

Interdependencies between First Nations and Salmon Farming Companies

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Introduction

Many First Nations along the Canadian west coast have relied on seafood and the catch of wild salmon to sustain their communities. Salmon farming is an industrial alternative to the traditional way of living, but this is not an obvious choice for First Nations. Firstly, doing business with corporations can be challenging, as such, for indigenous peoples (e.g. Peredo and Anderson, 2006). Secondly, opposition against salmon farming is strong in British Columbia; critical voices from First Nation communities and external stakeholders alike have been common over years.

This study focuses on two First Nation's and their formal agreements with two salmon farmers. Ahousaht has worked with the global farming giant Cermaq for a number of years. Tla-o-qui-aht has a more recent partner agreement with Creative Salmon, a local and small farmer. The study acknowledges that relationships between corporations and indigenous peoples often are troublesome. Conflict is common, and their interactions are competitive regarding goals, the use of resources, and distribution of benefits (cf. Gedicks, 2001; Calbucura, 2003). Indeed, the meeting between corporations and indigenous peoples concerns questions of how to make a living, how make living itself meaningful, and may even challenge the conditions under which one makes a living (cf. Bebbington, 1999). An Ahousaht member stressed that "the West" and its corporations usually miss that "*everything is one; People and Ocean.*" This emphasis, stressed by both Ahousaht and Tla-o-qui-aht, relates to resource development in truly fundamental ways, including the development of identity and knowledge.

Consequently, a relevant theme is how First Nations and corporations influence one another when they enter into partnership agreements or alliances. Specifically, this study asks how First Nations perceive salmon farming and their relationships with commercial fish farmers.

The following section presents the design and methods of the study. Thereafter follows the main section, which is a description of the focal relationships. An analysis including an indigenous perspective on salmon farming and relationships with corporations is thereafter discussed. Finally theoretical reflections, managerial implications and conclusion end the paper.

Methods

Both firms and indigenous peoples may benefit from working together. Firms gain from indigenous peoples' knowledge of biodiversity, sacred sites and seasonal changes. Indigenous peoples constitute an important workforce in remote areas and the fact that they are ecologically embedded (Whiteman and Cooper, 2000) may help in joining traditional knowledge and modern techniques. However, collaboration is often difficult and many indigenous peoples are concerned about the Western business model (Peredo and Anderson, 2006). On the other hand, partnerships with non-indigenous organizations can play constructive roles in indigenous development, including employment and various community projects.

This study is exploratory and builds on a longitudinal case study relying primarily on interviews and observation techniques. The adaptability of qualitative methods is desirable when facing multiple realities. Hence, the purpose of qualitative studies – to address a subject in a way that makes alternative or new meanings visible – becomes particularly valuable (e.g., Kvale, 1996; Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Qualitative work focuses on meanings and interpretations, favoring a natural setting or context of the entity for which the study is proposed.

Data sources and analysis

The focal relationships in this study are between the Ahousaht First Nation and Cermaq, and between the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation and Creative Salmon.

Ahousaht is located on Flores Island off the west coast of Vancouver Island. The Ahousaht First Nation has a population of over 1,000 people in the reserve and over 2,000 total members, and is the largest nation on the west coast of Vancouver Island. Cermaq is global salmon farmer and the second-largest aquaculture company in British Columbia, with its head office in Campbell River. The company holds half of its operations in the Ahousaht territory where it has been farming Atlantic salmon since 2000. Mitsubishi bought the company in 2014; the previous majority owner was the Norwegian state.

The Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations (formerly referred to as the Clayoquot), live on ten reserves on Vancouver Island. Their primary economic activities are fishing and tourism. Creative Salmon was established in 1990. Contrary to multinational Cermaq, Creative Salmon is a relatively small local company farming Chinook (Pacific) salmon. All of its farming activities take place in First nation territory and some 20% of its west coast crew are Tla-o-qui-aht. The company has been focusing on organic practices since 1995.

The paper builds on 24 interviews, the majority focusing on the Ahousah-Cermaq relationship, which has been studied since 2010. The Tla-o-qui-aht-Creative Salmon relationship has been followed since 2015, and builds on interviews with the resource manager of Tla-o-qui-aht and the CEO and communications and Human Resource manager of Creative Salmon. Hereditary chiefs, elders, the operations manager and previous fish farm committee members have been interviewed in the Ahousaht case, in addition to Cermaq Canada's CEO, the communications and sustainability manager and the community liaison.

