

Hello All AANS Members,

I would like to reinstitute the monthly newsletter/ update from the AANS staff to all the members. I don't plan to make these long, but I just want to give you a sense of what's going on in the office. If you have any messages, interesting stories or photographs you would like to share with the AANS membership we would be happy to add it to the newsletter. For now I will send the newsletter as an e-mail but in the future I would like to explore the idea of posting it on our web-page.

### **Executive Director's Report (May 2010)**

**Bruce Hancock**

The month of May was one of transition for me as I shared my time between wrapping things up in my old job on the mussel farm and starting in my new position here with the Association. May also had a very busy meeting schedule with the AAC conference and CAIA Board meeting in St. John's, the NASAPI workshop in Ottawa, and several meetings with provincial fisheries here in Halifax. Of particular interest with the province was the inaugural meeting of the renewed Nova Scotia Aquaculture Environmental Coordinating Committee and the beginning of another year with the Outreach Program.

I am just beginning to get my head around the projects we are currently involved in and some of the major issues facing both our industry and the Association. With respect to the Association's issues, my immediate focus will be to broaden our membership base and to put together a short term financial plan that will keep the office open so we can continue our work. I'm looking forward to meeting with the Board later this month and setting both some short and long term goals for the office.

I'm very impressed with our staff, Cassie and Fernando and I think that through this office and with your help, we can have a very positive influence on the growth of our industry. I have also been struck with the very positive tone set by our provincial government (see attached document) both on the political and administrative level. Over the twenty one years that I have been involved in this industry, I have never seen such an obvious sign of support for our industry. I truly believe that we are on the cusp of some significant opportunities for our industry if we can capitalize on this support.

Finally, I would like to thank all the members and friends of the Association that came out on May 7<sup>th</sup> to help celebrate Brian Muise's retirement. It was a great evening and a fitting acknowledgement to an outstanding career. Brian's contribution to our Association and the industry in general has help build the foundation for the successful industry that we have today – many thanks Brian! A big thank you also to Brian Blanchard and his wife Sharon for organizing the party and making it such a big success.

## **RDC Progress Report (Jan-May 2010)**

### **Fernando Salazar.**

This is a short summary of activities since January 2010.

#### Scotian Pride 2010

The conference was a success, 118 people registered for the conference 60 of which also registered for the NSERC luncheon. During the luncheon all companies were informed about the new Partnership for innovation funds and how they can be used by the aquaculture industry. 10 aquaculture companies, 4 educational institutions, 4 associations and 6 government offices were present and hopefully at least 3 of those companies will look into applying to the program.

#### Projects

*Gap Analysis:* A gap analysis for Innovative Fishery Products, Canaqua and Merlin Fish farms was performed by Global Trust during February. The idea is to help those companies achieve certification in the near future. The final reports have been delivered to the companies.

*Duck Project:* The project finished its first phase of prototype development. The sensor based unit showed promising functionality but it was not possible to conduct extensive field tests due to time constraints and some minor setbacks in the product design. A second phase of field testing and fine tuning is expected for 2010. The project will be led by iDLab and Dalhousie University's ornithologist Cindy Staicer. They will seek funding through an NSERC's ENGAGE program.

*Identification of the Malpeque agent:* This has proved to be a very challenging project. Positive identification of the agent using differential display identification for DNA or RNA has not been possible for Malpeque, though it was possible for MSX. The project was extended until March 2011 for further testing of new samples. The researchers have even considered the idea that Malpeque disease is not caused by an infectious agent.

#### Other activities

*Attended GRI courses:* I participated in the Global Reporting Initiative course coordinated by CAIA in St. John, NB during November 2009. In February 2010, a follow up workshop took place also in St. John with the objective of identifying the best performance indicators applicable to the aquaculture industry. Some of the indicators chosen are: FCR, survival, antibiotic use, amount of omega-3 produced, sulphides, escapes, disease management, energy use, among others. The workshop was facilitated by Global Trust and a document with our decisions will be drafted.

*Spanish and Canadian missions:* Based on June 2009 Spanish Mission, a second delegation from Spain will be coming to Atlantic Canada in July 2010. I may be involved in the mission to the same capacity as last year. In addition, the AANS and ACOA will be coordinating a Canadian Mission to Spain in September-October 2010. We are in the organization and planning process right now and we hope to have an itinerary and invitations soon.

*Student presentations:* I gave a presentation of the aquaculture industry in NS and Atlantic region to students from NSAC and to Charles P. Allen High school. Good feedback and interest was expressed by some students that are considering aquaculture as a career. I also attended a "Mariculture Expansion and Management

in NS" presentation given by Dalhousie students from the MSC Resource and Environmental Studies school.

