

Scottish Salmon Watch, 31 March 2021

[Netflix's 'Seaspiracy' Exposes Disease-Ridden Scottish Salmon \(As Sponsored by the RSPCA & Aquaculture Stewardship Council\)!](#)



- "Push back from industry" blocks publication of damning new video footage
- Has the salmon farming lobby threatened legal action?
- Compassion in World Farming's watered down call for a moratorium on 'reckless' expansion of salmon farming branded 'feckless'

[Netflix's new hit documentary 'Seaspiracy'](#) which features stomach-churning video footage of diseased Scottish salmon has leapt into the [top 10 most popular films and TV shows in several countries worldwide](#). Scottish Salmon Watch can now reveal that the salmon farm visited by Seaspiracy's producer Ali Tabrizi - Mowi's Gorsten salmon farm in Loch Linnhe near Fort William - is not only [certified as 'welfare friendly' by RSPCA Assured](#) but it has also recently been [accredited as 'environmentally responsible' by the Aquaculture Stewardship Council](#).



In *'Seaspiracy'* (rated 8.6 out of 10 on IMDb; 4.8 out of 5 via Google and 92% on Rotten Tomatoes), director Ali Tabrizi can be seen climbing up a Billy Bowie tanker full of diseased Mowi salmon in the dead of night with Don Staniford (Director of Scottish Salmon Watch).



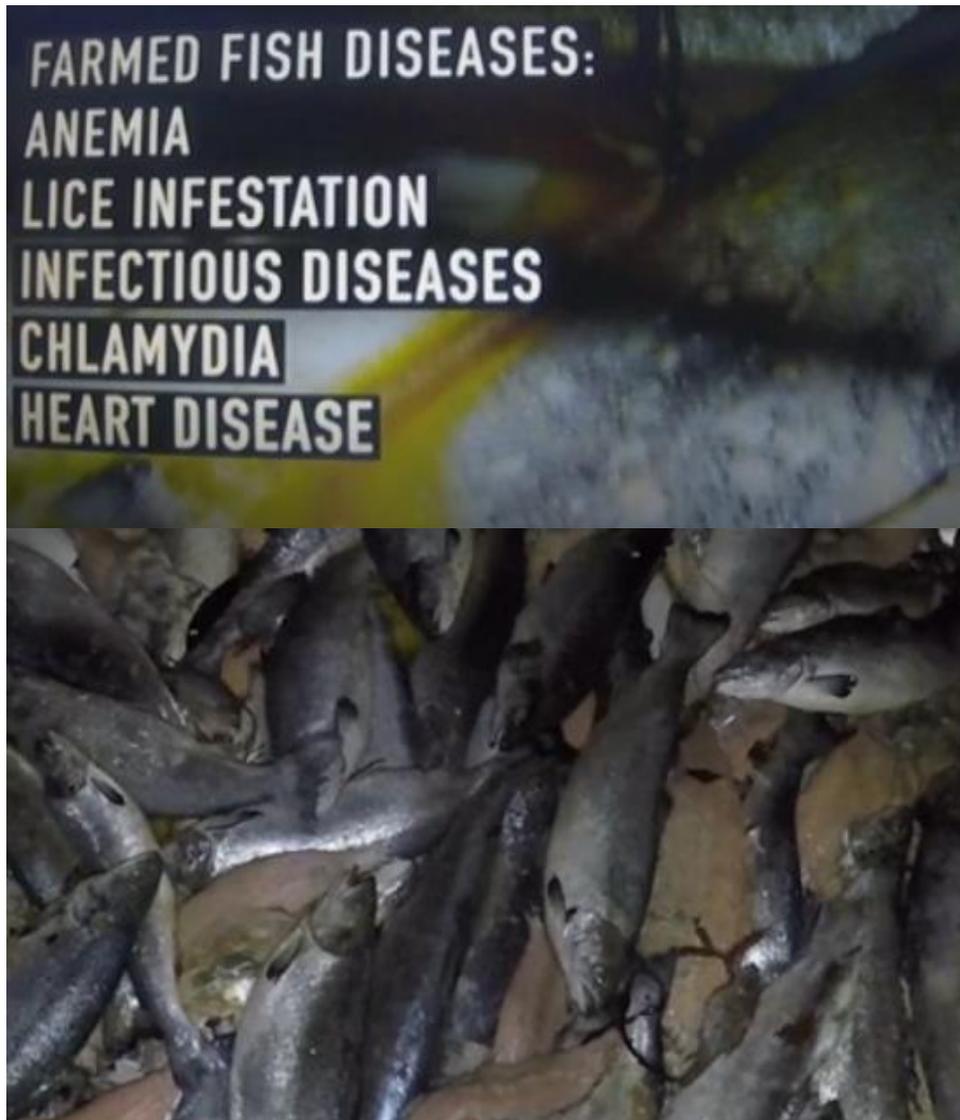
The Sunday Times [reported \(28 March 2021\)](#):

