

The Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture, 11 December 2017

Millions of Scottish Salmon Going Up in Smoke - BBC's 'The One Show' exposes Scotland's 'Dead Salmon Run'

The burning issue of infectious diseases, lice infestations and mass mortalities on Scottish salmon farms was showcased tonight by [The One Show](#) on primetime on BBC 1 - watch [online here](#)



[The One Show](#) featured footage of a convoy of haulage trucks carrying dead fish dripping with wastes away from Loch Kishorn (where [Scottish Sea Farms](#) operates three salmon farms reported by the Fish Health Inspectorate to be affected by gill pathology, cardiomyopathy syndrome and anaemia) [1]. Scottish Sea Farms is [owned by the Norwegian corporations Leroy and SalMar](#) and is the [exclusive supplier](#) of Marks & Spencer's [fake Lochmuir salmon](#).

"This is the dirty side of the salmon farming industry," said [BBC reporter Joe Crowley](#). "A lorry has just turned up to pick up that big skip full of dead fish - but what I was not expecting was also a tanker arriving and they're simply vacuuming vast quantities of dead fish straight out of the bins and you can hear the weight of them rattling and banging as they're sucked up into the tanker."



"Last year nearly 22,500 thousand tonnes of salmon died on Scottish farms - double what it was just three years earlier," continued Crowley who followed a convoy of trucks hauling dead salmon from Loch Kishorn to Dumfries for disposal. "The dead salmon run is back on again. There is something very stark about this very ugly cargo of dead fish winding its way through this beautiful, majestic countryside."



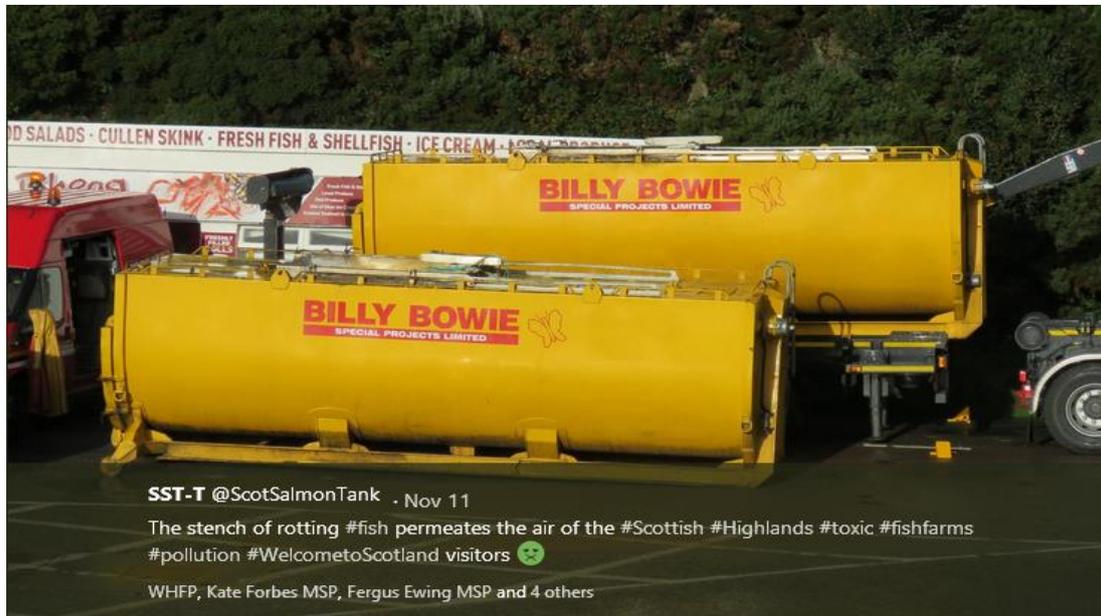
"Shoppers who buy Scottish salmon this Christmas have the blood of millions of dead fish on their hands," said [Don Staniford](#), Director of the [Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture](#) (GAAIA) who was interviewed for [The One Show](#).



"Lice infestations and infectious disease outbreaks on Scotland's filthy fish farms are spewing out dead salmon on a horrific scale. Tourists coming to the West coast of Scotland do not want to see trucks laden with rotting salmon dripping with wastes. Questions must urgently

be asked about the industry's bio-security measures to prevent the spread of infectious diseases."

Mass mortalities from Scotland's [lice-infested](#) salmon farms could now stand at [over 20 million fish per year](#) - that's [over 22,000 tonnes](#) of 'morts' with an annual mortality rate over a quarter [2].



The mortality rate on Scottish salmon farms is estimated to be five times higher than on chicken farms. Whilst the mortality rate on Scottish salmon farms is [26.7% according to the latest Scottish Government fish farm survey](#), the [mortality rate on UK chicken farms is less than 5%](#).

