

Commerce vs Wild Salmon

alexandra morton

The re-opening of the Cohen Inquiry on ISA virus provided an opportunity to see past the PR machine that protects salmon farms. The events around this virus have been moving so fast there has not been enough time to bury the evidence. Through strong questioning by the Commission's own lawyer, Brock Martland, and the lawyers for all the participants the coverup was laid bare. In addition, we could see the crux of the reason wild salmon are dying of politics. In the coming weeks I will provide detailed analysis, but here is the issue as I see it.

While we might think Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) provides protection of wild salmon, I did not find evidence of that in the thousands of emails and other documents I read over the course of the inquiry. And while you might think the Canadian Food Inspection Agency provides protection from animal diseases that is not exactly the case. The CFIA is unsuccessfully trying to walk a line between suppressing pathogens *and* at the same time trying to ensure commerce opportunities are maximized. And so we now have biological definitions of disease and legal definitions of disease in conflict with each other and this is not going to work.

Dr. Miller's lab found evidence that salmon testing positive for the ISA flu virus are responding at a cellular level as if they have the flu. Using her powerful genomic profiling, her lab discovered that the characteristic flu-response pathways within cells were up-regulated. However, the legal definition of ISA virus requires a complete suite of different tests to all produce an artificially prescribed set of values. If those values don't pop up *voila* we don't have ISA virus and farm salmon grown in BC can continue to maxime premium values because they have a unique ISA-free certification.

I don't know what country doesn't want ISA virus contaminated salmon, but I am guessing its China. There have been over 150 positive tests for ISA virus, but the Canadian Food Inspection Agency has rationalized how each one is not a "positive" and they just call them negative! Neat trick, but it has been exposed.

Most serious in terms of the Commission, the federal government, so this means the DFO and the CFIA never revealed the 100% ISA positive tests in 64 Cultus lake sockeye. There was extensive testimony throughout the over one year of the inquiry. We heard about the Cultus Recovery team, we heard questioning whether this run was even worth trying to save because nothing seemed to help. I read 100% of them are dying in some years just before spawning and no one could figure out why. But the federal government did not inform the commission EVER that there was evidence of a very serious virus associated with salmon farms around the world in 100% of these sockeye. Even if the findings are flawed, this evidence should have some forward because Canada was asked to produce documents pertaining to the health of the Fraser sockeye.

We heard again and again that trade partners with the Norwegian salmon farming companies in BC were notified and kept informed about the ISA virus tests, but there was NEVER any mention of informing First Nations and other Canadians. Salmon farmers were in attendance at meetings on this virus, but not First Nations, commercial fishing organizations, NGOs or anyone else!

It was revealed that the FIRST response by the CFIA to the positive ISA virus tests in the Rivers Inlet sockeye was to go on a hunt to find anything they could discredit Dr. Kibenge's lab with. Dr. Kibenge runs the international ISA virus reference lab at the Atlantic Veterinary College that has met the extremely high standards of the international OIE of, which Canada is a member nation. When DFO discovered Dr. Miller team had not only found ISA virus positives, but also evidence that the infected fish were fighting the flu they intimidated her. She is not afraid of losing her job, the fear she named was losing the thousands of samples going back decades, that she uses to figure out what is happening to wild salmon in BC. She is standing beside our fish.

While we were led to believe last summer that the salmon farmers were going to give Miller samples of Atlantic salmon for testing, we learned that never happened. Insidiously the salmon farmers offered to become her "partner" in her sockeye viral work!!! If she agreed, which would have meant lots of money for her, they said she could test Atlantic salmon at some later date. Miller said "no." So many groups from environmental to salmon enhancement have been lured by this bait, but not Miller, she did not want the salmon farmers directing her research.

I am going to post much more on this mad hatters tea party, in the coming weeks. I found many on the stand loathsome as they stood by and let

viruses enter the Pacific Ocean. They revealed they are at “war” against the truth, the prize being our minds. They are trying to fool us and we have indeed been fools.

My volunteer team and I are going to continue testing wild salmon for disease using the labs we decide to use. DFO confiscates all my samples from the labs I use, so I will see that as free-shipping to their labs as well. An email was flashed up on the screen where Kim Koltins of the CFIA suggested all labs in Canada be told not to test for ISA virus, my name also appeared in the brief email. When asked about this she said it had just been an "idea". This idea would have prevented Canadians from finding out for themselves about disease in wild salmon.

I never believed in the word “evil,” but anyone on earth today whose work helps viruses spread, mutate and reproduce should realize they are working in aid of powerfully irrevocable forces that cause suffering, death and ecosystem collapse. The world of commerce does not and will not exist without the biological world. Therefore the biology of disease has to come first. The CFIA can call positives, negative, they can redefine ISA virus so that it doesn't exist on paper – but this effort threatens our world.

If we want wild salmon it is up to us. The BC and Canadian governments cannot be trusted with salmon farms, because they are addicted to commerce at the risk of all that is British Columbia. If you want to know if you have ISA virus in your salmon - contact me and I will help you.

Canadian media has decided largely not to report on these hearings so I suggest the brilliant writing by [Damien Gillis](#) and [Ivan Doumenic](#)