In *Seaspiracy*, Tabrizi steals onto fish producer Mowi's Gorsten salmon farm in Loch Linnhe in the dead of night with Don Staniford, a veteran campaigner against fish farming. They find a "mortality mountain" — a tanker filled with thousands of dead fish — that Staniford claims is evidence of welfare abuse. The fish would have succumbed to an assortment of diseases, explains Staniford, including sea lice infestation, chlamydia and heart disease.

With his mouth and nose covered, Tabrizi describes the stench as "horrifying". Pointing to the depiction of farmed salmon in advertising, he says: "These weren't the bright orange and pink salmon I'd seen in the commercials." Staniford adds: "Far from being a panacea for the world food problem, salmon farming is a waste of resources."



“Seaspriacy literally lifts the lid on the disease-ridden Scottish salmon,” said [Don Staniford](#), [Director of Scottish Salmon Watch](#). “The spread of lice-infested salmon farms across Scotland must be stopped dead in its tracks and all sites closed down immediately. Salmon farming is a malignant cancer on our coasts which must be ripped out altogether. Ending salmon farming in Scotland – especially the scam of ‘organic’ certification and accreditation by RSPCA Assured and the Aquaculture Stewardship Council – is the only rational response to such damning video evidence.”



“Compassion in World Farming’s watered down call for merely a moratorium on reckless expansion is feckless”, continued Staniford, author of the forthcoming report ‘[Greenwashing Scottish Salmon](#)’. “Supermarkets should stop sourcing Scottish salmon from the welfare nightmare that is Mowi, The Scottish Salmon Company, Scottish Sea Farms, Cooke, Grieg, Loch Duart, Kames, Wester Ross and ‘Organic’ Sea Harvest. Consumers are urged to boycott all Scottish salmon – please take the pledge not to buy any Scottish salmon. Don’t be duped by ‘responsibly sourced’ RSPCA Assured Scottish salmon”.

Watch video footage shot by Scottish Salmon Watch during the same night as Seaspiracy visited:



Netflix's '[Seaspiracy](#)' also screened [video footage of welfare abuse at The Scottish Salmon Company's lice-infested salmon farm in Loch Roag](#) captured by Corin Smith.



The Scottish Sun [warned its readers yesterday](#) (30 March 2021):



## **SEA ASSAULT** Netflix doc **Seaspiracy** exposes filthy Scottish salmon farms where fish are infested with lice and chlamydia

**WARNING**

Dan Hall

30 Mar 2021, 11:43 | Updated: 30 Mar 2021, 11:44

**NEW** Netflix show **Seaspiracy** shows salmon being eaten alive in Scottish fish farms.

The disturbing documentary claims fish are infested with lice and have chlamydia due to filthy and cramped conditions.



**Salmon in Scottish farms can develop horrific lice problems and other grim illnesses** Credit: Netflix

The Sun article [used a photo of a disease-ridden Scottish salmon](#) – sourced from [video footage posted last week \(23 March 2021\) by Compassion in World Farming \(CIWF\)](#).

### Lice-infested salmon

Problems from eating seafood can even be found here in the UK.

Seaspiracy shows Scottish salmon being eaten alive in cramped fish farms – half of all of the world's food comes from farms.



Scottish salmon are allegedly eaten alive by parasites on some of the country's biggest fish farms Credit: Compassion in World Farming YouTube

Here's the shocking video footage showcasing welfare abuse on RSPCA Assured salmon farms across Scotland which was [published by CIWF and OneKind](#):



“Our undercover investigation - supported by a global network of 30 organisations - and accompanying [report ‘Underwater Cages, Parasites & Dead Fish: Why a Moratorium on Scottish Salmon Farming Expansion is Imperative’](#) - highlights the grim reality for many fish raised in sea cages to produce world-famous Scottish salmon,” [wrote CIWF in a press release](#) (23 March 2021). “We investigated 22 farms between September and November 2020, using both drone technology and, at 6 farms, underwater divers. On several of these farms, investigators found severe sea lice infestations and high levels of mortalities. They also found fish crammed in barren underwater cages, where these natural migrators have nothing to do but swim aimlessly for up to 2 years. These animals suffer to such an extent that as many as a quarter will die before they even make it to slaughter. The appalling findings were documented on farms owned by all five of Scotland’s largest salmon producers (Cooke Aquaculture, Grieg Seafood, Mowi, Scottish Sea Farms and The Scottish Salmon Company), which together account for over 96% of the industry.”



