

(including aquaculture) and agriculture are combined as a "food" ministry. In essence, aquaculture can be said to be both a farming-based activity and an extension of the fishing industry, at least for the provision of broodstock and in the use of a common growth medium (i.e. the aquatic environment) which also happens to be a common property resource. As one moves through production into the transformation and final marketing stages, the distinction becomes even less clear as both industries supply fisheries products to the consumer.

Accordingly, consistent regulatory treatment of both fish production systems, natural or cultured, is necessary if optimum benefits are to be derived from them. A further recognition that some specific needs of the aquaculture industry may be closer to agriculture than to the commercial fisheries is also necessary. This will require an adaptation of some of the activities and programs of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in the areas of seed stock supplies, R&D, extension services, product inspection, fish health and general support of aquaculture through fisheries development programs. It may also mean involving the Department of Agriculture in the delivery of programs to the aquaculture industry or expanding the activities of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans into totally new areas such as crop insurance.

4. Interactions and/or Conflicts With Other User Groups

Aquaculture development has inevitably lead to some conflicts. While some of these conflicts are a matter of perception, some of them are very real. A notable fact about these conflicts is that they vary tremendously between regions and across user groups although some concerns are jointly shared by some groups such as the commercial and recreational fishermen leading to a coalition of various interest groups against unregulated and unsupervised aquaculture development.

It can be expected for example that commercial fishermen will continue to oppose aquaculture development until such time as their concerns with it are put to rest. This is particularly true in BC where there is a large commercial salmon fishery concerned with salmon aquaculture development. The concerns of commercial salmon fishermen include the following: aquaculture as a source of pollution endangering the wild fish habitat, increased scarcity of funds for fish habitat improvement and stock enhancement programs (e.g. SEP) as more resources are directed to aquaculture development, the danger of genetic "pollution" if escaped farmed