Media Backgrounder (September 2018)

Scottish Salmon's Mort Mountain
- Leaping to Record Levels in 2018?

Summary:

- Data published by SEPA in August 2018 reveals that mortalities during the first six months of 2018 are the 2nd worst (after 2017) on record (data available since 2002)

- Mortalities ('morts') are predicted to leap over 20,000 tonnes by the end of 2018 (and could surpass 2017's 25,000 tonnes)

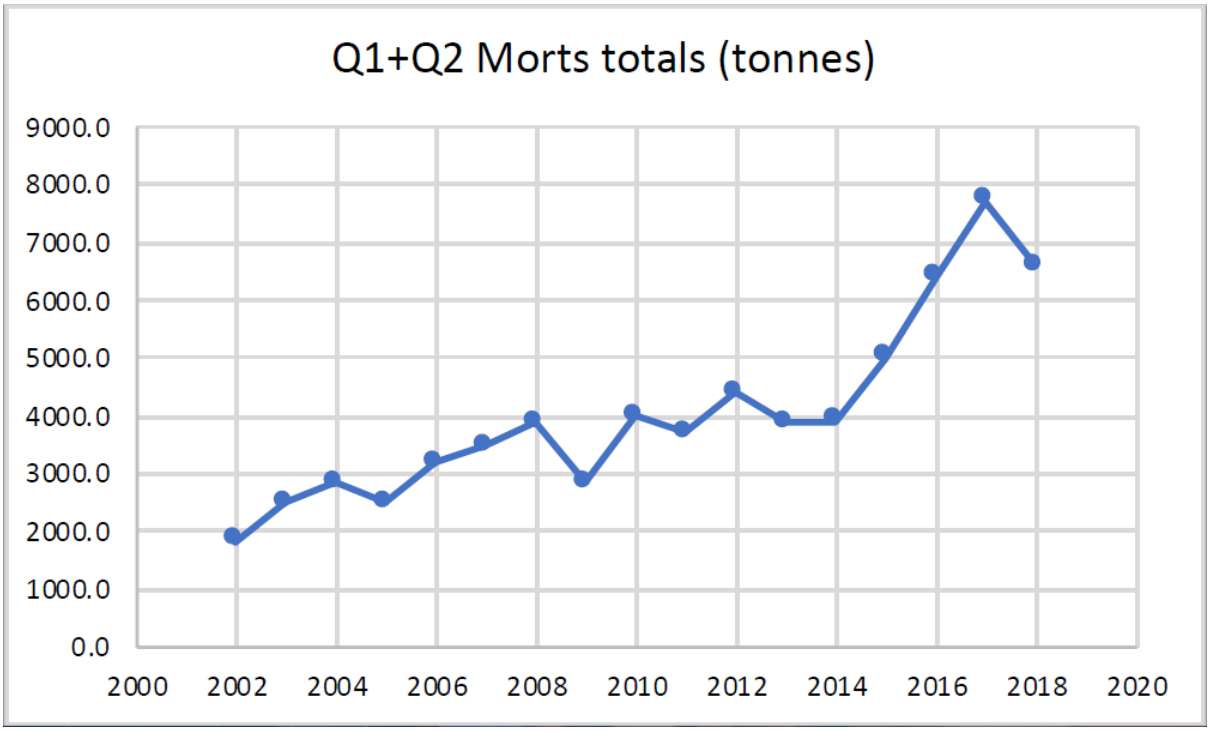
- Mortalities in the second six months of the year account for ca. 70% of morts (October is the worst month for morts closely followed by September and November)

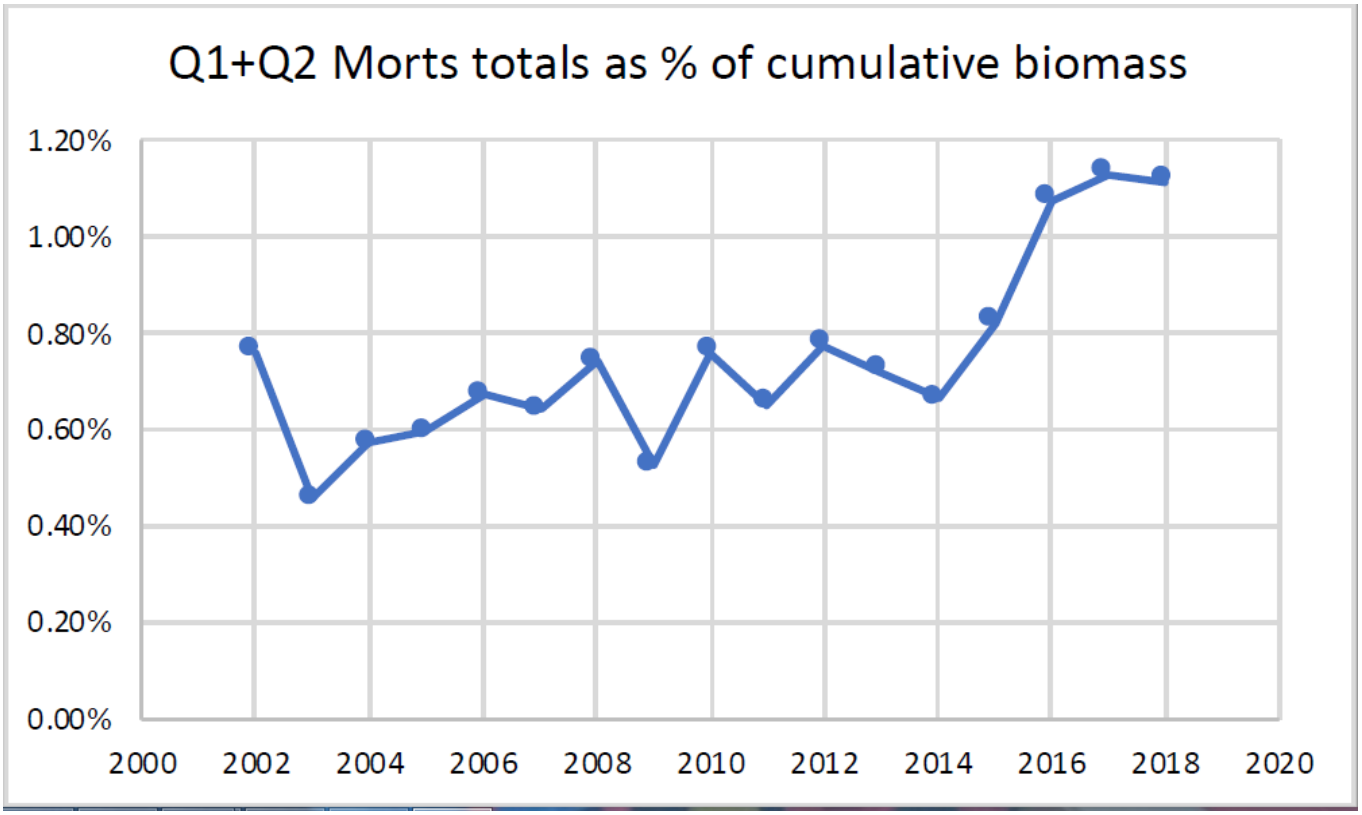
- Marine Harvest's Carradale (North) salmon farm reported 19% mortality in March 2018 with 193 tonnes of morts (even though Marine Harvest have denied a mort problem)

- Scottish Salmon Company's site at Taranaish in Loch Roag (next to the Vacasay site exposed by photographer Corin Smith) lost 129 tonnes (9.9% of fish) in June 2018

- Data on actual mort numbers has not been available since 2012 following lobbying by the SSPO who said publication would be "commercially damaging" (only weight of mortalities is published). In 2012 there were 8.5 million morts - now there could be over 20 million at a mortality rate of 26.7%

Mort data via Scotland's Aquaculture web-site (new data for Q2 2018 was posted in late August 2018):

