

Chilean salmon producers obliged to disclose antibiotic use

Chile's salmonid producers will be forced to reveal the exact volume of antibiotics they use each year, after the country's Supreme Court rejected an appeal by the salmon industry for this to remain confidential.

Previously, while the total volume of antibiotics used by the industry was published, the ruling means that each company's use will now be publicly available – as requested by Oceana.

The appeal, which had been filed by the salmon farming industry against the ministers of the Court of Appeals, aimed to revoke the sentence that ordered the National Fisheries Service (Sernapesca) to publish information of the industry's use of antibiotics per company in 2014. In the recent ruling, the court dismissed any serious fault or abuse conducted by the ministers and rejecting the business secrecy hypothesis backed by the salmon producers' union by stating that "this information should be made known to the public in view of the importance of the salmon industry for human consumption".

Oceana's Executive Director in Chile, Liesbeth van der Meer, celebrated the ruling, saying: "This is a victory for transparency and consumers. From now on, all salmon farming businesses need to publicly and separately report their use of antibiotics so that we don't have to wait years to find out.

"Efficient and effective measures need to be taken to finally and substantially reduce the industry's use of antibiotics in their production processes," she said.

According to official figures, Chilean companies used 382,500 kg of antibiotics to produce 727,812 tonnes of salmon in 2016.

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