

Organizations Declare ‘Salmon Sacrifice Zone’ in Protected Areas of Chilean Patagonia Amid Environmental Concerns

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Organizations, through a citizen campaign, declared eight areas in southern Chile as 'Salmon Sacrifice Zones.' Based on official data, they reported that 42% of aquaculture concessions, many linked to transnational interests, operate in these areas, causing chemical pollution and ecosystem destruction, demanding their immediate removal.



Original article: «Son zonas de sacrificio salmonero»: Organizaciones alertan por 428 concesiones acuícolas en áreas protegidas de la Patagonia chilena

Organizations Declare ‘Salmon Sacrifice Zone’ in Protected Areas of Chilean Patagonia

The citizen campaign «Defend Patagonia,» along with communities and other organizations, declared on November 8, designated as National Protected Areas Day, that the national parks and reserves in southern Chile housing salmon farming concessions are now «Salmon

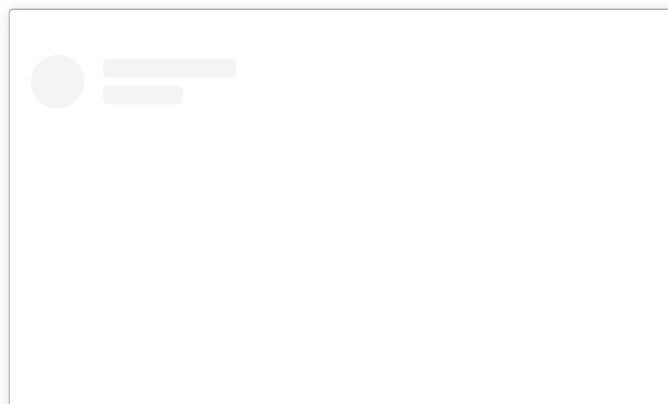
Sacrifice Zones.» This action aims to highlight the environmental impacts in the regions of Los Lagos, Aysén, and Magallanes.

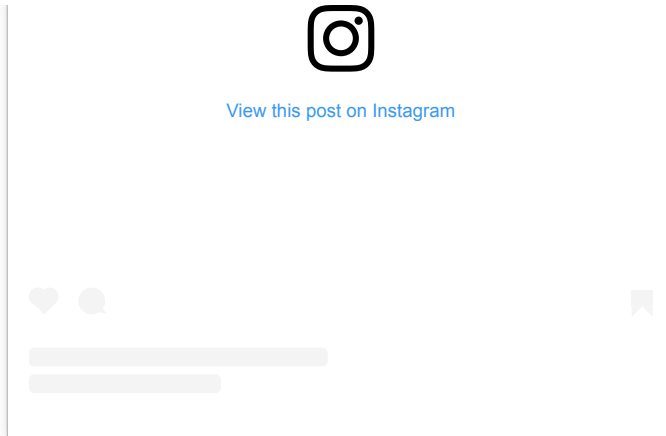
The accusation is based on official data from Sernapesca and studies by the Universidad Austral de Chile, revealing that 42% of salmon farming concessions in the country currently operate within or adjacent to protected areas. According to the organizations, this situation violates Law 19.300 on General Environmental Bases and the Ramsar Convention on wetlands of international importance.

See also / National Protected Areas Day: The Paradox of a Country that Celebrates While Handing Over its Ecosystems to the Salmon Industry

The campaign's statement describes a «devastating» impact: annual tons of antibiotics creating bacterial resistance, oxygen-depleted water columns (anoxia), dead seabeds, and destroyed coastal zones. They assert that this «industrialization disguised as 'development'» is turning biodiversity sanctuaries into «chemical dumps,» with ecosystems threatened by escaped salmon that spread diseases and marine life, such as whales, becoming entangled in installations.

See publication:





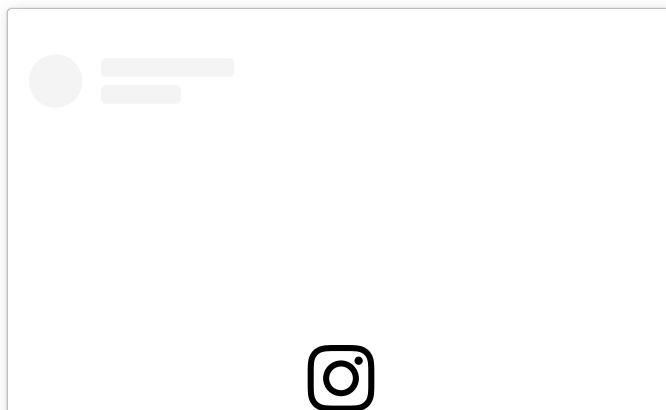
The case of Comau Fjord, in the Los Lagos Region, stands as a hallmark for the movement. This protected area was the origin of the campaign «Protected Areas Without Salmon Farms,» following a massive fish mortality event that exceeded 5,000 tons in 2021. This precedent, along with a stalled bill in Congress and President Gabriel Boric's announcement about the industry's exit from these zones—which activists consider merely rhetoric without concrete progress—prompted the declaration of the eight affected protected areas as sacrifice zones.

This declaration serves not only as a diagnosis but also as a list of demands. Indigenous communities, scientists, and environmental organizations are calling on the State to: 1) Immediately remove existing concessions from protected areas, 2) Impose a complete ban on new concessions in these territories, and 3) Establish an ecological restoration fund financed by the industry itself to heal the damaged ecosystems.

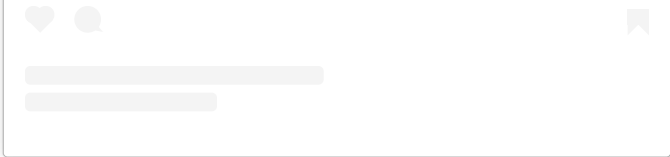
Through an emotional appeal, Defend Patagonia is calling on the nation to recognize the deep cultural and emotional ties Chileans have with the stunning landscapes of Patagonia: blue fjords, timeless glaciers, ancient forests, and vibrant biodiversity. They highlight the contrasting reality faced by local communities and indigenous peoples, whose traditions and livelihoods they claim are being «trampled by profit motives.»

Concluding with a call to action: «The State must choose between poisoned salmon or a vibrant future,» the campaign invites the public to join a petition and a «virtual march» under the banner #SalmonSacrificeZone, asserting that «the ocean does not wait» and that defending Patagonia is a national imperative.

See the published video shared by Defend Patagonia



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Fuente: El Ciudadano