The interviews were approached in a reflexive, pragmatic manner (Alvesson, 2003) geared to viewing the subject matter from different angles. The study has a relational perspective, acknowledging that 'reality may take different shapes depending in the view taken. Where corporations see commercial resources, indigenous peoples see ancestral lands. In the studied relationships, it has been central to acknowledge First Nation perspectives.

Indigenous participation in salmon farming

A basic First Nation concern is whether salmon farming is consistent with traditional wild catch of salmon and the old ways of sustaining livelihood. Wrongdoings by previous fish farmers in First Nation territories, such as inferior practices and management routines resulting in fish escapes, accumulation of garbage, and dead areas around the pens, has created resistance towards salmon farming. The following text presents two relationships between the Ahousaht First Nation and Cermaq, and between the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation and Creative Salmon. It will be illustrated that the relationships have developed from opposition to common protocol agreements.

The Ahousaht-Cermaq relationship

Opposition and sustainability concerns

The sustainability of fish farming continues to be a concern among coastal First Nations in Canada. As Ahousaht's operation manager explains: "*When fish farming came, our people was almost at war with them. Our head chief at the time, he listened to his Elders, he knew that provincial government was not going to stop fish farming. I think he listened to his advisors; we have to work something out.*" The operations manager suggests there are three camps in the community today; those who oppose and have negative thoughts, those in favor and a third group not knowing where to lean. The ones in favor appreciate economic benefits and employment, whereas those against tend to disregard

information about sustainability improvements that have been accomplished over the years, according to this manager.

From Cermaq's perspective, it is clear that their business depends heavily on First Nation support. Company representatives also claim that First Nation relationships with the industry are changing. One illustration is a recent reception in Victoria, Vancouver Island, which Cermaq hosted for the government and industry representatives. A couple of Ahousaht members showed up with a drum, and one Cermaq manager, due to the conflicts over the years, jokingly asked "*are you going to protest?*" The unexpected performance, conducted in Ahousaht language, was on the contrary an appraisal of their relationship with Cermaq. The Ahousaht members were there on the behalf of the hereditary chiefs, they had been given the right to speak and announce to the government and the industry that they respected the partnership. "*They got up there, stole the show and....said wonderful things.*" (Cermaq communications and sustainability manager).

Another illustration was the 2015 meeting of the salmon farming association, held at Tla-o-qui-aht, another First Nation on Vancouver Island. Firm representatives view the invitation as bold, and regard this as an acknowledgment of the industry in the area. The meeting may also represent an opportunity to express Tla-o-qui-aht interests and concerns, and is an opportunity for them to influence the operations of the industry.

Partnership and support

The hereditary chiefs of the Ahousaht First Nation, the Tyee Hawiih, concluded a few years back that fish farming is replacing the prosperity missing since the downturn of commercial fishing. Ahousaht and Cermaq have managed to develop a common vision regarding salmon farming in Clayoquot Sound, an UNESCO Biosphere Reserve where anti-salmon farming campaigns have been particularly strong. The actors have established that they intend to meet or exceed existing environmental standards and that they will strive to be a progressive, innovative Aboriginal/Industry partnership that seeks mutual long-term social, economic, cultural, and spiritual benefits for both parties (Huemer 2014).

Ahousaht and Cermaq signed their first protocol agreement in 2002. This agreement included an acknowledgment of the Ahousaht traditional land presence and rights, which was fundamental for the First Nation. A second protocol agreement was signed in 2010, and further established the principles for working together with sustainable and mutually beneficial salmon-farming operations. The protocol aligns Ahousaht's interests with Cermaq's performance.

The operations manager of Ahousaht informs that Cermaq for years has been supportive in good and bad times for the community, by assisting in various events and functions. As expressed by another Ahousaht leader, most other actors, including NGOs with opinions about what Ahousaht should or should not do (preferably not farm salmon), has not prioritized to learn about Ahousaht, to, "*learn about our identity, what makes us tick.*" The operations manager continues: "*Norway was the only nation that recognized us, our people and our hereditary chiefs, our territory. The Norwegian government did a real good job; I feel that they helped identify who we are. That we are not just Indians, we are actually a community.*"