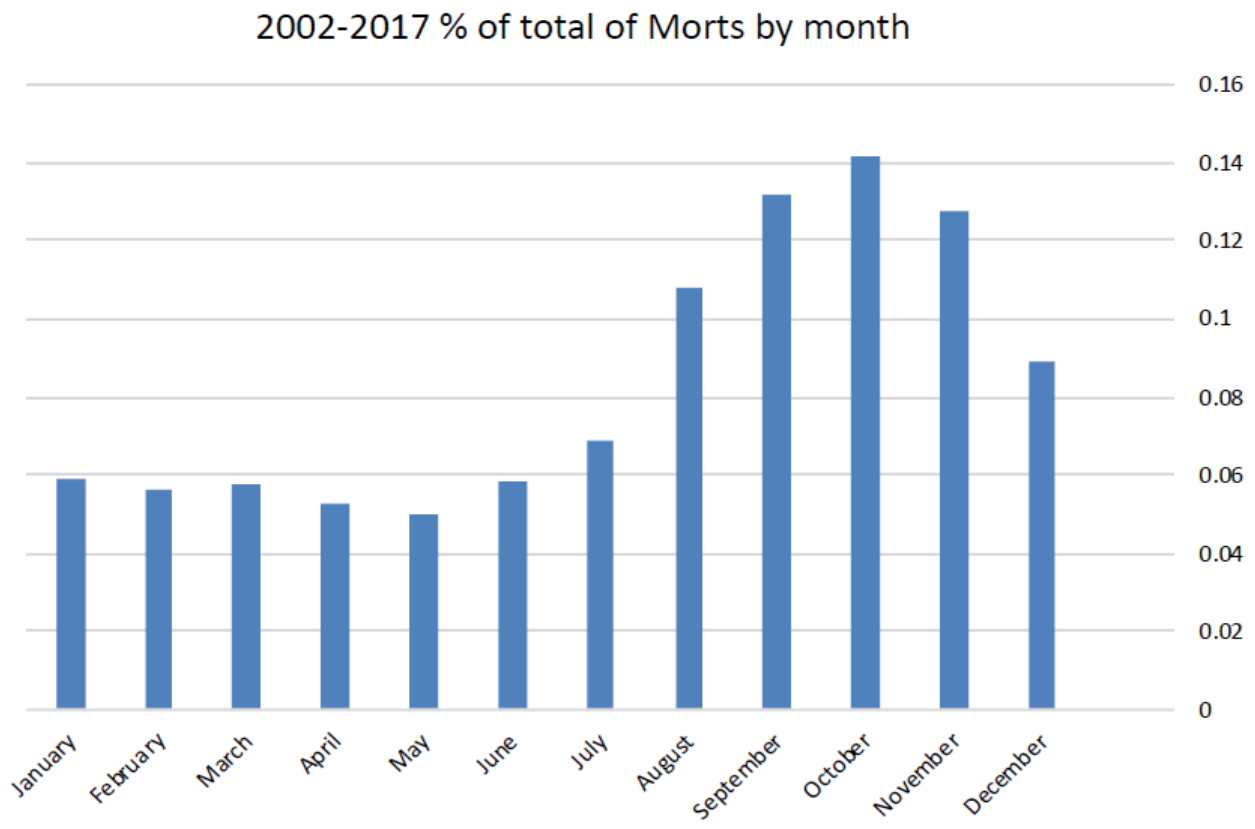




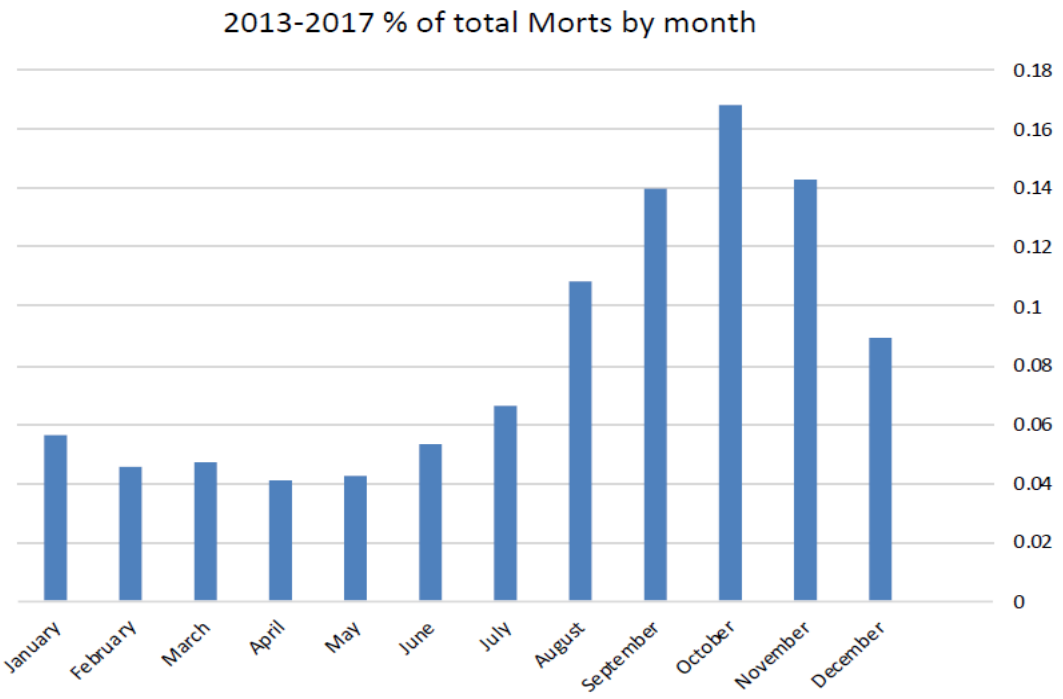
Data analysis of SEPA's mort data since 2002 reveals that ca. 30% of mortalities occur in the first six months of the year with ca. 70% of mortalities in the second six months of the year (due to rising Summer temperatures causing lice and disease problems) and the last four months of the year (September to December) accounting for ca. 50% of morts:

	TOTAL ANNUAL MORTS (tonnes)	Q1 + Q2 total	Q1 + Q2 total as a % of the year	Sept - Dec total	Sept - Dec total as % of the year
2018		6581.9			
2017	25737.5	7705.6	29.94%	13309.2	51.71%
2016	22478.4	6396.1	28.45%	10895.5	48.47%
2015	18649.3	4989.9	26.76%	10708.8	57.42%
2014	16479.8	3893.8	23.63%	10461.1	63.48%
2013	10598.0	3882.8	36.64%	5282.0	49.84%
2012	13429.1	4400.8	32.77%	6393.9	47.61%
2011	9670.8	3702.0	38.28%	4854.4	50.20%
2010	7846.0	3987.8	50.83%	2620.1	33.39%
2009	8463.1	2823.6	33.36%	3621.7	42.79%
2008	9201.7	3880.9	42.18%	3952.9	42.96%
2007	11590.4	3458.1	29.84%	6234.4	53.79%
2006	8225.6	3185.2	38.72%	3382.4	41.12%
2005	5222.5	2501.5	47.90%	1933.5	37.02%
2004	6967.1	2825.8	40.56%	2894.3	41.54%
2003	6582.4	2492.4	37.86%	2716.9	41.28%
2002	4582.4	1823.6	39.80%	1654.2	36.10%
		Average	36.09%		46.17%
		10yr average	34.28%		48.79%
		5 yr average	29.08%		54.18%
		3 yr average	28.38%		52.53%

The month of October accounts for over 14% of morts closely followed by September and November which account for well above their fair share of morts (if all morts were spread evenly each month would account for 8%):

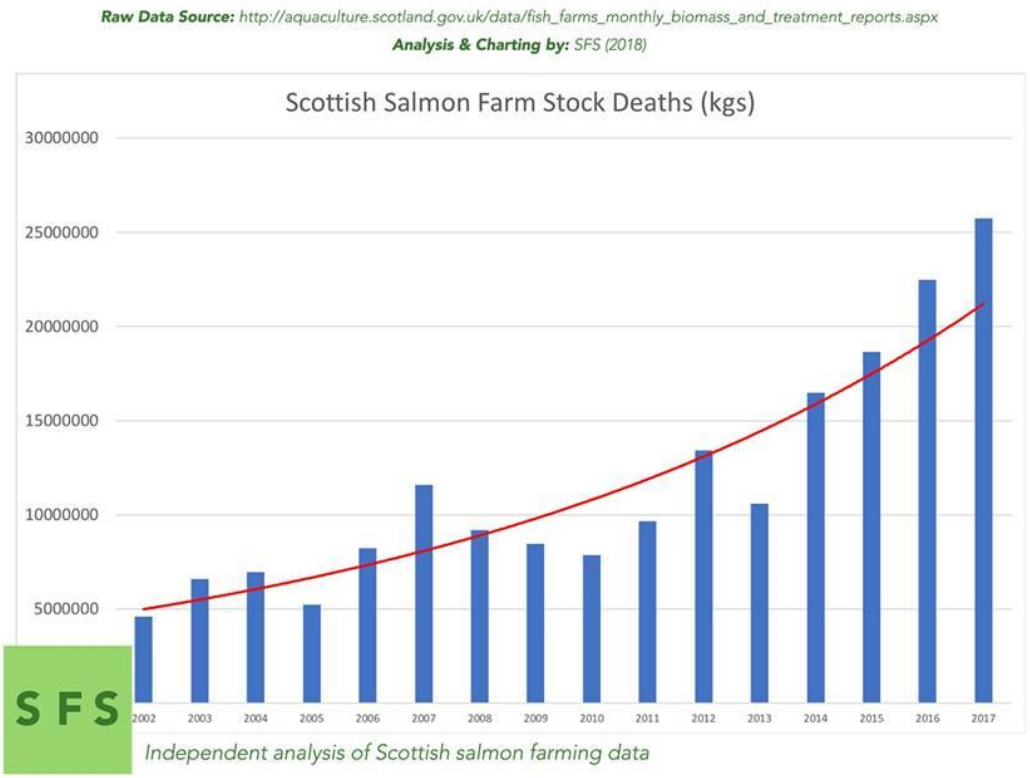


Over the period 2002-2017, there is an increasing trend towards higher mortalities in the latter months of the year - here's average monthly mort data for 2013-2017:



Download Excel spreadsheet online via [2018 Mort data from Scotland's Aquaculture (Q1 & Q2)]

Here's an analysis of the data by [Corin Smith at SFS]:



And more via Corin Smith's Facebook page 'Inside Scottish Salmon Farming' posted on 18 September 2018:

Corin Smith - Inside Scottish Salmon Farming
1 hr ·

👇 The devil is in the data.

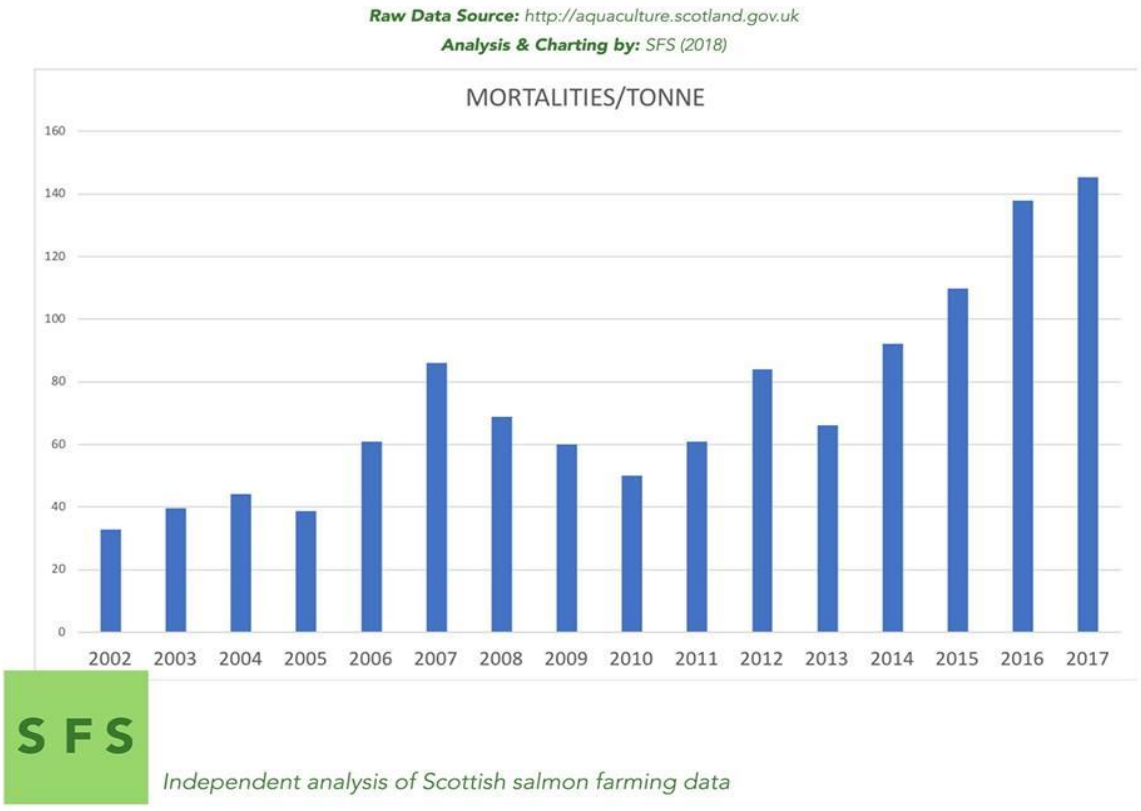
The inescapable truth about salmon farming in Scotland.