Hidden beneath the [murky depths of CIWF’s ‘Rethink Fish’ campaign](#) is the uncomfortable truth that [RSPCA Assured certifies Scottish salmon farming in return for over £500,000 per year](#). Fish Farming Expert [reported last week](#) (25 March 2021) that: “All Scottish salmon farmers are now signed up to the RSPCA Assured accreditation scheme apart from Organic Sea Harvest, which adheres to organic standards through the Soil Association”.

“Around 70 per cent of Scottish salmon are certified to the RSPCA Farm Assured scheme – a higher percentage than any other UK farming sector,” [claim the Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation](#) (the lobby group representing [foreign-owned salmon farming companies in Scotland](#)). “The remaining salmon are reared to the same high welfare standards under other accreditation schemes.”

Strangely, CIWF is loathe to name and shame the RSPCA (who [last year were urged to cease certification of Scottish salmon](#)) or supermarkets such as [Sainsbury’s, Aldi and Lidl who all use Mowi salmon](#). “At Compassion, we often don’t mention the names of farms/producers in our investigation, and are only doing so to make it clear that this investigation covers +96% of the industry (and it is not a few ‘bad eggs’),” explained CIWF in an email to Scottish Salmon Watch earlier this month. “We build relationships with retailers and producers through our food business work to improve the lives of many animals, and so directly targeting these groups can impact our other strands of work. Although we do not purposefully mention the RSPCA, they certify farms covered by these producers, and as a result it’ll indirectly put pressure on them to improve/better enforce their standards for fish”.

In August 2018, a [report by OneKind named and shamed salmon farms across Scotland](#) including [RSPCA Assured Mowi](#) (then named Marine Harvest – the company [controversially changed their name to Mowi](#) in January 2019 following “[negative consumer perception](#)”), the [welfare nightmare that is The Scottish Salmon Company](#) and [RSPCA Assured Loch Duart](#).

*Table 1. The top 7 worst performing salmon farms for animal welfare in 2017.*

| Rank | Farm               | Company                 | Mortality score | Escape score | Biomass score | Seal score | Sea lice score | Welfare score |
|------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1    | Poll na Gille      | Marine Harvest          | 0               | 3            | 3             | 3          | 2              | 11            |
| 2    | MacLean’s Nose     | Marine Harvest          | 3               | 3            | 0             | 3          | 0              | 9             |
| =    | Bagh dail nan Cean | Marine Harvest          | 0               | 0            | 3             | 3          | 3              | 9             |
| =    | Vuia Beag          | The Scottish Salmon Co. | 3               | 3            | 0             | 3          | 0              | 9             |
| 3    | Inch Kenneth       | The Scottish Salmon Co. | 3               | 0            | 0             | 3          | 2              | 8             |
| =    | Badcall Bay        | Loch Duart Ltd.         | 3               | 0            | 0             | 3          | 2              | 8             |
| =    | Loch Carnan        | Loch Duart Ltd.         | 3               | 0            | 0             | 3          | 2              | 8             |

Earlier this week, CIWF told Scottish Salmon Watch that they had experienced “push back from industry”. “Any conversations that Compassion has had with the industry remain confidential,” said CIWF in an email to Scottish Salmon Watch (29 March 2021) when questioned if the Scottish salmon farming lobby – [ca. 80% owned by Norwegian financial interests including the Norwegian Government’s Pension Fund](#) – had threatened legal action blocking media coverage. “I’d rather not talk about the specifics on our team’s efforts to secure a media story in the UK

and push back from industry, as the situation is still unfolding and we don't want the details in the public realm" explained [Sean Gifford, Global Director of Campaigns at CIWF](#).

