- The aquaculture industry is unlikely to address community and broader management concerns in meaningful ways given its economic interest in the maintenance of the status quo.

The Atlantic Coalition for Aquaculture Reform resolves to work together to address our common concerns about the impacts of aquaculture on our marine environment and coastal communities. We will support each other, share information, and speak with a united voice in defence of our communities and our shared waters.