Following the [BBC's broadcast of images of wastes leaking from a haulage truck](#) transporting dead farmed salmon from Loch Kishorn, GAAIA will be asking whether the [Animal By-Products \(Enforcement\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2013](#) have been breached. Guidance issued by the [Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs](#) and [Animal and Plant Health Agency](#) in 2014 stated under 'Vehicle Hygiene & Storage': "When you're transporting animal by-products (ABPs) or any ABP derived products, you must make sure you: use vehicles and containers that are covered and leak-proof".



In November 2016, a [Parliamentary Question filed by Mark Ruskell MSP](#) asked "where and by whom containers of diseased salmon morts are checked for biosecurity compliance during their journey from farm to final disposal, and how many such journeys have taken place in each of the last three years".

"Vehicles used for transporting salmon morts to a disposal site must be approved or registered under the Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 (ABPR)," [replied Fergus Ewing](#), Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy and Connectivity, in December 2016. "The operators of these vehicles must ensure that salmon morts be collected and transported in sealed new packaging or covered leak-proof containers."

Another [Parliamentary Question and reply in November 2016](#) also stressed when transporting Animal By-Products transporters must ensure that they "use vehicles and containers that are covered and leak-proof":

In Canada, the issue of discharges of blood water spreading infectious diseases is a hot topic following shocking [video footage published last month by Tavish Campbell](#).



Read more via [Bloody sewage from Canada fish plant 'threatens' wild salmon](#)

"Scottish salmon's burgeoning mort mountain could soon rival Ben Nevis and the carcasses of dead salmon would help rebuild Hadrian's Wall," continued Staniford. "Millions of farmed salmon being burned in incinerators gives a whole new meaning to smoked Scottish salmon. If you're served Scottish salmon over the festive period please [throw it in the rubbish bin where it belongs](#). Join the boycott against farmed salmon."

The Times [reported](#) today (11 December 2017): "Tens of thousands of farmed fish which died from parasites or disease have been recycled into renewable energy. The fish carcasses

are sent to anaerobic digestion plants that use bacteria to break down organic matter to produce biogas. This is then burnt to generate electricity which goes to the National Grid" (read more via "[Energy from dead salmon horrifies vegan activists](#)").

The Sunday Times [reported](#) yesterday:

“Consumers that avoid eating fish for ethical and environmental reasons will rightly be dismayed to hear this,” said Justin Kerswell, deputy director of Viva! “Of equal concern is how badly broken the farmed fish business must be if it can create commercially viable energy from fish deemed unfit for human consumption.”

Mimi Bekhechi, from campaign group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, said: “Given the cramped conditions that fish are forced to endure on farms, it’s no surprise that they’re dropping dead from parasites and disease.”

Dale Vince, the chief executive of Ecotricity, a green energy firm, said: “Most people will be surprised that animals are used to make electricity, but vegans and vegetarians will be horrified. We need greater transparency, so that people know what they are supporting with their energy bills.”

Read more via "[Vegans in shock at fish electricity: Energy firm SSE admitted generating power from dead salmon earlier this year](#)"

The National [reported](#) today (11 December 2017): "A 'catastrophic' failure of the salmon run in Argyll’s largest and most closely monitored river has prompted demands for the closure of some fish farms and a review of the expansion of the industry" (read more via "[Call for closure of fish farms after 'catastrophic' drop in salmon numbers](#)").

"Instead of [doubling aquaculture production by 2030](#), the Scottish Government should be drastically reducing salmon farming production and closing [Scotland's liceiest farms](#)," concluded Staniford. "Hopefully [the Scottish Parliament's forthcoming inquiry](#) will open up the can of worms that is Scottish salmon farming."

GAAIA will also ask the Scottish Environment Protection Agency to [overturn its 2013 decision to keep the number of dead salmon secret following lobbying by the salmon farming industry who argued that disclosure would be commercially damaging](#).

For a media backgrounder on mass mortalities at Scottish salmon farms see Note [3].

Contact:

Don Staniford (Tel: 07771 541826; email: dstaniford@gaaia.org)

Notes to Editors:

[1] Since 2014, Scottish Sea Farms has [operated three salmon farms in Loch Kishorn](#). According to [monthly data published via Scotland's Aquaculture web-site](#), mortality is significant:

Year	SEPA Site	Site Name	Mortalities (Kilograms)	Mortalities (tonnes)
01-Sep-17	ACH1	Achintraid (Kishorn Site 1)	0	0.00
01-Sep-17	AAC3	Allt a Chois (Kishorn North Shore)	123054	123.05
01-Sep-17	CDP2	Camas Doun Point (Kishorn Site 2)	128802	128.80
01-Sep-17	KIO1	Kishorn Outer, Offshore of Airigh-drishaig	78476	78.48
01-Aug-17	ACH1	Achintraid (Kishorn Site 1)	0	0.00
01-Aug-17	AAC3	Allt a Chois (Kishorn North Shore)	22353	22.35
01-Aug-17	CDP2	Camas Doun Point (Kishorn Site 2)	23974	23.97
01-Aug-17	KIO1	Kishorn Outer, Offshore of Airigh-drishaig	125400	125.40
01-Jul-17	ACH1	Achintraid (Kishorn Site 1)	0	0.00
01-Jul-17	AAC3	Allt a Chois (Kishorn North Shore)	34474	34.47
01-Jul-17	CDP2	Camas Doun Point (Kishorn Site 2)	7200	7.20
01-Jul-17	KIO1	Kishorn Outer, Offshore of Airigh-drishaig	45170	45.17

Percentage of biomass lost	Total % per month	Total tonnes lost per month
0.00%		
8.16%	10.04%	330.33
14.94%		
8.54%		
0.00%		
1.56%	4.94%	171.73
2.74%		
10.71%		
0.00%		
2.79%	2.77%	86.84
0.97%		
3.93%		

Download as a PDF [online here](#)

Please note:

Cumulative loss when losing 2% of biomass a month:

Month	Biomass	2% monthly loss	Overall % lost
1	100000.00	2000.00	
2	98000.00	1960.00	
3	96040.00	1920.80	
4	94119.20	1882.38	
5	92236.82	1844.74	
6	90392.08	1807.84	
7	88584.24	1771.68	
8	86812.55	1736.25	
9	85076.30	1701.53	
10	83374.78	1667.50	
11	81707.28	1634.15	
12	80073.14	1601.46	19.93%
13	78471.67	1569.43	
14	76902.24	1538.04	
15	75364.19	1507.28	
16	73856.91	1477.14	
17	72379.77	1447.60	
18	70932.18	1418.64	29.07%
19	69513.53	1390.27	
20	68123.26	1362.47	
21	66760.80	1335.22	
22	65425.58		34.58%

Download as a PDF [online here](#)

When questioned by the BBC's One Show, the Scottish Government's Fish Health Inspectorate (Tel: 01312 444 010) gave the following information:

1 Mortalities.

1.1 Are you (FHI) able to disclose the approximate total quantity of mortalities trans-shipped or proposed to be trans-shipped from Kyle pier for disposal during this present case? If you are unable to do so, when would you anticipate such disclosure might be made?

The FHI do not hold details of total numbers of mortalities removed from site for disposal. Animal by-product disposal is regulated by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), further details can be found here

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/transporting-animal-by-products>

The FHI may record details of increased or unexplained mortalities occurring at aquaculture sites as part of routine inspections. Details of increased or unexplained mortalities are held within case information which is published on a quarterly basis. As well as case information and inspection reports, a list of all sites inspected during the quarter is published. Further details can be found here

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/Fish-Shellfish/FHI/CaseInformation>

If or when information is held by the FHI as part of our surveillance in relation to this issue it would be released as part of our quarterly publication process.

1.2 Are you able to disclose the site from which the aforementioned mortalities originate, and if you are unable to do so, when would you anticipate such disclosure might be made?

To our knowledge the waste in the sealed containers originated from fish farm sites in Loch Kishorn.

1.3 Are you able to disclose the possible cause(s) of the mortalities and if unable to do so, when would you anticipate such disclosure might be made?

Mortality information provided to the FHI from farms in Loch Kishorn assign mortalities due to gill pathology, cardiomyopathy syndrome (CMS) and anaemia. In addition, any case information recorded during routine surveillance at the fish farm sites in Loch Kishorn will be published as described.

[Please note that [the Fish Health Inspectorate's Case Information](#) does not currently provide data beyond June 2017]

[Scottish Sea Farms](#) (formerly called Hydro Seafoods) was the source of the first outbreak of Infectious Salmon Anaemia (ISA) in Scotland which originated in Loch Nevis in 1998 and [spread to a total of 11 salmon farms with a further 34 salmon farms suspected](#) on the Scottish west coast mainland, Skye, Orkney, Shetland and the Western Isles. The outbreak of ISA [cost £100 million and led to the loss of 200 jobs](#).

"In the unlikely event that infectious salmon anaemia is found, Scottish salmon farmers work closely with the regulatory authorities with the aim of minimising any immediate impacts, and ensuring that it is eliminated as rapidly as possible," [said Scott Landsburgh of the Scottish Salmon Producers' Organisation in March 2017](#). "All of the measures already in place in Scotland meet the requirements of EU fish health legislation, having been reviewed and strengthened following two previous occurrences of ISA a number of years ago, and we are confident that, should ISA be detected in the future, we are well placed to deal with it quickly and effectively."