In 2017 the MORTALITY RATE on Scottish salmon farms was THREE TIMES HIGHER than 15 years ago. Three times the amount of dead salmon per tonne on Scottish salmon farms. Nearly one in every four fish dies during the rearing process in saltwater now.

Higher mortality rates = lower welfare standards, more disease, more parasites and much bigger environmental impacts.

This is directly linked with having more and more fish crammed into the same surface area and much more intensive farming. There is no sign of this trend reversing, it is actually getting worse and potentially breaking out from a linear relationship to an exponential one. Which would be entirely expected with greater intensity and no transformational technology.

Mark Ruskell MSP - Scottish Greens Rob Edwards Claudia Beamish RSPCA Assured SSPCA Proud to farm Scottish Salmon Jamie Oliver River Cottage Kate Forbes MSP



According to the Scotland's Aquaculture database, 193 tonnes of dead salmon was reported at Marine Harvest's Carradale (North) site in Kilbrannan Sound in March 2018.

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Fish Farms Monthly Biomass and Treatment Reports

Fish Farm Monthly Biomass and Treatments Details	
Year	2018
Month	March
Submitted By	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd
Licence Number	CAR/L/1131788/V3
Licence active at time of report	CAR/L/1131788
Report for Site	ELGN2 Carradale (North)
Max licensed biomass on site (tonnes)	2500
Actual biomass on site (tonnes)	1020
Biomass Exceedance (tonnes)	0
Feed (kg)	135761
Mortalities (kg)	192508.1697375660

Location Details	
Receiving Water	Kilbrannan Sound
National Grid Reference	NR81634150
View on Map	View on Map

Data supplied by SEPA on 31/08/2018

Other mass mortalities included:

129 tonnes of dead salmon (the biggest loss reported at any salmon farm in Scotland during Q2) at The Scottish Salmon Company's salmon farm at Taranaish in Loch Roag on the Isle of Lewis in June 2018.

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Fish Farms Monthly Biomass and Treatment Reports

Fish Farm Monthly Biomass and Treatments Details	
Year	2018
Month	June
Submitted By	The Scottish Salmon Company Ltd
Licence Number	CAR/L/1017374/V11
Licence active at time of report	CAR/L/1017374
Report for Site	TARA1 Taranaish
Max licensed biomass on site (tonnes)	1710
Actual biomass on site (tonnes)	1301
Biomass Exceedance (tonnes)	0
Feed (kg)	221494
Mortalities (kg)	129342

Location Details	
Receiving Water	Loch Roag
National Grid Reference	NB18063710
View on Map	View on Map

Data supplied by SEPA on 31/08/2018

A 'Mortality Event Report' for Taranaish obtained via FOI in August cited "muscle fatigue":

Mortality Event Report	
Mortality Event ID	MRT00652
Site Name:	Taranaish
Site No:	FS0752
Start date of mortality:	14/05/2018
Period of mortality:	weekly
Percentage mortality:	1.2
Explained/unexplained:	Explained
Reason (if explained):	Post treatment
Business Name:	The scottish salmon company
Business Number:	FB0169
Species:	SAL
Water Type:	SW
Weight (site average):	>750g
Weight (affected population average):	2.7kg
Age:	2017 s1
Estimated number of fish lost:	not disclosed
Additional information:	biomarkers showed muscle fatigue, but a physical treatment for sea lice was required causing the increase in mortalities
MS action:	FHI to monitor

Mort data obtained by Scottish Salmon Watch in August 2018:

A FOI disclosure by the Scottish Government on 16 August detailed dozens of 'Mortality Event Reports' (including the one for Taranaish above but interestingly none from Marine Harvest's salmon farms at Carradale) - download PDFs online here and online here

The Scottish Government's covering letter dated 16 August 2018 included:

Response to your request

As you will be aware, Marine Scotland's Fish Health Inspectorate does not hold a comprehensive record of mortality across Scotland's Aquaculture sites. Snap shots of mortality are captured through our Aquatic Animal Health Surveillance activities, the results and information relating to the same are published through our active publication plan. Further details available on our web site:

https://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/Fish-Shellfish/FHI/CaseInformation

In addition to this, voluntary reporting thresholds have been agreed between Scottish Government and the industry with respect to specific development stages of farmed fish. This agreement was reached through the Healthier Fish Working Group and the reporting thresholds which were recommended have been adopted by industry stakeholders. Details of the mortality reporting requirements are contained within the Code of Good Practice for Scottish Finfish Aquaculture (CoGP). I would like to emphasise that this is a voluntary agreement with no statutory basis behind reporting. Please refer to the relevant pages within the CoGP for further information:

http://thecodeofgoodpractice.co.uk/

You may also be interested to know that the Scottish Salmon Producers' Organisation (SSPO) have, very recently, started to publish fish farm mortality information. You can find further information regarding the same on the SSPO website through the following link:

http://scottishsalmon.co.uk/salmon-survival-mortality-data/

'Mortality Event Reports' provided via a 46-page PDF (download online here) included reference to "lesions from fish rubbing against net":

Mortality Event Report

Mortality Event ID	MRT00592	
Site Name:	Taranaish	
Site No:	FS0752	
Start date of mortality:		12/02/2018
Period of mortality:	Weekly	
Percentage mortality:	1.17	
Explained/unexplained:	Explained	
Reason (if explained):	Predator damage/lesions	
Business Name:	The Scottish Salmon Company	
Business Number:	FB0169	
Species:	SAL	
Water Type:	S	
Weight (site average):	≥750g	
Weight (affected population average):	2.5-3Kg	
Age:	2017 S1	
Estimated number of fish lost:	not disclosed	
Additional information:	Seal in one cage (no net damage). Lesions from fish rubbing against net	
MS action:	FHI to monitor. % figure collected during visit to office; 26/3/18	

Another report cited "physical damage, due to poor weather":

Mortality Event Report	
Mortality Event ID	MRT00615
Site Name:	Meall Mhor Loch Fyne
Site No:	FS0091
Start date of mortality:	12/03/2018
Period of mortality:	Weekly
Percentage mortality:	1.05
Explained/unexplained:	Explained
Reason (if explained):	Physical damage, due to poor weather.
Business Name:	The Scottish Salmon Company
Business Number:	FB0169
Species:	SAL
Water Type:	s
Weight (site average):	>750g
Weight (affected population average):	~0.900g
Age:	2017S0s
Estimated number of fish lost:	not disclosed
Additional information:	Increased morting. Site was inspected on 26/3/18 for routine surveillance, fieve fish diagnostic taken.
MS action:	Site has been inspected and samples taken (2018 0113)

Another report cited "strong tides/physical damage":

Mortality Event Report	
Mortality Event ID	MRT00636
Site Name:	Druimyeon Bay
Site No:	FS0336
Start date of mortality:	23/04/2018
Period of mortality:	Weekly
Percentage mortality:	1.1
Explained/unexplained:	Explained
Reason (if explained):	Strong tides/ physical damage
Business Name:	The Scottish Salmon Company
Business Number:	FB0169
Species:	SAL
Water Type:	SW
Weight (site average):	>750
Weight (affected population average):	~8kg
Age:	S0 2016
Estimated number of fish lost:	not disclosed
Additional information:	Site due to harvest
MS action:	FHI to monitor situation.

Another report cited "storm at site, fish showed damage from rubbing against net":

Mortality Event Report

Mortality Event ID	MRT00585
Site Name:	Slocka Ronas Voe
Site No:	FS1018
Start date of mortality:	01/01/2018
Period of mortality:	Weekly
Percentage mortality:	3.05
Explained/unexplained:	Explained
Reason (if explained):	Physical damage
Business Name:	Scottish Sea Farms Ltd
Business Number:	FB0125
Species:	SAL
Water Type:	S
Weight (site average):	≥750g
Weight (affected population average):	2.5kg
Age:	2017 S1
Estimated number of fish lost:	11325
Additional information:	Storm at site, fish showed damage from rubbing against net. Company biologist attended site, mortalities dropped below 1% following week.
MS action:	FHI to monitor

A second 57-page PDF (download online here) detailed further 'Mortality Event Reports' - including the report citing "physical damage following storm":

Mortality Event Report

Mortality Event ID	MRT00658
Site Name:	Eilean Grianain
Site No:	FS1176
Start date of mortality:	19/03/2018
Period of mortality:	Weekly
Percentage mortality:	1.808
Explained/unexplained:	Explained
Reason (if explained):	Physical damage
Business Name:	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd
Business Number:	FB0119
Species:	Sal
Water Type:	SW
Weight (site average):	≥750g
Weight (affected population average):	945g
Age:	2017 Q4
Estimated number of fish lost:	15504
Additional information:	Physical damage following storm. Strong peak in easterly winds. Health team visited to check for 2ndy infections but not an issue. Any badly damaged fish were removed and dispatched. Mort levels fell to 0.171% week 15 9/4/18
MS action:	PSI case 20180233 Site manager contacted for further details. Mort levels on site currently very low; 0.0143%.

And this report detailing over 140,000 farmed salmon killed at Marine Harvest again citing "physical damage following storm":

Mortality Event Report	
Mortality Event ID	MRT00659
Site Name:	Eilean Grianain
Site No:	FS1176
Start date of mortality:	26/03/2018
Period of mortality:	Weekly
Percentage mortality:	16.689
Explained/unexplained:	Explained
Reason (if explained):	Physical damage
Business Name:	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd
Business Number:	FB0119
Species:	SAL
Water Type:	SW
Weight (site average):	≥750g
Weight (affected population average):	945g
Age:	2017 Q4
Estimated number of fish lost:	140488
Additional information:	Physical damage following storm. Strong peak in easterly winds. Health team visited to check for 2ndy infections but not an issue. Any badly damaged fish were removed and dispatched. Mort levels fell to 0.171% week 15 9/4/18
MS action:	PSI case 20180233 Site manager contacted for further details. Mort levels on site currently very low; 0.0143%.