In 2015, a renewal of the protocol was signed, for a duration of five years. From Cermaq's perspective, Ahousaht's concerns were this time financial rather than sustainability focused. Whereas it took several years to establish the previous protocol, the new version was completed in six months due to a well working baseline. The main change in the formalization of the partnership is that Ahousaht intended to separate the politics from business. As expressed by Ahousaht operations manager: "*We want to be more business minded.*" Cermaq experiences that several First Nations have started to create corporations to separate management of funds received from partnerships and other business operations from other sources of income. Ahousaht dismantled the fish farming committee and created a smaller board with the ambition of easing communication between them, Cermaq and the Ahousaht community. Both parties stress improved communication. According to Cermaq's

community liaison: *“Communication is the biggest thing in our relationship. The corporate structure is very much a paper/email system that can be tracked. Looked back upon, recorded, it can be accessed. Combining that with a verbal culture can be difficult.”*

The new corporate structure has created challenges for Cermaq. They now face a more pure financial and direct relationship with the Ahousaht Corporation, but still want to maintain a close relationship to the community.

The company has continued to work with different sponsorships, social events, sports and scholarships. They have open-house meetings and career-fairs in Ahousaht territory explaining what they do and how members can become employable. In the current protocol, there is an intent to hire Ahousaht members, based on qualifications and skills, but there is no fixed number of employment. Capacity building aimed at facilitating employment is a common concern. Education and training is a prioritized theme and a recent program involving ten Ahousaht members resulted in three immediate hires, not only by Cermaq but also by Creative Salmon. As expressed by Cermaq’s community liaison: *“We want a better equipped community.”*

Managing the business with Ahousaht values and principles

There is an interesting explanation behind the recent structural change of Ahousaht’s business operations. As indicated above, the main reason is to get politics out of business; to keep internal community issues more separate from business activities. It is also an intent to return to pre-European organization based on the hereditary system. The operations manager explains: *“I believe we are actively using the past and the old ways to reeducate people. A lot of people are so used to the elected system, the chief in council, a generation that really does not understand the hereditary system. Now the Hereditary chiefs explain their roles and responsibilities. I for my family had an event for my daughters...; this was witnessed by a 1000 people. We did ceremonies that have not been done for 85 years.”* The hereditary chiefs are trying to bring back stories about how disciplined the community used to be in terms of the environment; no overfishing, no overharvesting. Ahousaht’s operations manager hopes this approach will influence how they do business.

Cermaq is aware of these changes, acknowledging that Ahousaht intends to strengthen the hereditary tradition and old forms of resource management. The salmon farmer’s main challenge here is, as indicated above, to maintain a close relationship to the community, since the nation itself is central in terms of future support. Good community relations, beyond pure financial interactions with the Ahousaht Corporation is significant according to Cermaq’s managers: *“How you blend the corporate culture and the First Nation culture is a dance, you have to give and take.”* (Cermaq community liaison). Balancing cultural values and practices in the community with corporate matters is important and can be challenging.

Both Ahousaht and Cermaq representatives agree that it is essential for Ahousaht members to retain their cultural identity. Various events are significant in the community, such as the death of community members or traditional fishery. At the same time, those employed in the business must be committed to the job. From Cermaq’s perspective, it is argued that: *“not everyone can go to every funeral, we also need to run the company.”* (Cermaq communications and sustainability manager). Accordingly, the operations manager of Ahousaht argue: *“We also understand that this is a business and people need to show up for work.”*

The hereditary chiefs are in a process of explaining to the community that they need to take training and make themselves employable. The agreement was signed to benefit the people, but it is the individual’s responsibility to keep the job.

Mutual learning

There are different kinds of learning processes taking place in this relationship. The parties have spent considerable time learning about one another’s cultures and practices. Cermaq continues to share the management teams’ developed understanding with the entire organization. The new protocol

emphasizes cross-cultural awareness and it is stressed by the management that all Cermaq employees need to understand that First Nations including Ahousaht represent distinct cultures. The ambition is to better understand Ahousaht's origin, their experiences through history and what they have become today. There is also a mutual recognition of Ahousaht's need to better understand Cermaq's business approach.

As a result of the relationship with Ahousaht, Cermaq has increased its knowledge base. This includes concrete salmon farming practices, particularly the location of sites, the Elders' cleansing ceremony after accidents, and traditional knowledge concerning fish routes (Huemer 2014). As a consequence of the relationship, Ahousaht has influenced new site locations based on sustainability concerns and with respect to pristine areas.

