



Don Staniford
salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com

Our Reference: 202000018081

25 March 2020

Dear Mr Staniford ,

Thank you for your letter of 24 February to the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Tourism asking what precautions Scottish Ministers are taking in relation to Bio-security protocols & safety in the import of ova for use on Scottish salmon farms. I have been asked to reply.

The Scottish Government takes the protection of aquatic animals and their environment seriously. That is why we have adopted international standards which minimise the risk of pathogen transfer and the spread of aquatic animal disease.

The OIE World Organisation for Animal Health, Aquatic Code and Aquatic Manual are international standards which provide solid principles to help protect aquatic animal health on a global basis. They include standards supporting safe trade, at the international level, of aquatic animals (fish molluscs, crustaceans and amphibians) and their products.

Scotland, as part of the Great Britain health zone, has approved disease free status for many of the listed fish diseases specified within Council Directive 2006/88/EC and is also recognised as free from *Gyrodactylus salaris* under Council Decision 2010/221/EU.

Under the current regulations, trade between countries, zones or compartments can only occur between those of equal health status or take place from an area of higher to lower health status – measures to help prevent the spread of disease. Health status is based upon historical testing and appropriate surveillance to prescribed levels, recognised through international processes.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot



Within Scotland, The Aquatic Animal Health (Scotland) Regulations 2009 (the 2009 Regulations) implement Council Directive 2006/88/EC on animal health requirements for aquaculture animals and products thereof, and on the prevention and control of certain diseases in aquatic animals.

Under these regulations the importation or introduction of aquatic animals from third countries, EU or EFTA member states can only occur if the consignment is supported by a valid health certificate with appropriate health attestations applicable to the health status of the importing country, zone or compartment. No imports of ova can be accepted without appropriate certification testified by the Competent Authority of the exporting country. These measure help to reduce the risks associated with the trade in live aquatic animals.

In addition, the Trade in Animals and Related Products (Scotland) regulations 2012 require that the importer or consignee of ova from an EU Member State notifies the Scottish Ministers prior to arrival of the consignment. This notification is made to the Fish Health Inspectorate and allows them to confirm that the source is located in a country, zone or compartment recognised as free from the appropriate listed disease. They will advise the importer if the source does not meet the required health standards and the consignment cannot enter the country. Consignments originating from a third country must enter Great Britain via a Border Control Post where the accompanying health documentation is presented to the official veterinarian. If the consignment fails to meet the health standards, permission to enter will be refused.

Under the 2009 Regulations, Aquaculture Production Businesses (APBs) can be granted authorisation to farm, where it is considered that the operation of the business will not lead to an unacceptable risk of spreading disease. Specific conditions of operation are stated, including the requirement for the business to follow good bio-security practice at each farm site in operation.

Such measures include the establishment, maintenance and compliance with a Biosecurity Measures Plan (BMP) aimed at identifying and mitigating the risk of contracting and spreading disease at the site level. Specific measures for operators importing or introducing stocks may involve the disinfection of ova to reduce the risks from horizontal transmission of pathogens and disease, or the initial isolation of new stocks brought on site as a precautionary disease control measure. The BMP is subject to inspection by Marine Scotland's Fish Health Inspectorate as part of the aquatic animal health risk-based surveillance programme.

Aquatic animal health surveillance, undertaken in accordance with Council Directive 2006/88/EC and the 2009 Regulations, is designed to support the early detection of disease and to help minimise the risks of disease introduction and transmission.

One aspect of surveillance is an active risk-based surveillance programme aimed at assessing the risk any individual site poses to contracting and spreading diseases and their pathogens.

The greater the risk posed, the greater the frequency of inspections conducted.

The movement of aquaculture animals onto a site, including imports or introductions from other areas is one factor which can increase the risk an individual site poses and result in a higher inspection frequency.

Further Information

Further information is provided through the following online resources.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

Details on the responsibilities of importing and exporting countries: https://www.oie.int/index.php?id=171&L=0&htmfile=chapitre_certification_general.htm

Minimum information required as part of a BMP: <https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/marine/Fish-Shellfish/FHI/authorisation/apb/bmp>

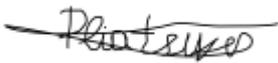
A disinfection guide providing guidance and best practice outlining strategies to minimise and prevent the spread of disease: <https://www2.gov.scot/Resource/0038/00385854.pdf>.

Details of the surveillance programme implemented by Marine Scotland's Fish Health Inspectorate:

<https://www.gov.scot/policies/fish-health-inspectorate/>

I hope this is helpful in explaining our position.

Yours sincerely



Panagiotis Pliatsikas

DMARINE : Aquaculture, Crown Estate, Recreational Fisheries, EMFF and Europe

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
www.gov.scot



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

Accredited
Until 2020

