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## Seaweed scientist says Bay of Fundy faces 'serious crisis'

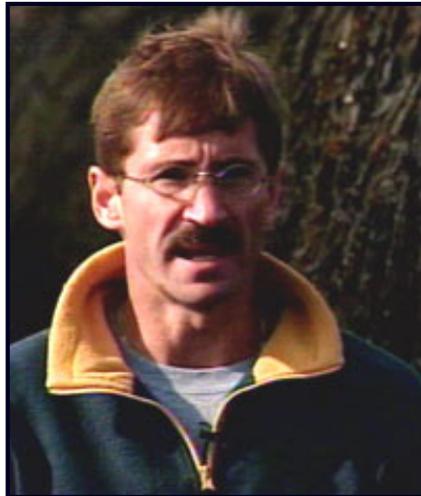
Last Updated Mon, 27 Oct 2003 19:26:20

ROUND MEADOW COVE, N.B. - The disappearance of some seaweeds could be a warning sign for the health of the Bay of Fundy, a New Brunswick scientist says.

Red seaweeds normally form underwater meadows in the bay, serving as habitat for everything from baby fish to big lobsters.

In parts of the bay, some species of red seaweed started vanishing around 1997.

Biology Prof. Gary Saunders studies seaweed at the University of New Brunswick. His team monitors areas of the bay.



Gary Saunders

Saunders is worried some seaweeds are disappearing from areas dotted by salmon farms.

"I think it is a serious problem," he said. "I think we're on the verge of a serious crisis in the bay."

Biologists say the lower covering of kelp and carpet of red algae has been completely lost. In its place, they're seeing signs of eutrophication, or higher nutrients in the water.

The province's \$270 million salmon farming industry says it's doing environmental monitoring to avoid any harm.

"Changes in the environment have a direct impact on the farm," said Jamie Smith, an environmental consultant for the New Brunswick Salmon Growers Association.

"So it's in the farmer's best interest to maintain as high environmental quality as absolutely possible."

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### EXTERNAL LINKS

- Prof. Gary Saunders: University of New Brunswick
- Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance
- New Brunswick Agriculture, Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Aquaculture Coordination Office: Fisheries and Oceans Canada

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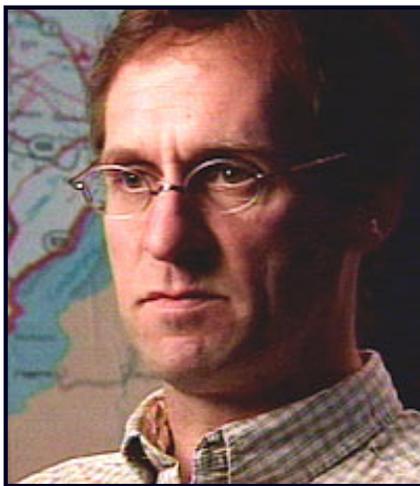
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Saunder's study area is bordered by the province's 99th salmon farm. He's watching for any decline of red seaweeds, which may be an early warning sign of environmental damage.



Jamie Smith

Last fall, the New Brunswick government began to require environmental operating approvals for salmon farms.

The federal department of Fisheries and Oceans is also halfway through a five-year, \$75-million project to set standards for sustainable aquaculture.

Written by CBC News Online [staff](#)

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