This report referred to problems at Marine Harvest due to lice-skirts:

Mortality Event Report	
Mortality Event ID	MRT00665
Site Name:	Loch Greshornish
Site No:	FS0015
Start date of mortality:	01/01/2018
Period of mortality:	Weekly
Percentage mortality:	1.11
Explained/unexplained:	Explained
Reason (if explained):	anaemia
Business Name:	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd
Business Number:	FB0119
Species:	SAL
Water Type:	SW
Weight (site average):	≥750g
Weight (affected population average):	2kg
Age:	2017 Q1
Estimated number of fish lost:	7516
Additional information:	It was reported that lice skirts on site had a lot of natural growth which caused water quality issues leading to poor gill health and anaemia and increased mortalities. The skirts have been removed and in Feb the whole site had a fw treatment for the gill issues. Mort levels have since decreased.
MS action:	PSI case 20180269 Mort levels currently low at 0.38% for wk22 (2018) and 0.22% wk 23 (2018). Fell to 0.78%/site/wk in wk13 2018(26th March)

Video footage shot by Scottish Salmon Watch in Loch Spelve shows lice-infestation of both farmed salmon and cleaner fish at a salmon farm with lice skirts - read more via Press Release: "Dirty Secrets Lurking Under Scottish Salmon's Lice Skirt"

Another report cited "physical damage following March storms" and over 10,000 morts at Marine Harvest's Hellisay salmon farm:

Mortality Event Report

Mortality Event ID	MRT00677	
Site Name:	Hellisay	
Site No:	FS1261	
Start date of mortality:		19/03/2018
Period of mortality:	Weekly	
Percentage mortality:		3.48
Explained/unexplained:	Explained	
Reason (if explained):	Physical damage	
Business Name:	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	
Business Number:	FB0119	
Species:	SAL	
Water Type:	sw	
Weight (site average):	<750g	
Weight (affected population average):	102g	
Age:	2018 Q1	
Estimated number of fish lost:		10546
Additional information:	Physical damage following March storms. Mort figures have returned to normal and were reported as 0.07% for site for week 22 (WB22/5/18) and 0.07% (WB23 4/6/18).	
MS action:		

Then another 38,000 morts due to "physical damage following March storms":

Mortality Event Report

Mortality Event ID	MRT00678	
Site Name:	Hellisay	
Site No:	FS1261	
Start date of mortality:		26/03/2018
Period of mortality:	Weekly	
Percentage mortality:	13.01	
Explained/unexplained:	Explained	
Reason (if explained):	Physical damage	
Business Name:	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	
Business Number:	FB0119	
Species:	SAL	
Water Type:	sw	
Weight (site average):	<750g	
Weight (affected population average):	109g	
Age:	2018 Q1	
Estimated number of fish lost:		38093
Additional information:	Physical damage following March storms. Mort figures have returned to normal and were reported as 0.07% for site for week 22 (WB22/5/18) and 0.07% (WB23 4/6/18).	
MS action:		

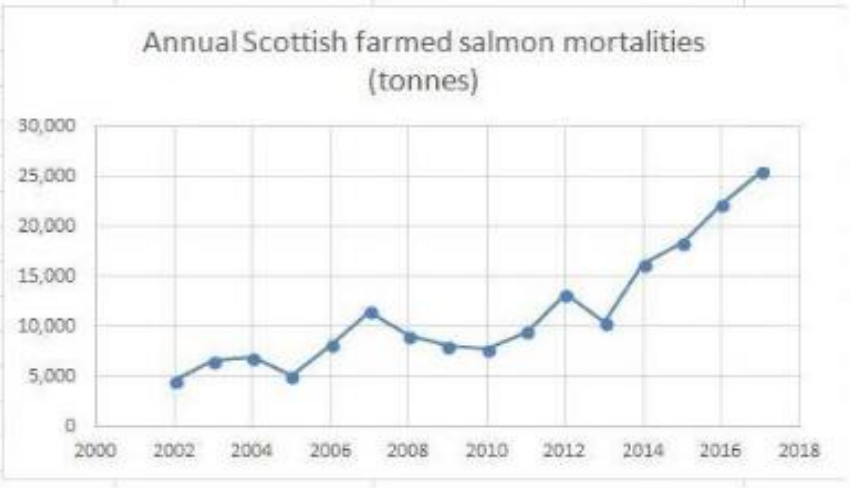
Mort Data since 2002:

Scottish Salmon Watch's written submission to the Scottish Parliament's salmon farming inquiry in March 2018 included:

We know from the mortality data (in tonnes) published by Scotland's Aquaculture database that mortalities have risen dramatically since 2002:

Mortalities at Scottish Salmon Farms

Year	Mortalities (Tonnes)
2017	25,435
2016	22,232
2015	18,373
2014	16,245
2013	10,424
2012	13,234
2011	9,475
2010	7,713
2009	8,064
2008	9,088
2007	11,495
2006	8,183
2005	5,100
2004	6,907
2003	6,537
2002	4,578



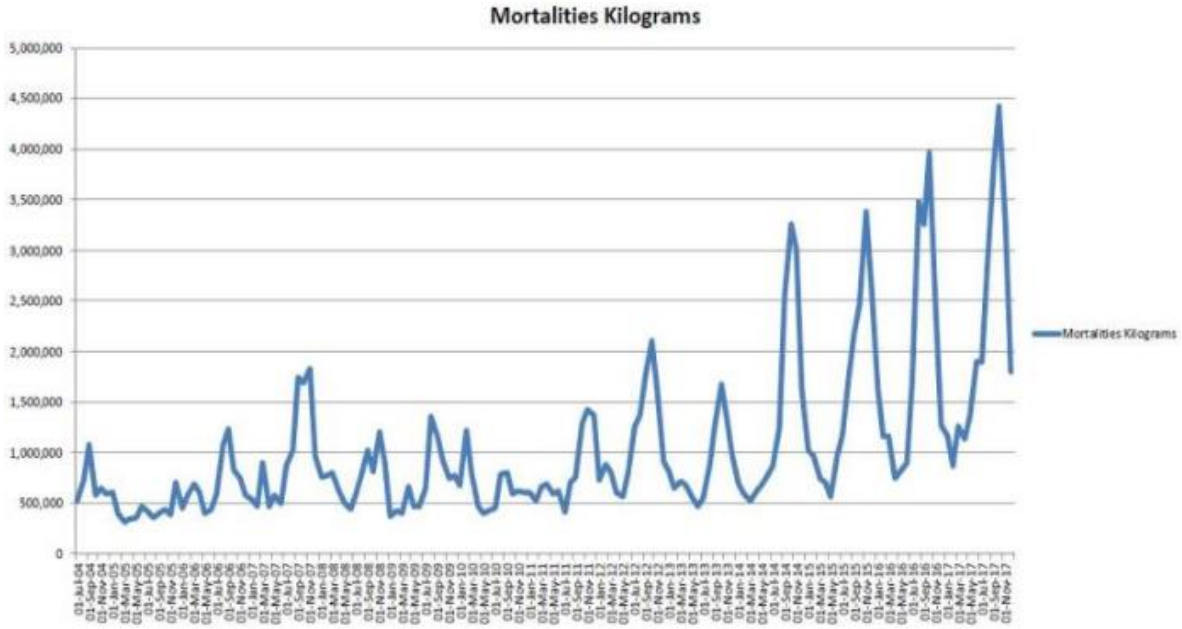
Marine Harvest reported the most mortalities during 2017 followed by the Scottish Salmon Company, Cooke Aquaculture, Scottish Sea Farms, Grieg Seafood and Loch Duart all with over 1,000 tonnes of dead farmed salmon:

Scottish Farmed Salmon Mortalities in 2017 (Tonnes)	
Marine Harvest	**7,066**
Scottish Salmon Company	**6,029**
Cooke Aquaculture	**4,552**
Scottish Sea Farms	**4,328**
Grieg Seafood	**2,191**
Loch Duart	**1,066**
Kames	**187**
Wester Ross	**15**
Total	**25,435**

The 20 worst salmon farm sites for mortalities (by weight and month) between 2002 and 2017 were:

1	Year	Mortalities (Kg)	Submitted By	Site Name	Local Authority
2	01-Dec-15	640812	Grieg Seafood Shetland Ltd	Cole Deep	Shetland Islands
3	01-Feb-10	564900	Rysa Farm Salmon	Pegal Bay	Orkney Islands
4	01-Oct-17	527936	Cooke Aquaculture Scotland	Stead of Aithness	Shetland Islands
5	01-Oct-13	494652.3731	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Portnalong	Highland
6	01-Nov-17	487622	The Scottish Salmon Company Ltd	Druimyeon Bay	Argyll and Bute
7	01-Apr-02	423165	Scottish Sea Farms Ltd	Sand Sound, Bixter	Shetland Islands
8	01-Nov-17	422946	Cooke Aquaculture Scotland	Stead of Aithness	Shetland Islands
9	01-Oct-16	396461	The Scottish Salmon Company Ltd	Trilleachan Mor	Eilean Siar
10	01-Oct-14	392856.0973	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Greshornish	Highland
11	01-Oct-14	361742.2665	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Marulaig Bay	Eilean Siar
12	01-Oct-12	340000	Hjaltland Seafarms Ltd	Setterness South	Shetland Islands
13	01-Nov-14	330998.5855	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Eilean Raineach	Eilean Siar
14	01-Aug-02	326520	Lewis Salmon Ltd	Arbhair	Eilean Siar
15	01-Sep-17	319615	The Scottish Salmon Company Ltd	Tuath (Rubha na Gall)	Argyll and Bute
16	01-Aug-08	317940	Scottish Sea Farms Ltd	Fiunary	Highland
17	01-Nov-14	294281.1441	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Greshornish	Highland
18	01-Oct-11	291056	The Scottish Salmon Company Ltd	St Molios	North Ayrshire
19	01-Sep-16	289180.2091	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Soay Sound	Eilean Siar
20	01-Nov-14	285003.843	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Scotasay	Eilean Siar
21	01-Oct-16	283830.0231	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Noster	Eilean Siar

Mortalities spiked in late Summer with higher mortality rates reported during the Autumn months:



The worst monthly mortalities during 2017 were reported at the following salmon farming sites with Gravir Outer (Scottish Salmon Company) and Poll na Gille (Marine Harvest) featuring twice and most morts appearing in October/November:

Year	Mortalities (Kg)	Submitted By	Site Name	Local Authority
01-Oct-17	527936	Cooke Aquaculture Scotland	Stead of Aithness	Shetland Islands
01-Nov-17	487622	The Scottish Salmon Company Ltd	Druimyeon Bay	Argyll and Bute
01-Nov-17	422946	Cooke Aquaculture Scotland	Stead of Aithness	Shetland Islands
01-Sep-17	319615	The Scottish Salmon Company Ltd	Tuath (Rubha na Gall)	Argyll and Bute
01-Jul-17	272236	The Scottish Salmon Company Ltd	Gravir Outer	Eilean Siar
01-Aug-17	265069.1243	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Tabhaigh	Eilean Siar
01-Aug-17	256601	The Scottish Salmon Company Ltd	Gravir Outer	Eilean Siar
01-Sep-17	244634	Scottish Sea Farms Ltd	Snarraness Voe	Shetland Islands
01-Oct-17	223889	Scottish Sea Farms Ltd	Allt a Chois (Kishorn North Shore)	Highland
01-Sep-17	214813.5376	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Erisort, North Shore East	Eilean Siar
01-Oct-17	175884	The Scottish Salmon Company Ltd	Druimyeon Bay	Argyll and Bute
01-Oct-17	175161.7139	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Sron	Highland
01-Oct-17	173967	Scottish Sea Farms Ltd	Kishorn Outer, Offshore of Airigh-drishaig	Highland
01-Oct-17	171645.0592	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Poll na Gille	Argyll and Bute
01-Nov-17	159141.0419	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Poll na Gille	Argyll and Bute
01-May-17	156754.0857	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	MacLeans Nose	Highland
01-Nov-17	153826	The Scottish Salmon Company Ltd	Strone Point	Argyll and Bute
01-Nov-17	144124.9417	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Sron	Highland
01-Oct-17	143399.9967	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Erisort, North Shore West	Eilean Siar
01-Oct-17	139634.3207	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Port na Cro	Argyll and Bute