*IPAC Luncheon on the use of social media for businesses:* Interesting approach on how to engage social media users into business related social pages. It is the new and sometimes unique way of reaching the new generations of consumers. The aquaculture industry should be looking into being part of this phenomenon.

#### Meetings and workshops

*EMP and NSAECC:* The purpose of these meetings and workshops has been to review the Environmental Management Program for Nova Scotia and discuss how we can make it better and prepared for a possible harmonization with NB and NL.

*Fish health (sea lice workshop):* Technical session for farmers to cover the critical aspects of managing sea lice on salmon farms. I suggested that a team of "professional louse counters" could be considered as an option to farmers doing it. The idea was well received and I will look into the details and feasibility of making it happen.

*Oyster aquaculture (PEI):* The intention is to explore further growth opportunities and solve challenges. In NS, AANS wants to develop a program to increase industry size in the North shore. This workshop gave me a good overview of future collaborations.

*WWF Meeting:* We discussed the document that was previously submitted as a Canadian response to WWF's bivalve dialogues. A new draft with our considerations and suggestions was posted in WWF's website for public comment. Soon after the meetings I forwarded the emails and links to our membership asking for their participation.

*CSSWG:* Meetings and conference calls of the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Working Group and its Nova Scotia's chapter have been dealing with the impact that the new regulations from FDA will have on the Canadian industry. We have been pushing our authorities to express the industry's concerns with Federal Government and the FDA to find feasible solutions to the regulation and announcement of closures due to heavy rainfall.

*AAC and Cold Harvest Conference:* It was a very well attended conference. Good presentations and updates related to current research projects and main issues within the industry such as DFO's closed containment initiative, NASAPI, WWF's bivalve dialogues, CSSWG and Fish Health Management group. A few ideas for future projects for NS and the region were discussed with my counterparts and researchers.

#### Future Projects Ideas

The following is a list of some ideas that could make for some interesting projects given that we can secure the proper collaborations and funding from interested parties.

*Harmonization of Codes of Practice:* This idea has been considered by the AANS since last year. It is part of our set of deliverables to ACOA and it is a work in progress. Not much has been done since January but it is something that will be finalized before the end of the year.

*Microalgae and worms use for production of oils and meals:* The research for alternative ingredients to be used in fish feeds is a priority. Algae could be the main

source of high quality oils and/or meals to be incorporated in diets. I have talked to SABS nutritionist about this ideas and she agrees it could make an interesting project.

*Use of Thyasirid clams to be used as bio-indicators and possibly bio-remediation in highly enriched areas:* According to one of the main researchers of Thyasirid clams the best projects could be: 1) a survey of the natural distribution of thyasirids at aquaculture sites in conjunction with analysis of cores by CT-scan and perhaps also 2D optodes (to determine oxygen or pH distributions in sediments around those clams) and 2) The development of better techniques to determine the impact of aquaculture on the benthos. It should be able to develop simple techniques based on a combination of CT-scan and ship-based core incubations to measure nutrient fluxes, to get a much better indication of what is going on in the benthos that by measuring sulfides. These projects are being considered to be regional in scope and could be coordinated by ACAIRDN.

*Trials to test the effectiveness of Acti-Fish, Stor-fish and Ova-fish:* These products developed by IMV technologies to increase fertilization success and cryopreservation of gametes have been tested with salmon and trout with very positive results. It could be very valuable to perform trials on Arctic char and Atlantic halibut to determine if a direct cost effective benefit can be obtained for those fish.

*Duck monitoring second phase:* (Described in the Projects section above)

*Mussel seed survey:* Nova Scotia's mussel industry relies on seed that is collected in very few sites or even bought from other provinces. It is necessary to find alternative sources of good quality seed in NS. This project could incorporate some of the technologies applied in NL in a similar project.

*Wind Power Generation:* This idea has not been explored since it was considered a couple of years ago. There is potential for developing a project to test its effectiveness in an aquaculture setting by using cost effective technologies from Green & Clean Energy Co. Ltd.

*Gulf Shore development:* This project is intended to jump start the oyster aquaculture industry in the Gulf Shore of NS. It was originally proposed to AIMAP but it was not considered for funding. A draft proposal was prepared by me and Brian Muise and we just need to find the right funding source to get it under way.

*Alternative anti-foulants:* This idea was suggested in June 2009 by Dick Paterson as a way to test different anti-foulants for nets. One month prior to that, I had been contacted by a representative of a company that manufactures anti-foulants so it was a perfect fit at the time. Unfortunately no further action was taken but if any member of the AANS is interested this could lead to an interesting project.