Cermaq has also developed relational knowledge, which the corporation is trying to formalize. It is acknowledged that Ahousaht represent their key initial engagement process and that this relationship has formed Cermaq's baseline for other First Nation relationships. The company has a desire to develop partnerships with all First Nations in whose territories they operate in. Ahousaht has shaped the corporations First Nation strategy and principles.

Today, Cermaq managers argue that they approach new relationships from a more equal position, it is no longer viable that the company enters a First Nation territory and 'makes an offer'. The new approach is based on a desire to develop partnerships acknowledging the needs of both the First Nation and the company. This includes staffing, expectations, regulatory issues, financial issues etc. The First Nations have a saying in practices including where sites are located. As expressed by Cermaq's community liaison: *I think we have learnt a fair bit what works and not, how to approach in a way that achieves that transparency and clarity. No hidden agendas. We are very confident, we have shown that there can be long term benefits to communities, it is a viable model*".

Cermaq also suggests that Ahousaht has gained knowledge from working with them as well, not least in terms of protocol development. Higher education leading to employment and business opportunities including sub-contracting are part of this development.

The Tla-o-qui-aht-Creative salmon relationship

Opposition and sustainability concerns

The Tla-o-qui-aht nation, including the resource manager, were not always in favor of salmon farming. Thoughts about evicting the farmer existed, and concerns about sustainability are still present. Moreover, the industrial activity did not always benefit the First Nation: *"You want pristine waters..., of course you want to be in our rivers. It is the best waters to do it in. We have great amount of fresh water which keeps salinity low and sea lice low. You want to be here and have nice waters, it is too expensive for you to be on land ... then you should pay a premium price"* (Resource manager Tla-o-qui-aht).

The CEO of Creative Salmon expresses that companies, including his own, entered the area without much thought about the First Nations, they just started farming. This explains why many First Nations have opposed the industry. Since Creative Salmon wants to be in Tla-o-qui-aht territory, he argues that some kind of consent is definitely better than the costs of conflict.

Tla-o-qui-aht's vision is to have sustainable fish farming with year round job opportunities in combination with vibrant seasonal fish runs. Creative Salmon's CEO also emphasizes their desire to do no harm to the environment; a concern they share with the First Nation. As stressed by Creative Salmon's communications and HR manager: *"To a lot of the people we are not incompatible in their environment."*

A Tla-o-qui-aht plan stresses the desire to be able to drink water out of their rivers and to eat the fish, both which are at risk. Another ambition is to establish industrial relations according to Tla-o-qui-aht

rights and treaties, which explains their agreement with Creative Salmon. The ambition to increase communication was well received by the company.

Partnership and support

The salmon farmer's willingness to engage with the First Nation is one reason for their current protocol agreement. As stressed by the resource manager of Tla-o-qui-aht: "*all these NGOs and what they want, they have not brought any benefits to the Indigenous Peoples. They try to tell them 'keep those trees standing for the world'; well let's get some value out of those trees standing*". It is not a stretch of imagination, he continues, that indigenous peoples, anywhere in the world, ask for scholarships, cultural programs, and sustainable business opportunities.

Reaching the protocol was a time consuming effort, as in the Ahousaht-Cermaq case. Creative Salmon hired a First Nation liaison in the late 1990s. This relationship helped the company in understanding their First Nation employees better. It also helped that the company historically has been "*in a decent spot regarding sustainability*", as stressed by the CEO. Creative Salmon's business model is based on a number of sustainable practices, such as low densities and hand washed nets. Such practices eased the initial support from Tla-o-qui-aht leaders.

A few years back, several First Nation concerns were removed when Creative Salmon was invited to explain their business model, pacific salmon, no use of copper nettings, nets were not only hand washed but also sundried. The company continued to have council meetings, open house meetings, which in combination with the experiences that Tla-o-qui-aht employee made changed the First Nation's perception of the company and its activities. However, the early relationship did not have the rigor of the dialogue the parties have developed in their protocol agreement regarding output and footprints including net density and feed content.

