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Shellfish aquaculture–environmental interaction in relation to the impact of aquatic invasive species

Shellfish aquaculture in Prince Edward Island (PEI) has been impacted with the arrival of four invasive tunicates over the past two decades. Treatment methods have been developed to minimize the impact of these infestations on the shellfish aquaculture industry, with some consideration on associated ecosystems. Tunicates are important fouling organisms that compete with mussels, oysters and associated fauna for space and food. Untreated infestations have led to reduced growth rates and meat yields of farmed shellfish and significant loss in productivity due to fall-off of mussels. The main impact, however, is food depletion and bio-deposition which could lead to some disruption in the ecological function of infested estuaries. Science has played an important role in providing key knowledge and advice to identify management options, particularly relevant to environmental consideration. This knowledge now plays a key consideration in the expansion of the shellfish aquaculture in PEI and other areas affected by tunicate infestation.

Biography

Thomas Landry is a Senior Marine Research Biologist with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada and an Adjunct Professor at the Atlantic Veterinary College, with over 30 years of research experience and 60 publications. His work is primarily focused on the optimization of bivalve production within a healthy ecosystem for purposes of sustainable harvesting. Thomas has served as a member of the ICES Working Group on "The Interaction of Mariculture with the Environment" for the past 8 years. His present research is focused on shellfish aquaculture, aquatic invasive species, bivalve physiology and genetics, and investigations on the interactions between bivalves and the environment. He serves on various professional committees and working groups concerned with the development of shellfish aquaculture in Canada. He co-chaired and participated in the organizing committees of several international and national conferences.

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