Read online in full via: "Hard Evidence: Dossier of Data on Lice, Diseases & Mortalities at Scottish Salmon Farms"

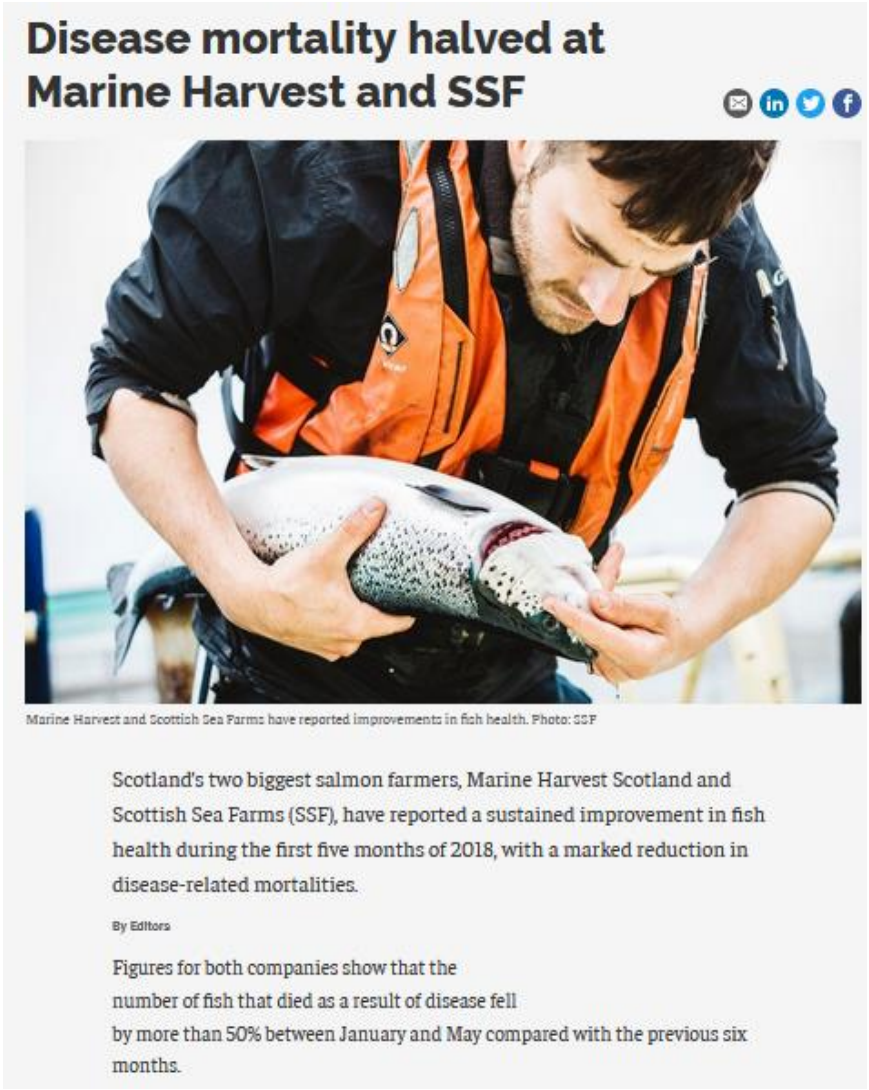
No 'Mortality Event Reports' from Marine Harvest's salmon farms at Carradale:

Strangely, the 'Mortality Event Reports' disclosed via FOI in August 2018 do not contain details of morts from Marine Harvest's salmon farm at Carradale in March 2018. However, Marine Harvest report via their web-site 10.86% mortality at Carradale due to "Physical Damage - Storm" (5.23% mortality was also reported at Hellisay for the same reason) in March 2018:

Marine Harvest Scotland
March 2018

	Avg Gravid Female		Incident Based Mortality	Comment
Ardintoul	0.10		0.00%	
Duich	0.57		0.00%	
Loch Alsh	0.07		0.00%	
Loch Hourn	NR	Site Fallow	-	
Cairidh	0.00		0.00%	
Maol Ban	0.00		0.00%	
Sconser	0.00		0.00%	
Greshornish	0.60		6.35%	Anaemia
Harport	0.00		0.00%	
Torridon	0.00		0.00%	
Isle Ewe	0.02		0.00%	
Ardnish	NR	Site Fallow	-	
Gorsten	0.00		0.00%	
Leven	0.00		0.00%	
Linnhe	0.00		0.00%	
Kingairloch	NR	Site Fallow	-	
Invasion Bay	0.33		0.00%	
Camas Glas	0.48		0.00%	
MacLean's Nose	0.27		4.72%	Cardiomyopathy Syndrome (viral infection causing weak hearts)
Poll na Gille	0.44	Site Fallow	0.00%	
Bagh Dail nan Cean	NR	Site Fallow	-	
Port na Cro	NR	Site Fallow	-	
South West Shuna	0.19		0.00%	
Carradale	0.00		10.86%	Physical Damage - Storm
Colonsay	0.64		0.00%	
Muck	0.20		0.00%	
Cheese Bay	0.01		0.00%	
Ornish	0.02		0.00%	
Stulaigh	0.00		0.00%	
Marulaig Bay	0.00		0.00%	
Hellisay	0.00		5.23%	Physical Damage - Storm

Instead, Marine Harvest publicly claimed a "marked reduction in disease-related mortalities" (with no mention of storm damage). Fish Farming Expert reported in June 2018:



Disease mortality halved at Marine Harvest and SSF

Marine Harvest and Scottish Sea Farms have reported improvements in fish health. Photo: SSF

Scotland's two biggest salmon farmers, Marine Harvest Scotland and Scottish Sea Farms (SSF), have reported a sustained improvement in fish health during the first five months of 2018, with a marked reduction in disease-related mortalities.

By Editors

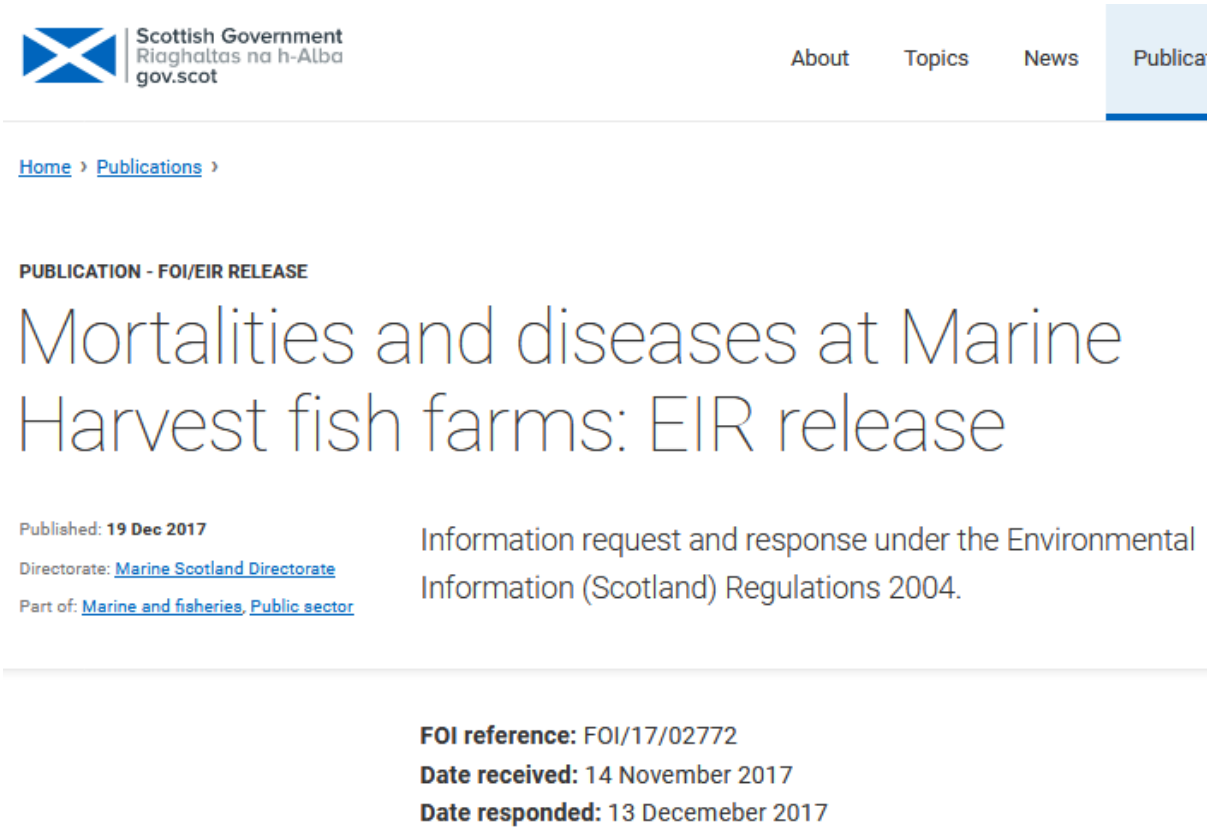
Figures for both companies show that the number of fish that died as a result of disease fell by more than 50% between January and May compared with the previous six months.

Marine Harvest reported in June 2018:

Disease-related mortality is also lower year on year with Marine Harvest Scotland and Scottish Sea Farms reporting a reduction of 61% and 27% respectively compared with the first six months of 2017.

Marine Harvest appalling track record on mortalities:

A FOI reply from the Scottish Government in December 2017 detailed diseases and mortalities at Marine Harvest during 2017:


Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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PUBLICATION - FOI/EIR RELEASE

Mortalities and diseases at Marine Harvest fish farms: EIR release

Published: **19 Dec 2017**

Directorate: Marine Scotland Directorate

Part of: Marine and fisheries, Public sector

Information request and response under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004.