A first version of the current protocol agreement was signed in 2010, and it was foremost operational in focus. The parties had been discussing the protocol for about 10 years before this initial agreement. The developed protocol took four more years and was signed in 2014. These four years were not characterized by serious conflicts; the parties met on a regular basis and the Tla-o-qui-aht resource managers stresses they spent a long time getting educated on the salmon farmer's practices and that justified the content of the final protocol agreement. It was a learning curve on both sides and he claims that also Tla-o-qui-aht had to "*swallow a pill*" by accepting less benefits since they require the company to maintain certain standards. Out of six sites, four are operational, and as expressed by the Tla-o-qui-aht resource manager: "*it is a lower return model. And we do so willingly...If you want a higher return, grow Atlantic. And then you get all the other concerns.*"

Organizationally a fish farm committee has replaced the liaison role. Three hereditary chiefs and three representatives from Creative Salmon make up the committee's formal structure. The particular business model is central in the current agreement; a request from the hereditary chiefs. Tone of the protocols' guiding principle emphasizes farming of pacific salmon. This historical practice is now formally written down. Additional obligations is to only stock pens with chinook salmon, no use of underwater lights at night, no copper coating and use of antibiotics, among other practices.

Creative Salmon's CEO experienced that the First Nation essentially appreciated their way of working and that the protocol agreement did not imply any significant changes in how the company operates. Good practices have been formalized and Tla-o-qui-aht have a saying in future developments. The company also made available a predator management plan to the committee, benthic monitoring reports and information on feed content and fish density. The company is also expected to immediately notify Tla-o-qui-aht about fish health issues and the parties have agreed joint fish sampling and to monitor developments and the feasibility of closed containment projects. Creative Salmon is further expected to use their best effort to hire qualified members Tla-o-qui-aht.

Most of these demands were already aligned with the company's practices; the most significant change appears to be in terms of communication, such as conducting regular meetings, and assisting

the fish farm committee to become an expert entity in the business. In addition to the business dimension, the protocol agreement also includes funding, education and salmon enhancement projects. The resource manager of Tla-o-qui-aht argues that the relationship has been good and that there is a general support for the salmon farmer which already has assisted the First Nation in fish stock restoration, a coho project and the refurbishment of one of Tla-o-qui-aht 's hatchery decks.

Indigenous perspectives on salmon farming and corporate relationships

The two relationships are similar in a number of ways. Both have been characterized by indigenous opposition, based on lack of consent and dialogue, sustainability concerns and few visible benefits from the industrial activity. Ahousaht and Tla-o-qui-aht alike have over time come to consider salmon farming as one feasible way of developing their communities. Both First Nations have signed protocol agreements with salmon farmers operating in their territories. Reaching these cooperative arrangements were time consuming for both Ahousaht and Tla-o-qui-aht and required substantial investments and a willingness to learn about corporate practices and modern salmon farming.

Based on the data available at this stage of the study, it also appears as if their requests are similar. Experienced economic advantages include salmon enhancement funding, employment, and contracting and business opportunities based on training and education programs. There are a number of sustainability concerns, some of which are related to First Nations values and principles. Work opportunities in the industry in combination with vibrant seasonal fish runs is a common goal. Both communities still have members expressing resistance against salmon farming; however, it is noteworthy that few of those with an experience of the industry are against it. Ahousaht and Tla-o-qui-aht both express pride in their agreements; the Tla-o-qui-aht resource manager's comment on their invitation to the salmon farmer association's annual meeting: *"We've just signed the protocol and would like to share the practices we are proud of"*.

From a corporate perspective, both firms acknowledge that their business depends heavily on First Nation support. Both corporations engage in various forms of community activities, and they have stabilized their operations within their respective First Nation partner's territory. From a relational perspective, all parties emphasize the importance of communication and mutual learning.

All relationships are unique; First Nation-corporate relations are no exception. There are consequently some noteworthy differences in these relationships and how the First Nations have approached the new business activity. Ahousaht relates to a multinational corporation, one of the largest in the world, farming Atlantic salmon. Tla-o-qui-aht interacts with a local producer that has differentiated itself from its large volume competitors by farming Chinook salmon and by its historically organic profile. Cermaq on the other hand is a world leader (in the salmon industry) in terms of certifications and transparency reports. Cermaq is also certified according to the Aboriginal Aquaculture Association (AAA)¹. Building on a combination of business and First Nation values, AAA was established as a federally incorporated company in 2003 by aboriginal leaders in British Columbia. The two First Nations and the corporations stress these aspects in different ways when supporting the sustainability of their operations.

