

## DOGWOOD INITIATIVE NEWS RELEASE - MAY 20, 2008

**Fishy Business at The Hague:**

Coalbed Methane Plans Threaten Wild Salmon, BC Activist tells Shell AGM

VICTORIA -- Shell plus Canada equals dead salmon. That's the message being delivered today to Shell shareholders at their annual general meeting in the Netherlands. Dogwood Initiative, a BC-based watchdog group and the Skeena Watershed Conservation Coalition are raising concerns at the AGM over Shell's plans for coalbed methane extraction in the Sacred Headwaters, the shared source of three of Canada's major wild salmon rivers.

"Many here in The Hague probably assume Shell's operations in Canada must be clean. We're here to tell them they're not." remarks Eric Swanson, Dogwood Initiative's corporate campaigner who speaks at the AGM today. "Shell's international executives and shareholders will know after today that Shell's Klappan project threatens wild salmon, and that BC's oil and gas laws are insufficient to safeguard the Sacred Headwaters."

Swanson cites a Pembina Institute report released last Thursday that warns Shell's plans would harm wild salmon. It calls the government's decision to allow Shell's project at the headwaters of the Stikine, Skeena and Nass rivers "an irresponsible experiment," noting coalbed methane development has never before taken place in a salmon watershed.

"This is the case of a risky, unproven industry being proposed in a region that already has a rich economy based on wild salmon," said Swanson. "The people of the region have stated clearly that the minimal benefits of coalbed methane are not worth the tremendous risks to the environment."

The Hague trip and release of the Pembina report add to the mounting pressure on Shell and the BC government to stop plans to drill this fall. Since the province granted Shell its development tenure in 2003, protests and blockades have escalated into an international campaign. Commercial fishermen, sport anglers, guide outfitters and numerous First Nations bands from the region have all voiced opposition to the project.

"I think Shell has grossly underestimated how much people in this part of the world care about their home," commented Swanson. "If Shell pushes ahead, this conflict is only going to deepen."

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Download high resolution versions at <http://dogwoodinitiative.org>:

<http://www.dogwoodinitiative.org/haguebanner2.jpg/>

<http://www.dogwoodinitiative.org/haguebanner1.jpg/>

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Haguebanner1.jpg:

Caption: Banner reading "Coalbed Methane Threatens Canada's Wild Salmon" flies outside Shell's head office in the Hague.



Haguebanner2.jpg:

Caption: A volunteer with Friends of the Earth International stands next to Canadian banner outside the Shell AGM.



Hagueagm1.jpg:

Caption: Malcolm Brinded, Executive Director Exploration & Production, Royal Dutch Shell plc, answers a question asked by Dogwood Initiative's Eric Swanson at the Shell AGM in the Hague.