FOI reference: FOI/17/02772
Date received: 14 November 2017
Date responded: 13 Decemeber 2017

The FOI data obtained from SEPA reveals that the ten biggest monthly losses at Marine Harvest salmon farms during 2017 (up to September) were as follows:

149,949 at Colonsay in August (reported via Scotland's Aquaculture as 12,439kg)
97,235 at MacLeans Nose in March (reported via Scotland's Aquaculture as 107,760 kg)
87,914 at MacLeans Nose in April (reported via Scotland's Aquaculture as 135,641kg)
85,147 at MacLeans Nose in May (reported via Scotland's Aquaculture as 156,754kg)
76,913 at Tabhaigh in August (reported via Scotland's Aquaculture as 265,069kg)
70,627 at MacLeans Nose in February (reported via Scotland's Aquaculture as 67,757kg)
62,747 at Erisort (North Shore East) in September (reported via Scotland's Aquaculture as 214,813kg)
48,620 at Soay Sound in August (reported via Scotland's Aquaculture as 3,645kg)
41,946 at Creag an Sagairt West in June (reported via Scotland's Aquaculture as 116,536kg)
41,615 at Ardintoul in February (reported via Scotland's Aquaculture as 4599kg)

Read more via "Scottish Salmon's Mort Mountain Leaps Over 10 Million - FOI reveals 2.3 million dead salmon at Marine Harvest farms in 2017"

Mort data published by the SSPO in August 2018:

Scottish Salmon Watch believes that the FOI disclosure on 16 August prompted the Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation (SSPO) to publish mortality data as a pre-emptive strike (the SSPO and their members companies are routinely notified a week or so before a FOI disclosure - in the case of a FOI disclosure on post-mortem photos we know that two salmon farming companies threatened legal action in the days leading up to disclosure).

In any case, on 15 August 2016 the SSPO issued a press release titled "Salmon farmers lead the way with transparent reporting" (it should instead have been titled: "Data we had to get out because Scottish Salmon Watch accessed the data via FOI").

Scottish Salmon
PRODUCERS ORGANISATION

ABOUT US FOOD MEDIA

Salmon farmers lead the way with transparent reporting

Published on 15th August 2018

Scotland's salmon farmers have today (Wednesday 15th August) published monthly mortality figures on a farm-by-farm basis to increase transparency and understanding of this key sector. The data, which covers 100% of Scottish salmon farms, shows that for the first four months of this year, survival rates on farms ranged between 98.5% and 99%. Around 60% of salmon farms stocked with fish had less than 1% mortality.

The reporting is believed to be a first among all farming sectors in the UK and is at the forefront of international reporting for salmon farming globally.

Julie Hesketh-Laird, Chief Executive of the Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation (SSPO) explained the significance of the reports:

"The health and welfare of salmon is hugely important to salmon farmers. This regular, voluntary publication is unparalleled and sets a precedent for transparency in business reporting. It sets a base line to show future trends and currently around two-thirds of active salmon farms have 99% survival rates. We hope this will be helpful to the progress of the collaborative Farmed Fish Health Framework initiative to further improve survival of salmon."

On 15 August 2018, the SSPO provided further details on the causes of mortality including "weather/storms":

Weather / storms

Farmers monitor weather forecasts daily to stay up to date with changing conditions. They prepare their farms for impending storms. Salmon farms are designed to ensure they are robust and protect the fish from the elements. However, farmers cannot control the weather and severe storms, in particular, can cause losses.

They can also change farming practices to protect their fish, for example they may temporarily stop feeding the fish, encouraging them to swim in deeper, more protected water.

BBC News reported on 15 August 2018:

Monthly mortality rates at all of Scotland's salmon farms have been published for the first time.

The move by salmon producers follows **criticism from a Holyrood committee earlier this year** that fish mortality was at "unacceptable levels".

The SSPO data showed the average death rate across all Scottish salmon farms was between about 1% and 1.5% for each of the first four months of this year.

About 60% of farms stocked with fish had less than 1% mortality.

The worst monthly mortality rate, of 19%, was recorded in March at Marine Harvest's Carradale North operation in Argyll, with storms cited as a factor.

The SSPO data for March 2018 reports:

Company	Farm	Monthly mortality (%)	Notes	Cumulative mortality over full production cycle (%)
Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Carradale	3.0		In production
Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Carradale North	18.7	Weather / storms	In production

The SSPO reported May mort data on 7 September:

How we report salmon mortality

The level of mortality on a fish farm can be reported in a number of different ways. SSPO reports two different figures for each farm to reflect the monthly mortality and the cumulative mortality.

- Monthly mortality (%) is the percentage of fish lost on a farm within that month. This is the measure used by the Scottish Government's Fish Health Inspectorate when assessing the health of the fish on the farm.
- Cumulative mortality over full production cycle (%) is the percentage of fish lost on a farm during the entire production cycle, given as a percentage of the total number of fish that were initially stocked on the farm. It is reported once the entire farm has been fully harvested and fallowed.

Monthly reports (click for full dataset)

- 1.35% average in January
- 0.94% average in February
- 1.49% average in March
- 1.32% average in April
- 0.76% average in May

Information on causes of mortality is available here

Video Footage of Morts:

August 2018 - Whiteshore Cockles landfill in North Uist

Video footage online via the BBC One Show (shot by Corin Smith)

Here's a Tweet:

And another Tweet:

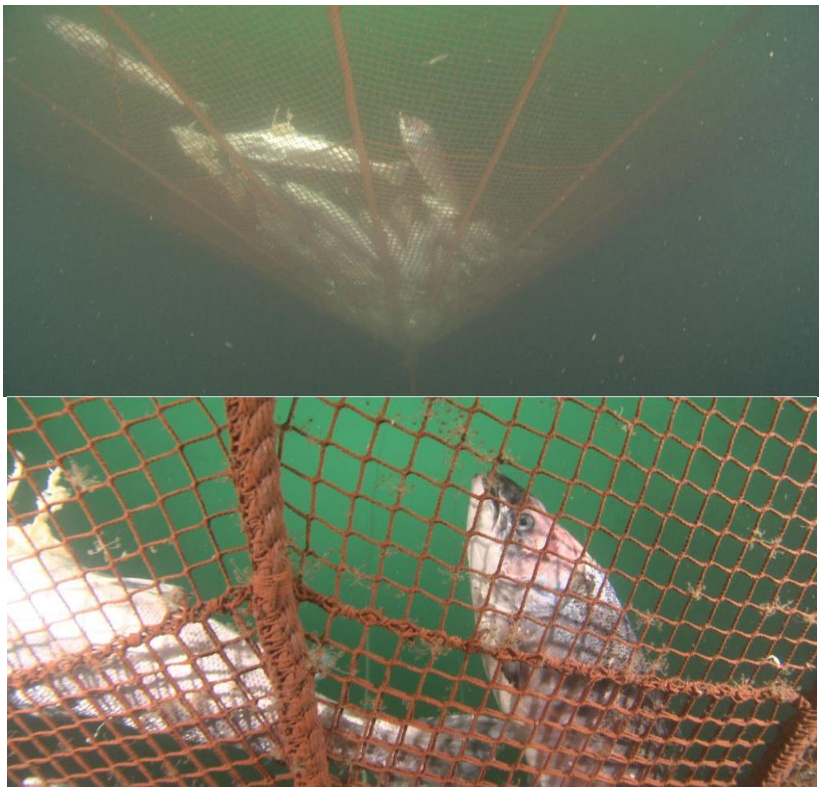
1 September 2018 - Scottish Sea Farms' Tanera 2 site in the Summer Isles (maggot-infested morts in bins on site)

Video footage online here (and other footage online here and online here)

1 September 2018 - The Scottish Salmon Company's Strondoir Bay site in Loch Fyne

Video footage online here

Diver David Ainsley's videos of dead salmon at the bottom of a salmon farm (Marine Harvest's salmon farm at Poll na Gille in Loch Shuna)



Video footage online here and online here

Download more high res images of dead salmon via Photo Gallery: Dead Salmon from Scotland's Disease-Ridden Salmon Farms

Mortality rate of 26.7% & 13 million morts (new data coming out soon via 2017 fish farm survey online here):

A Parliamentary Reply from Fergus Ewing in January 2018 detailed:

Question S5W-13432: Mark Ruskell, Mid Scotland and Fife, Scottish Green Party, Date Lodged: 14/12/2017
To ask the Scottish Government how many farmed salmon have died in each year since 2012.

Answered by Fergus Ewing (09/01/2018):

Scottish Government does not record farmed salmon mortalities by year but does maintain and publish the percentage of fish harvested from each year class in the Scottish Fish Farm Production Survey; http://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/Fish-Shellfish/FHI/surveys. Mortality is included in the number of fish not harvested for human consumption, which also consists of fish which have escaped, have been culled for production reasons, have been removed for sampling purposes, statutory culls or have been selected for broodstock production.

A year class represents all smolts put to sea in any one year. The production cycle of any year class is complete within two years. The following table details the data from the 2010 year class onwards, as these fish will have contributed to mortality in 2012. The latest fin fish production survey was published in September 2017 and the most up to date information available is for the 2014 year class.

Year Class	Percentage of Fish Not Harvested	Number of Fish Not Harvested (millions)
2014	26.7%	12.85
2013	23.7%	9.7
2012	14.6%	6.0
2011	23.0%	9.83
2010	17.2%	6.62
Average	21.04%	9

Current Status: Answered by Fergus Ewing on 09/01/2018

Data on mort numbers NOT published after lobbying by SSPO:

Mortality data obtained via by the Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture from SEPA revealed that Marine Harvest had 2.29 million mortalities (4,211 tonnes) during 2017 (up to September).

Marine Harvest Mortalities in 2017 (January to September)

	by Number	by Weight (kg)
January	146768	298172
February	276176	297784
March	242580	383483
April	241038	430080
May	178654	422361
June	181113	493186
July	277986	419200
August	447843	674938
September	299989	791933
TOTAL	2292147	4211137

Download Excel spreadsheet: Marine Harvest mort numbers & weights (Jan to Sept 2017)

Previous data accessed via FOI from SEPA by Rob Edwards of The Sunday Herald revealed that there were 8.5 million mortalities in 2012, 6.8 million in 2011 and 5.5 million in 2010. Estimates of mortalities since 2012 range between "20 million" (based on a report published in June 2017 by Salmon & Trout Conservation assuming that each dead farmed salmon weighed 1kg - i.e. 20,000 tonnes of mortalities = 20 million fish) and "losses of between 6 to 10 million" (Scott Landsburgh of the Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation quoted in The Sunday Herald in October 2017).

Data collated by Rob Edwards for The Sunday Herald reported that the weight of mortalities had increased from 10,599 tonnes in 2013 to 22,479 in 2016 - suggesting that the number of mortalities also doubled between 2013 and 2016.

In June 2017 Salmon & Trout Conservation published a report - "RSPCA Assured certification of Scottish farmed salmon" - estimating mortalities at 20 million farmed salmon per year.

Mr Graham-Stewart added:

> *"The alarming incidence of parasites and disease on the fish farms, which causes many of these mortalities, also has major implications for wild fish outside the farms, particularly the huge numbers of juvenile sea lice released from the farms into the sea lochs where they infest wild salmon and sea trout."*

Read via "New report estimates that Scottish salmon farming mortalities are now running at 20 million fish a year despite 2/3rds of the industry being certified as RSPCA Assured"

Note that a letter from SEPA dated 6 March 2018 explained:

Response
Please refer to the enclosed document for all mortality data held by SEPA for Scottish salmon farms in 2017.

