

Salmones Camanchaca finalized the mortality collection in all sites affected by the most relevant algal bloom in the last 20 years.

- The company concluded the mass mortality contingency after collecting and transferring to certified processing plants, the total (100%) of the biomass that did not survive this serious natural phenomenon that affected the Los Lagos Region, which corresponds to 50% of the biomass it had in the area. The remaining volume could be saved and preventively transferred to other authorized sites outside the area.

- Given the large scale and logistical complexity, the operation involved 18 vessels and involved coordination between 50 professional divers, artisanal fishermen, more than 100 specialists and technology provided by different companies from the region.

Puerto Montt, April 18, 2021 - Salmones Camanchaca informed that at midday this Sunday, April 18, the completion of mortality collection of all the fish affected by an extraordinary bloom of toxic algae in areas that include the Comau fjord, where the company has 4 sites in operation. The Company reported that 1.6 million fish died and were sent to certified processing plants, an amount that represents 50% of the total Atlantic salmon farmed in the area.

"We have concluded the rescue and removal of mortality that was caused by a very unusual and violent natural phenomenon that impacted us in an area where we had four sites operating. We had not seen these harmful algae for more than 20 years, and despite the fact that we have state-of-the-art systems to support the fish with oxygen and upwellings from deeper waters, the mortality was significant, affecting a little more than 1.6 million salmon. The containment efforts deployed prevented the mortality of a similar number of fish, which were rescued and moved out of the affected area. We did everything we could to combat this serious natural phenomenon," said Manuel Arriagada Ossa, general manager of Salmones Camanchaca.

Arriagada added. "We are maintaining special clean-up work at the site for subsequent stages of the operations deployed, actions that included a complex and extensive operation that meant working, on some days, at seven sites simultaneously. This required maximum operational, logistical, economic and human efforts, both our own and valuable contributions from artisanal fishermen and many suppliers in the area".

As informed by the company, the task of extracting all non-surviving fish and transporting them to specialized plants was completed. The focus was to protect the area where the sites are located, avoiding further mortality by transferring close to 1.4 million live fish to other centers.

In addition to the containment and removal of the mortality, Arriagada informed that "in addition to the cleaning work, we maintain a continuous protocol for monitoring the environmental conditions to report on their state", adding that now comes a detailed and in-depth operational-logistical review process that will generate the necessary lessons to enable us to respond to large-scale contingencies more quickly and effectively.

Salmones Camanchaca informed that before this situation, they had a contingency plan prepared in advance, which added to the traditional methods of extraction, the operation of high-capacity fishing boats, hermeticity and cold storage systems to preserve the raw material, in addition to a plant with state-of-the-art technology for the raw material, a plan that was activated to its full capacity when faced with the magnitude of the algae bloom. All actions were reported to and authorized by the competent authorities. Despite the above, the magnitude of the phenomenon that affected the sea was so large that activities could not be concluded in less time. The company will make available to the competent bodies all the data and background information available, including the daily activity log with details of actions carried out to contain and mitigate this contingency.

The work carried out included three main areas: prevention of greater mortality by moving fish out of the area and reducing feeding to lower metabolism; use of traditional and new methods, such as large fishing boats and disposal plants, to extract mortality, plus special suction equipment; and containment and cleaning of organic material from the affected fish that remain on the surface, together with environmental monitoring in the surrounding area.

The harmful algal bloom (HAB or algal bloom) is a phenomenon that was associated with climatic and oceanographic conditions that were generated by summer solar radiation out of range for that geographic area and lack of rainfall, among others. In fact, the summer of 2021 was particularly hot and is the second driest in the last 70 years.