These differences also explain some variation in farming practices. It is noteworthy that Ahousaht explicitly, and knowingly, refer to one of Cermaq's official values, being 'business minded', when referring to ongoing reorganizations to improve conditions in the community and its corporate relationship. Ahousaht has abandoned the fish farming committee structure and the managerial function of chiefs in council in favor of a corporate structure, Creative Salmon and Tla-o-qui-aht continue with a committee.

¹ See www.aboriginalaquaculture.com

The formalization of the Ahousht-Cermaq protocol is older than that of Tla-o-qui-aht-Creative Salmon, and that may explain why Cermaq has developed an explicit First Nation agenda based on its longer experience with First Nation relations. It also seems as if Ahousht and Cermaq are in a stage where they need to make the benefits of the protocol agreement visible to the community, a position Tla-o-qui-aht and Creative Salmon may reach in a near future as well.

Theoretical reflections

The studied relationships are interesting from a number of conceptual and theoretical perspectives. Previous work building on the Ahousht-Cermaq relationship has emphasized cooperative strategy and the importance of trust, identification and time in developing common benefits (Huemer 2014). Below notions of identity, learning and resource implications are briefly addressed.

The relationships indicate that a community identity and an organizational (corporate) identity can cue each other and generate reciprocal actions that reinforce and coproduce identity (cf. Howard-Grenville, Metzger and Meyer 2013). The First Nation expression ‘Everything is One’ is linked to environmental concerns and a belief in interdependencies between different entities. Emphasizing an interior, true self has the unintended consequence of neglecting how the authentic self is constituted in relationships with others (Sparrowe, 2005). As First Nations and corporations interact, the development of their respective identities become an interesting issue where the ‘self’ should be treated as a construction that proceeds from the inside–out as well as from the outside–in (cf. Bruner, 1990). This implies that the true, coherent, and deep core of an organization must be balanced with a view acknowledging that the identity of an organization is also to be found within the relationships in the community in which it exists (Czarniawska, 2000). First Nation’s and corporations, temporarily at least, seem to think less in terms of ‘we and them’ and more of ‘us’ in making salmon farming more sustainable, and in such respect also First Nations and corporations can be seen as part of the expression ‘Everything is One’.

As to learning, it is noteworthy that insights were developed in these relationships by the combination of already existing knowledge. It is not simply so that some possess better knowledge than others do, but rather that people can help to create better knowledge when they influence commonly available information to be used in uncommon ways (Nag and Gioia 2012). To combine modern practices with First Nation knowledge has been uncommon, First Nation knowledge has been available for a long time, but not been put to use.

To illustrate, in the early days of Cermaq’s presence in Ahousht territory and before the protocol agreement, Cermaq perceived its own knowledge to be reasonably good whereas the corporation ignored Ahousht’s knowledge. Moreover, the First Nation was, understandably, more preoccupied with how to resist the corporation than how to combine its traditional knowledge with Cermaq’s modern practices. When the actors started to share and combine their knowledge, new practices were developed, but many of these practices did not require no knowledge components as such. Whereas classical resource analysis tend to give resources a given value independent of other resources, this illustration reasons better with the underlying logic of the resource interaction approach (Håkansson and Waluszewski, 2002). This approach stresses that the actual value of a resource, such as knowledge, only emerges on the use side in specific use contexts. In other words, the value of a resource always depends on which other resources it is combined with. First Nation knowledge about the conditions in Clayoquot Sound has not changed in recent years, but it is now valued in a different way.

Managerial implications

From both indigenous and corporate perspectives, important managerial implications of these relationships are to be respectful, a willingness to learn, patience and a clear understanding of one another’s principles. Cultural awareness and an acceptance of differences are key managerial insights.

Conclusion

First Nations and corporations are working together in British Columbia. In different ways, and on their own terms, they try to combine business with sustainable community development. To what extent they succeed and how they influence one another remains to be seen. It is acknowledged, from a corporate viewpoint, that it is difficult to assess what First Nation reactions to salmon farming would be if they faced a number of feasible alternatives. Whether different funding programs and sponsorships will make a long-term difference is a recognized concern. Moreover, community members leaving their traditional land when they have been employed for while is a shared occurrence with remote non-indigenous areas.

Nevertheless, these relationships also demonstrate a genuine concern for the environment and the roles and responsibilities the different parties have in combining sustainable development with pure economic concerns. First Nation influence in making corporate strategy more multigenerational and an understating of 'business mindedness' which is not only long term but inclusive in terms of community and corporate development is a worthwhile challenge.

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