So whilst the Scottish salmon segment in Netflix's 'Seaspiracy' has featured in [Vogue](#), [The Sun](#), [The Sunday Times](#), [The Independent](#), [Stylist](#) and [The Tab](#), CIWF's shocking video footage has only been featured in the UK online by [The Ferret](#) and via an Op-Ed by the Executive Director of CWIF in [The Scotsman](#).



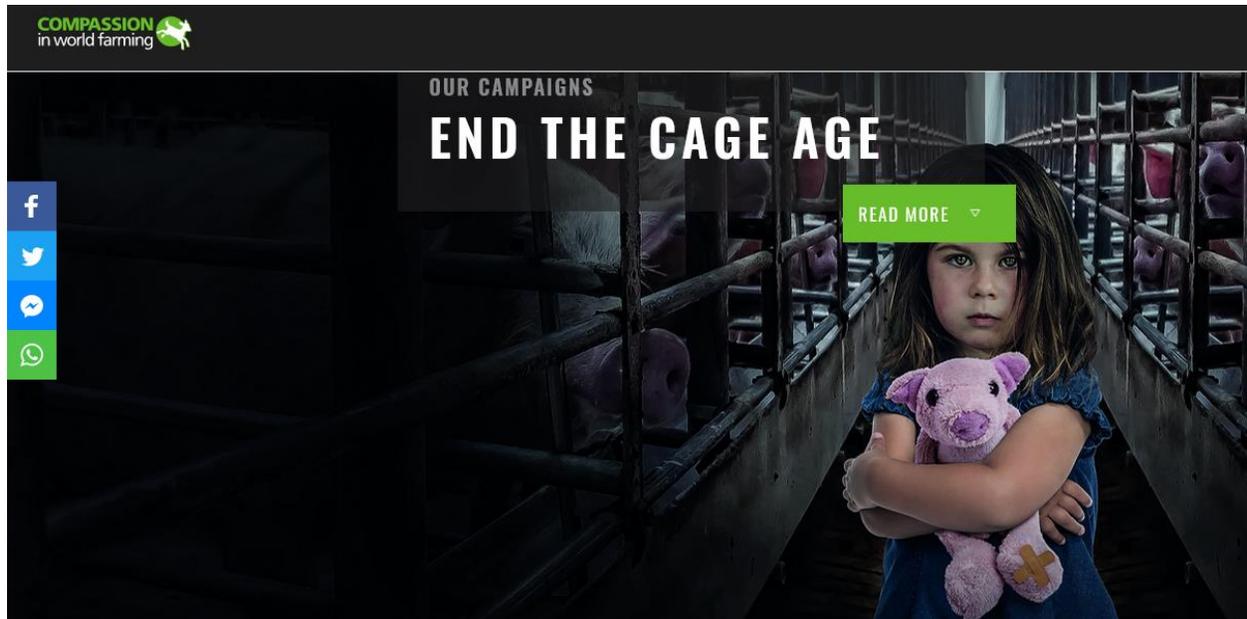
"As revealed in undercover footage recently released by my organisation, Compassion in World Farming, the [Scottish salmon farming industry is rife with these welfare issues](#) as well as serious environmental problems," [wrote CIWF's Philip Lymbery in The Scotsman](#) (26 March 2021). "Up to 50,000 salmon are often kept in a single sea cage. They can suffer from blinding cataracts, fin and tail injuries, body deformities and appalling infestations with parasitic sea lice. At current production levels, sea lice infestation and disease are out of control, causing fish suffering on an alarming scale and threatening wild fish populations".

Instead of targeting retailers, the RSPCA (or even the SSPCA who are [chaired by a vet employed by Scottish Sea Farms](#) – a company named in CIWF's video footage and [shamed by BBC Countryfile in December 2020](#)) and the [six foreign-owned salmon farming companies which control 99% of 'Scottish' salmon farming](#), CIWF has [directed an open letter to the First Minister of Scotland calling for "a moratorium to stop the reckless expansion of Scottish salmon farming"](#) (currently signed by over 80,000 people).

"Salmon are silently suffering, out of sight, in cruel underwater factory farms across Scotland. Even the experienced investigators were shocked at what they found," [said Sophie Peutrill, Compassion in World Farming's Global Campaign Manager for fish welfare](#) in a press release dated 23 March 2021. "The footage reveals salmon with deformities and disease, missing eyes and large chunks of flesh and skin being eaten away by sea lice," continued Peutrill (who [mysteriously left her job as 'Fish Welfare Campaigner' on 26 March 2021](#) just after CWIF's

video footage and report were launched – [her profile still appears on CIWF’s web-site](#)). “This is completely unacceptable. Salmon are sentient beings - they should not be subjected to such awful misery. There is an industry-wide failure to protect these animals, and this must change. We need an immediate halt on the continued expansion of Scottish salmon farming”.

