

Freshwater aquaculture gets help from interprovincial group

After years of being handicapped by unofficial moratoriums in various parts of the country, the Interprovincial Partnership for Sustainable Freshwater Aquaculture Development (IPSFAD) has begun taking steps to help develop the freshwater sector of the industry.

Speaking at the Aquaculture Association of Canada conference in Edmonton, Alberta

some weeks ago program coordinator Grant Vandenberg of Quebec's Laval University said that one of the initial hurdles for an interlocking Canada-wide program to aid the freshwater sector was that it remains comparatively small, even on a nation-wide basis; and continues not only to struggle in some areas but is to some extent quite isolated within each province.

He added that even as the program has begun to come together to focus on research-and-development and commercialization projects in the industry, there were some significant innovation and knowledge gaps that needed to be addressed as quickly as possible.

One of the main obstacles, he said, was that commercialization and development ideas

which had been developed for study in laboratories and research institutions have begun to die from lack of attention.

To deal with that, said Vandenberg, the IPSFAD partners held a meeting to bring forward issues and concerns needing to be addressed.

All-told, said Vandenberg, 49 issues were identified and brought forward for discussion and brainstorming. Those were reclassified into 19 R&D initiatives under six themes, a much more manageable way of deal with such a large number of topics.

Vandenberg said the organization became a not-for-profit organization in 2006 in order to allow for a better and more

coordinated administrative structure for handling projects.

"There was a clear lack of shared cooperation between projects and total lack of coordination between projects," he said. "It's very easy to sit in your office and think up what difficulties the industry faces, but it's a very different thing to go out and talk to the industry about what's happening."

He said that recently the interprovincial board of directors has been working on what he termed "a very aggressive and comprehensive" action plan to cover the next two years, to help the freshwater aquaculture industry grow and develop.

— *Quentin Dodd*



Grant Vandenberg of Quebec's Laval University