There is no statutory requirement within their licence for the salmon farm operators to submit the number of mortalities to SEPA. Consequently the information that SEPA holds on the number of mortalities has only been received from a small number of companies on a voluntary basis.

Annual mortality data for 2010-2012 was provided by SEPA:

The huge rise in fish farm deaths

year / tonnes of dead fish / number

2012 / 13,627 / 8.5 million
2011 / 9,717 / 6.8 million
2010 / 7,159 / 5.5 million

The companies with the most dead fish

company / tonnes of dead fish in 2012 / number

Hjaltland Seafarms / 4,661 / 2.4 million
Scottish Salmon Company / 2,374 / 1.5 million
Meridian Salmon / 1,913 / 1.8 million
Marine Harvest / 1,897 / 1.4 million
Scottish Sea Farms / 1,659 / 725,000
Loch Duart / 822 / 525,000
Others / 301 / 150,000

The 10 farms with the most dead fish

site / company / tonnes of dead fish

Swining Voe Site 3, Collafirth Ness, Shetland / Hjaltland Seafarms / 551
Setterness South, Shetland / Hjaltland Seafarms / 514
Skewart Holm, Linga, Shetland / Hjaltland Seafarms / 495
Trilleachan Mor, North Harris / Scottish Salmon Company / 490
Collafirth Delting Site 3, Shetland / Hjaltland Seafarms / 448
Setterness North, Shetland / Hjaltland Seafarms / 366
Linga South, Shetland / Hjaltland Seafarms / 297
Brindister Crossroads, Shetland / Hjaltland Seafarms / 248
Sron, Lochalsh / Marine Harvest / 234
Cava South, Orkney / Meridian Salmon / 226

source: Scottish Environment Protection Agency

The spreadsheet summarising fish farm mortalities in 2010, 2011 and 2012 released by SEPA can be downloaded here (188KB Excel)

For 2012, here's the worst sites in terms of # of morts:

1	Site ID	Site Name	Consent	Company	Year	Mortalities (Fish)	Mortalities (kg)
2						-	-
3	GNH1	Gob na Hoe	CAR/L/1033775	Hjaltland Seafarms Ltd	2012	252,347.00	100,500.00
4	CAV1	Cava South	CAR/L/1082725	Meridian Salmon Farms Ltd	2012	249,588.00	226,239.00
5	POR2	Loch Portree (Torvaig)	CAR/L/1002350	The Scottish Salmon Company	2012	228,020.00	140,654.00
6	FFMC04N	Port na Moine Site 2 (North)	CAR/L/1020918	Meridian Salmon Farms Ltd	2012	207,996.00	150,667.00
7	TRM1	Trilleachan Mor	CAR/L/1013016	The Scottish Salmon Company	2012	192,072.00	490,330.00
8	SETW1	Setterness South	CAR/L/1005092	Hjaltland Seafarms Ltd	2012	150,331.00	514,200.00
9	HOG1	Hogan (Site 1)	CAR/L/1005096	Meridian Salmon Farms Ltd	2012	148,580.00	32,444.00
10	TUR1	Turness	CAR/L/1003867	Meridian Salmon Farms Ltd	2012	144,482.00	69,604.00
11	WAD1	Wadbister Inshore	CAR/L/1004044	Hjaltland Seafarms Ltd	2012	144,129.00	160,400.00
12	LINB1	Skewart Holm (Linga)	CAR/L/1008811	Hjaltland Seafarms Ltd	2012	141,979.00	495,100.00
13	LAXV2	Laxfirth Voe East (Site 2)	CAR/L/1015765	Hjaltland Seafarms Ltd	2012	135,988.00	156,510.00
14	COL3	Swining Voe Site 3 (Collafirth	CAR/L/1003929	Hjaltland Seafarms Ltd	2012	134,812.00	551,200.00
15	BURK1	Point of Burkwell (Site 5)	CAR/L/1008751	Meridian Salmon Farms Ltd	2012	133,808.00	47,825.00
16	COLL3	Collafirth Delting Site 3	CAR/L/1004055	Hjaltland Seafarms Ltd	2012	117,141.00	448,400.00
17	NWW1	Winna Ness	CAR/L/1001927	Meridian Salmon Farms Ltd	2012	113,639.00	124,743.00
18	MBM1	Marulaig Bay	CAR/L/1028518	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	2012	112,109.00	66,821.99
19	UIS2	Uiskevagh North	CAR/L/1010065	The Scottish Salmon Company	2012	109,917.00	130,892.00
20	ELGN1	Eilean Grianain (Carradale	CAR/L/1078064	Meridian Salmon Farms Ltd	2012	106,585.00	40,054.00

However, later in 2013 SEPA [bowed to pressure from the Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation to keep the number of dead salmon secret]():

Scottish watchdog labelled 'lapdog' after agreeing to keep fish farm deaths secret

from Sunday Herald, 20 October 2013

Scotland's environment watchdog has bowed to pressure from the salmon farming industry to keep the number of fish killed by diseases secret, according to internal correspondence seen by the Sunday Herald.

The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (Sepa) agreed to delete information on millions of fish deaths from a public database on fish farming launched this month because the Scottish Salmon Producers' Association (SSPO) argued it would be commercially damaging.

An anti-fish-farm campaigner has accused Sepa of acting like the industry's "lapdog". Because the database also omits crucial information on sea lice, it is no more than "spin", he claimed.

In February the Sunday Herald revealed that the number of farmed salmon killed by diseases had leapt to over 8.5 million in 2012. This compared to 6.8 million deaths in 2011 and 5.5 million in 2010, and was blamed mostly on the spread of amoebic gill disease.

A few days after the report appeared, SSPO's chairman, Phil Thomas, wrote to Sepa's chief executive, James Curran. He accused Sepa of "fundamentally poor regulatory practice", arguing that it had "no justifiable need" to collect and make available information on the numbers of fish mortalities.

"You were potentially placing information in the public domain which could be used to the commercial detriment or competitive market disadvantage of the companies submitting the data," Thomas wrote. "You were in fact providing competitor companies both within and outwith the UK with significant market and business information.

In reply, Curran said he understood SSPO's concerns. He promised that in future it would be made clear that for most fish farms supplying information on the number of deaths was voluntary.

He added: "Although numbers of mortalities do appear in the current version of Scotland's aquaculture database which is being launched to partner organisations soon, it is our intention to make a small change to ensure that these data on the numbers of mortalities are not included in the version released to the public."

Read more via "[Public denied info on full scale of salmon deaths]()" and "[Scottish watchdog labelled 'lapdog' after agreeing to keep fish farm deaths secret]()"

Here's the letter from SSPO Chair, Phil Thomas (download as a PDF [online here]()):

Scottish Salmon SSPO

Professor James Curran
Chief Executive
SEPA
Erskine Court
Castle Business Park
STIRLING
FK9 4TR

February 15th 2013

Dear James

When we met last August with Linda Rosborough I raised a specific matter about the collection of data by SEPA. This related to you requiring fish farming companies to submit details not only of the weight of fish to be disposed of from fish farm sites, but also the numbers of fish. Whilst there is a wholly understandable reason why SEPA should require information on the volume (weight) of waste to be disposed of, there appears to be no justifiable need or requirement for information on the numbers of fish.

My concern about the approach SEPA was adopting was twofold. Firstly, it is fundamentally poor regulatory practice to demand information you do not need to undertake your statutory responsibilities. Secondly, since all information held by SEPA is in the public domain (through FOI or otherwise) you were potentially placing information in the public domain which could be used to the commercial detriment or competitive market disadvantage of the companies submitting the data. You were in fact providing competitor companies both within and outwith the UK with significant market and business information.

At the time I raised this matter you undertook to consult with colleagues in SEPA and then to write to me. However, there has been no follow up correspondence.

Could I therefore through this letter raise the matter once more?

And here's the reply from your predecessor James Curran, Chief Executive of SEPA (download as a PDF online here):

SEPA
Scottish Environment Protection Agency

Our Ref: JCC/kac/SSPO/130304
Your Ref:

Mr Phil Thomas
Chairman
Scottish Salmon Producers' Organisation
Durn,
Isla Road,
Perth PH2 7HG

4 March 2013

Dear Phil

Thank you for your letter of 15 February regarding the issue of mortalities at fish farms and the data collected by SEPA. This issue has recently been accorded prominence in the media and I understand your concerns.

Following our meeting in Edinburgh, this matter has now been discussed by relevant groups within SEPA. The majority of licenses authorising fish farms issued by SEPA do not include a requirement for the provision of data on numbers of mortalities, however a small number based on an older version of the licence template do. Given that a small number of licences have this requirement and the usefulness of the data, it was concluded that farmers be asked to make such returns to SEPA on a voluntary basis unless they are obliged to do so by conditions of the authorisation for a particular site. To make this clear to operators, in the Returns Spreadsheet supplied to farmers by SEPA the column containing numbers of mortalities has been re-labelled thus: *"Number of Fish - This entry is voluntary, unless required by the site's CAR licence."*

I understand that you may also be concerned by the appearance in Scotland's Aquaculture Database of data on the numbers of fish mortalities at finfish farms, as a result of these data being transferred from SEPA's fish farm database. Although numbers of mortalities do appear in the current version of Scotland's Aquaculture Database which is being launched to partner organisations soon, it is our intention to make a small change to ensure that these data on the numbers of mortalities are not included in the version released to the public.

I understand your point regarding competitive disadvantage. If, however, you assert that numbers of morts may be useful for competing companies beyond the information provided in data on the weight of mortalities, it demonstrates that information on numbers of mortalities gives added value beyond data on weights alone. The collection of data on mortalities is used by SEPA for a variety of purposes including assisting the auditing of the performance of fish farms against the limits set in authorisations. In this regard, in most circumstances the mass of dead fish arising at a site is vital information but the inclusion of numbers of mortalities may also be useful. For example, if there is a suspicion that data returns made to SEPA have been falsified in order to demonstrate compliance, an ability to check numbers of mortalities provides an additional means of auditing the submitted data.

.../cntd

However, SEPA has acknowledged, through the removal of the requirement from the more recent template, that this data is not always essential. Should operators wish to amend any element of a licence they can, of course, apply for a variation at any time.

These new arrangements will ensure that, should an operator have a particular issue with SEPA's collection of data on the numbers of dead fish, they can omit such data – unless its provision is required in the licence for a particular site. Similarly, where mortality numbers have been omitted, if SEPA has a concern with the operation of a site or the veracity of submitted returns, the Agency will be able to require the provision of such data through the imposition of a Notice or through the use of SEPA's wider powers.

