

From: [REDACTED]  
Subject:  
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The Cohen Enquiry,  
Suite 2800, P.O. Box 11530,  
650 W. Georgia St.,  
Vancouver, B.C., V6B 4N7

Dear Communications Officer,

Enclosed is a copy of a resolution submitted to the Canadian government by the Canadian Federation of University Women in 2006 by the Victoria chapter. As the Commission may know the Federation of University Women consists of 112 clubs in Canada with a membership of almost 10,000 women. This resolution was approved by all clubs and passed by the annual meeting held in Edmonton in 2006 and is on the internet at [cfuw.org](http://cfuw.org) @ advocacy policy.

Yours truly,  
Fern Payne (Kus)

#### **#4 ENFORCEMENT OF THE FISHERIES ACT**

Proposed by CFUW/Victoria

**RESOLVED**, that the Canadian Federation of University Women urge the Government of Canada and the Ministry of Fisheries and Oceans to enforce Fisheries Act to eliminate the pollution off fish and their habitat in Canada's coastal and inland waters.

#### **Background**

FISHERIES ACT, Government of Canada (revised 1985)

##### REGULATIONS

36(i) No one shall

- (a) throw overboard ballast, ashes, stones or other prejudicial substances in any river, harbour or roadstead, or in any water where fishing is carried on,
- (b) leave or cause to be thrown, left or deposited on the beach or bank of any water or on the beach between high and low water mark, remains or offal of fish or any marine animal or,
- (c) leave decayed or decaying fish in any net or any other fishing apparatus.

Deposit of deleterious substances prohibited

- (iii) subject to section (iv) no person shall deposit or permit the deposit of a deleterious substance of any type in water frequented by fish or in any place under conditions where the deleterious substance or any other deleterious substance that results from the deposit of the deleterious substance may enter the water.

34(i) Deleterious substance means

- (a) that any substance that if added to any water, would degrade or alter or form part of a process of degradation or alteration of the quality of that water so that it is rendered or is likely to be rendered deleterious to fish or fish habitat or to the use by man or fish that frequent that water.

According to the National Sewage Report Card of the Sierra Legal Defense Fund of September (2004), twenty-two Canadian cities dump 140 billion litres of raw sewage into Canadian waters annually. Included in these are St. John's, Halifax, Montreal, Vancouver and Victoria. Both Halifax and St. John's are in the process of constructing primary sewage plants. Municipal sewage contains biological waste, chemicals from industries, storm sewer run-off and sewer overflows during times of heavy rain or snow melt.

Biological waste contains the remains of pharmaceuticals ingested by Canadians. Among these are birth control pills whose hormones become endocrine disruptors that cause serious genetic mutations as reported by Scott Simpson in the Vancouver Sun, (Oct 25,

2001). These disruptors are being found in an increasing number of substances such as pesticides, herbicides and industrial wastes derived from hydrocarbons. At present, the federal Ministry of the Environment is conducting a study on endocrine disruptors which is to be completed by 2008. Some soaps, cleaning solvents and plastics may also be carcinogenic according to studies done by the U.S. Environment Protection Agency.

Leachate from abandoned landfills and closed mining sites continue to drain for some time after closure. At present, Victoria pumps leachate from its regional landfill to its sewage outfalls as revealed by Bill Cleverly, Times Colonist, (July 9, 2004). If fish or crustaceans, especially bivalves, enter such polluted water they die off within hours (Simpson, 2001). If they happen to survive they are toxic for human consumption and are closed to harvesting, as noted in the British Columbia Tidal Water Sports Fishing Guide, (2005). They have, in any case, long disappeared from Victoria's beaches.

The Macaulay and Clover Point Wastewater and Marine Environment Program, (2002) for the regional district of Victoria, states in its executive summary that mercury and 1,4-dichlorobenzene have regularly exceeded all guidelines for areas close to outfalls and beyond. Since then the former has decreased as the result of a collection from dentists' offices.

Suspended particles present in untreated sewage promote the growth of algae and aquatic plants that, as they mature, lead to an oversupply of nutrients and eutrophication. A 2001 National Survey of Wastewater Treatment Plants conducted by the Canadian Water and Wastewater Association found that of 738 facilities surveyed only 39 had treatment for nitrogen removal and 191 had phosphorus removal reported by the Sierra Legal Defence Fund (2004).

Tests carried out by this organization during 1997 on the efficacy of Vancouver's three secondary plants reveal that the copper and lead contents were reduced by 90%, mercury by almost 100%, arsenic by 25%, plastics by 80%, and zinc and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) by 67%.

On July 9, 2004, Louise Dickson in the Times Colonist quoted Environment Minister Stephane Dion saying that he wished to see at least secondary treatment in all communities across Canada.

Without proper treatment for sewage of Canadian municipalities our coastal and inland waters will continue to deteriorate, endangering the health of all Canadians, gradually destroying Canada's fishing industry and severely affecting a significant part of Canada's food sustainability.

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