

## **Residents of the Eastern Shore are holding an open information and strategy session**

in the Sheet Harbour Lions Center, Friday 17 February at 6 pm, to discuss community responses to plans by Scottish company, Loch Duart, and its Nova Scotia subsidiary, Snow Island Salmon, to establish three open pen finfish farms on the shore.

Last week, when representatives from Loch Duart and Snow Island Salmon presented their plans to the community, a packed hall forcefully made their "No" message clear to companies and government bureaucrats and politicians.

Armed with scientific information and questions, interveners from the lobster fishery, the Nova Scotia Salmon Association, and the Ecology Action Centre made it clear that they considered the implantation of finfish aquaculture on these shores to be a threat to their sustainable fisheries.

Community members argue that open pen finfish aquaculture is a threat to existing sustainable enterprises such as the lobster fishery. It will undo significant investments made in restoring wild salmon habitats along the shore. Fish farms on the Eastern Shore will also harm tourism, real estate, and the quality of life of current residents.

Chair of Friday's meeting, Marike Finlay reports, "Sentiment is running very high—I'd say more than 90% of the residents here are against the finfish farms. We don't feel that our concerns are being taken into account. Small businesses and sustainable fisheries are being sacrificed to an experiment with salmon farming that never has gone right anywhere else."

Dr. Elisabeth Bigras, another resident, adds, "Scientific research has convincingly established that open pen finfish farming destroys naturally occurring fish stocks and contaminates the waters with both chemicals and huge amounts of fecal matter. There is a reason why residents of British Columbia, Scotland, California, Latin America, and other parts of Nova Scotia are fighting this type of inadequately regulated industrial farming on their coasts."

Raymond Plourde of the Ecology Action Center assents: "Throughout the North Atlantic, wherever open-net salmon farms are located, the nearby wild salmon rivers die. That's a fact and it's completely unacceptable."

Representatives from other communities in Nova Scotia with open pen finfish farms will be at the meeting to discuss their experiences. The Ecology Action Center will also present some scientific data. Community members will discuss this information and develop strategies to resist the implantation of finfish aquaculture on their shores.

This week, more than 2000 people have signed an online petition against finfish aquaculture here. Community members are conducting a letter writing campaign, and have established a facebook page, Eastern Shore Residents Against Open Salmon Farming, which has more than 800 members.

Meeting will be at the **Sheet Harbour Lions Community Centre**  
183 Pool Road Sheet Harbour  
Friday 17 February 2012, 6-10 pm

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