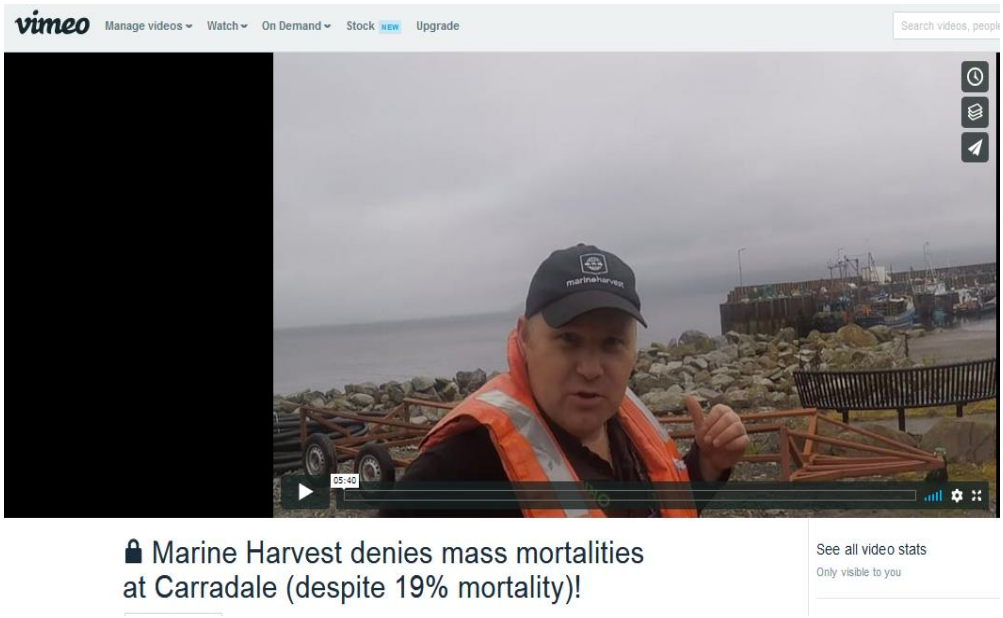
I hope you find the above information helpful. If you would like to discuss any of these issues further, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Yours sincerely

James Curran
Chief Executive

Fishy Goings On at Marine Harvest's salmon farm at Carradale (Kilbrannan Sound)

Scottish Salmon Watch visited Carradale on 2 September 2018 posting [a video report](#) featuring a Marine Harvest employee denying there had been a mass mortality in March 2018 [despite SSPO data reporting 19% mortality](#):



The Daily Mail [reported in June 2018](#):

Meanwhile, one of Scotland's biggest salmon farms lost around 300,000 fish after a heavy storm hit at the Marine Harvest site at Carradale, Argyll.

The company is now investigating new ways to weigh down nets at the vast site, which has up to 20 pens in which salmon are grown.

The fish are believed to have weighed about 2lb each – around a fifth of their target weight.

Salmon can fetch about £30 per fish when fully grown.

The dead stock was removed from the pens and taken away in waste tankers. Norwegian-based Marine Harvest is one of the world's largest seafood firms and the biggest producer of Atlantic salmon. The

firm employs 500 people at sites across the country.

Their net-weighting system is being trialled at eight pens at Carradale.

The firm hopes that introducing a different way of storing the fish will prevent further losses during extreme weather conditions.

Steve Bracken of Marine Harvest told the Sunday Mail: 'During a severe storm in March, with exceptionally heavy seas and galeforce winds, 300,000 fish died at our Carradale farm.

'This was a very rare incident, largely due to the wind coming from the east and north-east, which is unusual at this site.

'To prevent this happening again, we are carrying out trials of a new net-weighting system.

'The weights are being stored on the seabed while the trial is under way and will be moved once it is over.

'This has been approved by Marine Scotland.'

The new net-weighting system has been assessed by marine watchdogs.

The Scottish Government said: 'Marine Scotland has investigated and confirmed there has not been a breach of marine licensing rules.'

DS Write a comment...

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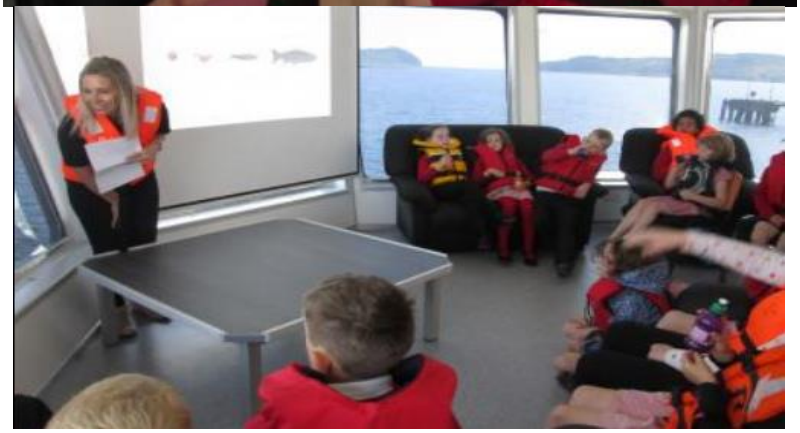
The Sunday Mail report - "Gutted" - should be available online here (but the link is not working)

Marine Harvest is planning a third salmon farm at Carradale despite a "lukewarm" response from Michael Russell MSP and an objection concerning "no local consultation".

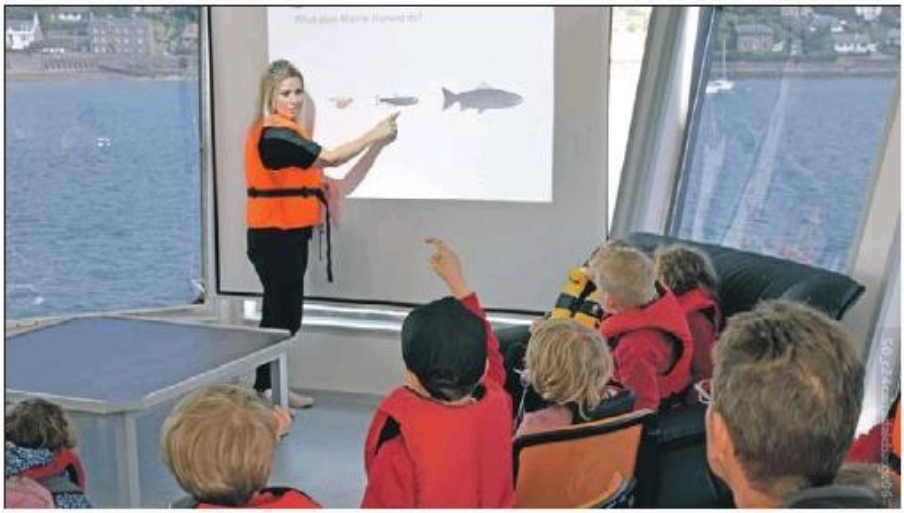
In June 2018, Marine Harvest gave primary school children a tour of their new barge and showed them videos and they had a lovely lunch giving Marine Harvest a big thumbs up.

Marine Harvest Visit - 6 June

Marine Harvest kindly invited the school children to visit their new barge for the Carradale Fish Farm. The children got a tour of the new barge, followed by a presentation and enjoyed beautiful sea views whilst eating their lunch.



The Campbeltown Courier [reported in June 2018]:



Jayne MacKay, personal assistant to Marine Harvest's managing director and communications assistant, gave the children an informative presentation.

Youngsters tour Scotland's largest salmon feed barge

'It's very excitng to be able to take the farm from strength to strength'

+29 more Words and photographs Hannah O'Hanlon editor@campbeltowncourier.co.uk

Primary pupils and staff were given a fish's eye view of a huge salmon farm feeding vessel. Marine Harvest staff organised the VIP tour, last week for Carradale primary school before the largest feed barge of its type was towed to its new home in the Kilbrannan Sound. Area manager Duane Coetzer, Carradale site managers Warren Harvey and Stuart Witts, the managing director's PA and communications assistant Jayne MacKay, and human resources advisor Sarah Ralston welcomed the pupils onto the vessel. The 18 youngsters, their teachers and classroom assistants were fitted with life-jackets and given a guided tour round the outside during which one child exclaimed: 'This is so exciting!' The barge, which is about 35 metres long and 12 metres wide, can hold 650 tonnes of feed, and will replace the site's current one, which has

Carradale pupils and staff pose with Marine Harvest staff beside the feed silos.

Carradale was also the scene of a mass escape in 2015 costing Marine Harvest £240,000:

Marine Harvest salmon escape raises concern

UNITED KINGDOM
Wednesday, June 17, 2015, 03:40 (GMT + 9)

Thousands of salmon worth about GBP 240,000 have escaped from a Marine Harvest farm at Carradale, Argyll, raising concern about the likelihood of breeding with wild fish stocks.

Sector sources informed *FIS.com* that the 16,000 fish escaped through a hole in the net following stormy seas and strong winds on 2 June.

The Salmon and Trout Association (S&TA) believes that the fish are mature and that they will migrate into important salmon rivers in the Firth of Clyde, genetically diluting wild stocks.

"There is a real danger that these fish may survive in sufficient numbers to breed with wild salmon in this area, leading to the genetic dilution of the wild fish population with farmed fish, which are largely descended from Norwegian and not Scottish fish, pointed out S&TA solicitor Guy Linley-Adams.

The solicitor added that this is very bad news for the long term survival of western Scotland's wild salmon.

Marine Harvest helped pay for a new slip-way at Carradale harbour - used by tourists for a picnic lunch (maybe not in March 2018 when Marine Harvest suffered a loss of 300,000 salmon and locals complained of a stench of rotting salmon).

The slip is open for business

03/05/2015

We made it! The final lorry drove away this week taking the last of the spoil with it, the fencing was taken down and finally our lovely new curved bench was installed, a place to rest and admire the view.

Champagne was used to toast the handover of the slip by the contractors, Macleod Construction to Carradale Harbour Enterprises Limited, part of Network Carradale Limited, the village's community business. The project was part-financed by Axis 4 of the European Fisheries Fund 2007-2013 programme with contributions from Marine Harvest, East Kintyre Windfarm Trust and the Carradale Community. The main subcontractor was local firm AJC Civils.

The slip is available for use by anyone, with users being requested to make a small contribution to ongoing maintenance. It will be useful for launching small boats by visitors and locals and should be of great assistance to the Marine Harvest fish farm. One project, put forward during community consultation was a small ferry service across Kilbrannan Sound to Arran, which now has the capital infrastructure to get underway.

One use that was not anticipated, however, was as a picnic area in fine weather.

But no sooner is the slip open when the Flick family, from Hilversum in Holland, made use of it to spread out their lunch. Bon appetit!