Whilst CIWF appear content for salmon farming to continue at current levels of production – [207,630 tonnes in 2020 according to the Scottish Government](#) – their ‘[End the Cage Age](#)’ campaign (which indefensibly does not include sea cage salmon farming) calls on UK ministers to end cage farming.



Scottish Salmon Watch [struggles to fathom](#) how CIWF – when faced with [such damning video evidence of welfare abuse](#) - can only “demand a moratorium to stop the reckless growth of Scottish salmon farming”.

“CIWF's watered down messaging calling for a moratorium to end the ‘reckless’ and ‘runaway’ expansion of salmon farming in Scotland is appallingly weak and misguided,” [wrote Don Stanford in an email to CIWF](#) (23 March 2021). “Surely CIWF should demand that all the salmon farms featured in the video footage (including RSPCA Assured sites) are immediately closed down? It is illogical and unreasonable for [CIWF to campaign to "Stop Salmon Suffering"](#) when even a reduction of farmed salmon production will not end suffering. Even ['welfare friendly' salmon farming certified by RSPCA Assured](#) (who [accredit ca. 70% of Scottish salmon farming in return for over £500,000 per year](#)) and supported by the SSPCA [who are chaired by a salmon farmer for Scottish Sea Farms](#) (one of the companies exposed as endorsing welfare abuse in your new video footage - and [previous video footage](#)) has been [shown to promote salmon suffering](#).”

Read more via:

[CIWF's watered down 'moratorium' message lets diseased & abused Scottish salmon slip off the hook - please Rethink!](#)

Meanwhile, Bryan Adams (whose 4<sup>th</sup> album was titled 'Reckless') [Tweeted in support of 'Seaspiracy'](#).



**Bryan Adams** ✓  
@bryanadams

Watch @seaspiracy on Netflix. #donteatfish  
#stopkillingfish #seaspiracy

3:49 AM · Mar 26, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

Fellow singer Anne Marie Tweeted her support for Seaspiracy too:



**ANNE-MARIE** ✓  
@AnneMarie

Watch Seaspiracy. Please.

11:15 PM · Mar 28, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

**Read more via:**

[The Sun: "Netflix doc Seaspiracy exposes filthy Scottish salmon farms where fish are infested with lice and chlamydia"](#)

[The Sunday Times: "Netflix hit shows scale of welfare abuses at fish farms"](#)

[RSPCA Assured "is a marketing scheme set up and run by salmon farmers for salmon farmers" says ISSF! Greenwashing by Scottish Salmon - as sponsored by SEPA!](#)

[Mowi Moves Goalposts on ASC Certification](#)

[Sneak Preview: "A Big Campaign to Invite the Public to Scotland's Salmon Farms"](#)

[Netflix Lifts the Lid on Diseased Scottish Salmon - 'Seaspiracy' Out Tomorrow \(24 March\)!](#)

[The Ferret: "Suffering 'endemic' at Scottish salmon farms"](#)

[REVEALED: The Farmed Salmon Crisis](#)

[Media Backgrounder: The Welfare Nightmare of Scottish Salmon \(Updated\)](#)

[BBC Countryfile features lice-infested RSPCA Assured salmon!](#)

[Video Exposes Welfare Abuse at RSPCA Assured salmon farm sourced by M&S 'Lochmuir'](#)

[RSPCA Suspend Salmon Farm Inspections](#)

[RSPCA Assured Mowi Plagued by Mass Mortalities & Infectious Diseases on Skye](#)

[Be Sure to Boycott RSPCA Assured Scottish Salmon - Shocking New Photos Published of Mowi's North Shore Feedlot in Loch Erisort!](#)

[Sunday Times: "RSPCA paid over £500,000 to back Scottish salmon industry"](#)

[Letter to the RSPCA - Please Stop Certifying Scottish Salmon!](#)

[Sunday Times: "Scientist hits out at RSPCA for backing Scottish salmon farms"](#)

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Coming from Scottish Salmon Watch in May 2021: "[Greenwashing Scottish Salmon](#)"



**Greenwashing  
Scottish Salmon**