INCIDENTAL CATCH AT MARINE FISH FARMS IN B.C.

Most fish farms in British Columbia (B.C.) use nets that allow continuous water movement, which supports fish health. While these nets are sized to keep farmed fish contained, they can allow small wild fish to swim in and out of the farm. If wild fish are caught during handling activities, such as the harvest, transfer, or treatment of fish, they are referred to as **incidental catch**. To address this risk to wild fish, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) requires farm operators to follow strict rules to monitor, report, and reduce incidental catch.

WHAT DOES DFO REQUIRE?

PREVENTION

Farm operators must design and use nets and equipment in a manner that causes least harm to wild fish and have measures in place to sort incidental catch from farmed fish.



DURING HANDLING ACTIVITIES

Rules for safe disposal of dead incidental catch must be followed.



Live incidental catch must be carefully and immediately released outside the farm.



DFO fishery officers or fishery guardians **perform inspections** to observe and confirm that mitigation measures are properly implemented and appropriate records are maintained.

REPORTING

Farm operators must **maintain records** of incidental catch and **submit reports** to DFO on a quarterly basis.

Data are summarized and publicly reported online.

https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/obf04c4e-d2b0-4188-9053-08dc4a7a2b03

While wild fish are often observed within marine farms, many are released live. The impact to wild fish populations is considered very low compared to commercial fishing and other activities.

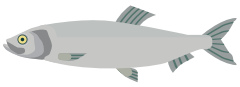


PACIFIC HERRING ACCOUNT FOR THE MAJORITY OF INCIDENTAL CATCH MORTALITIES, WHILE THE NUMBER OF PACIFIC SALMON FOUND IN FARMS IS VERY LOW.

PACIFIC HERRING	PACIFIC SALMON
>90%	<0.5%

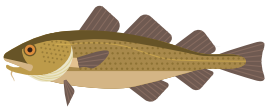
THE TYPES OF INCIDENTAL CATCH

HERRING



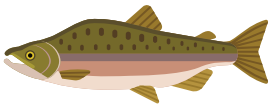
Clupea pallasii (Pacific herring)

COD



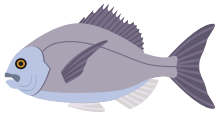
Gadidae (Pacific cod, Pacific tomcod, and walleye pollock)

SALMON



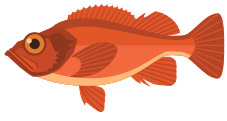
Oncorhynchus sp. (pink, sockeye, chum, Chinook, and coho)

SURFPERCH



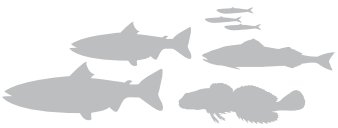
Embiotocidae (shiner perch, striped seaperch, pile perch, etc.)

ROCKFISH



Sebastidae (black rockfish, copper rockfish, yellowtail rockfish, etc.)

OTHER



All other species reported in minimal quantities (Northern anchovy, sablefish, sculpin species, etc.)

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