



# **Protocol**

## **for**

# **Fallowing at Offshore Fin fish Farms**

(subject to revision from time to time)

**11 May, 2000**

# **Protocol for Fallowing at Offshore Finfish Farms**

## **1. Requirement to Fallow**

All finfish farms are obliged to undertake appropriate fallowing which is a recognised technique for the control of disease and parasite problems (including sea lice infestation).

## **2. Description of Fallowing**

Fallowing involves the separation of generations of farmed fish. Each generation of fish is maintained on a site, which is geographically separate. This separation prevents the transmission of disease organisms or parasites from older to younger generations of fish, thus reducing the level of infection in the younger generation. To effectively prevent the vertical transmission of disease and parasites, as this process is called, requires that, at the end of each production cycle at a site, it is left fallow for a period to ensure that all infective stages are dead, or gone, before restocking the site. For this process to be effective, the separation between sites must be sufficient to prevent lateral transfer of infective material between sites, the fallow period must be of an appropriate length and adjacent sites must fallow at the same time.

## **3. Current Best Practices**

The best results are obtained from fallowing regimes which incorporate the following elements:

- Smolts are stocked into designated smolt sites, which are not used to hold older fish.
- Smolt sites are high-energy sites (exposed sites with good water exchange), which are fallowed annually over the winter months.
- Production sites are distant from smolt sites.
- All production sites are fallowed annually for a minimum of 30 continuous days and all equipment on site cleared and disinfected.
- Adjacent production sites are fallowed synchronously.

Where there is more than one finfish farm in a particular bay, fallowing shall be pursued in the context of the Single Bay Management/CLAMS process. The Department of the Marine and Natural Resources reserves the right to prescribe specific fallowing requirements in particular cases if necessary.