[2] The [latest statistics published by the Scottish Government in September 2017](#) reveal a mortality rate of 26.7% for 2014 (2015 figures will not be published until September 2018). Mortality rates in some regions is even higher - with salmon farms in the Western Isles reporting 42.8% and Shetland reporting 31.9% mortality for 2016 (read more via [Scottish Fish Farm Production Survey 2016](#) - see Tables 28 & 30).

Monthly data on mortalities (by weight only) are published online [via the Scotland's Aquaculture web-site](#). Data on the number of mortalities was available from SEPA until 2013 when it [bowed to pressure from the Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation to keep the number of dead salmon secret](#) due to its commercially damaging nature.

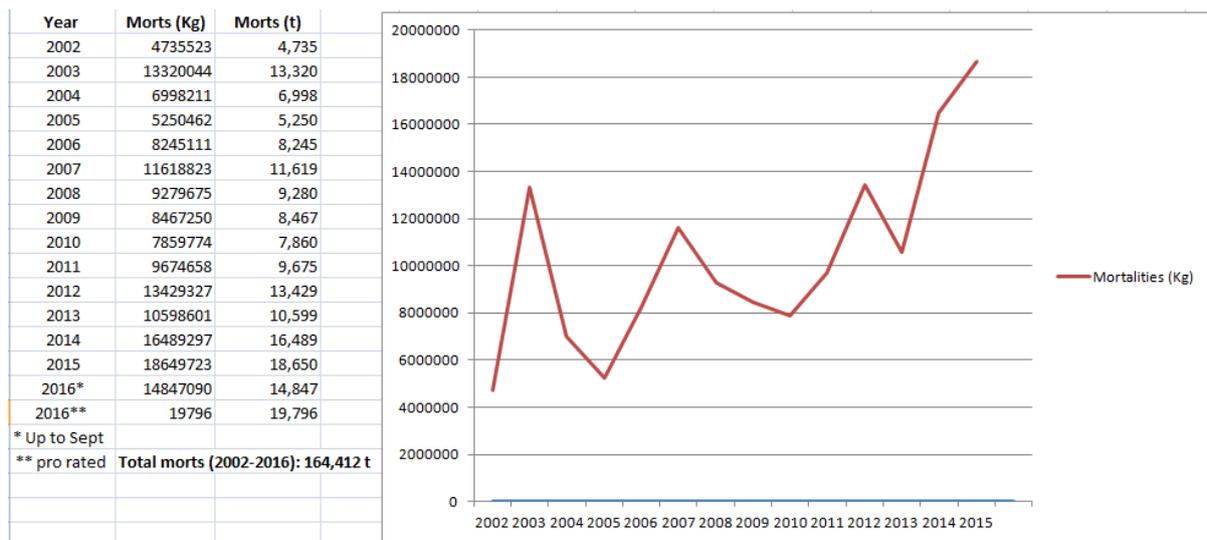
Official figures [published](#) by The Sunday Herald in 2013 revealed that 8.5 farmed salmon died in 2012 compared to 5.5 million in 2010. The Sunday Herald [reported](#) in October 2017 that there have been successive, significant increases in 2014, 2015 and 2016. "Critics estimate the total number of dead, discarded salmon last year to have been between 10m and 20m," [reported](#) Rob Edwards. "But the industry says it sustained losses of “between 6 and 10 million fish, depending on their size”.

Here's a table of mortality rates (and estimated number of morts) since 2002 using the data published via [Scottish Fish Farm Production Survey 2016](#):

Year	Mortality rate (%)	# of salmon put to sea (millions)	Estimated # of morts (millions)
2002	23.3	50.1	11.7
2003	22	43.1	9.5
2004	24.5	39	9.6
2005	21.9	37.2	8.1
2006	27.5	41.1	11.3
2007	28.2	37.9	10.7
2008	17.8	36.7	6.5
2009	16.7	38.5	6.4
2010	17.2	38.5	6.6
2011	23	42.7	9.8
2012	14.6	41.1	6
2013	23.7	40.9	9.7
2014	26.7	48.1	12.8

Download Excel spreadsheet [online here](#)

Data on mortalities was [made available by SEPA via FOI for the period 2002 to 2016](#) (up to September):



The twenty worst salmon farms in terms of mortalities for the period 2002 to September 2016 were:

Year	Morts (kg)	Site Name	Operator	Receiving Water	Local Authority
01-Dec-15	640812	Cole Deep	Grieg Seafood Shetland Ltd	Gon Firth	Shetland Islands
01-Feb-10	564900	Pegal Bay	Cooke Aquaculture Scotland	Scapa Flow	Orkney Islands
01-Oct-13	494652.3731	Portnalong	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Loch Bracadale	Highland
01-Apr-02	423165	Sand Sound, Bixter	Scottish Sea Farms Ltd	Sandsound Voe	Shetland Islands
01-Oct-14	392856.0973	Greshornish	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Loch Snizort	Highland
01-Oct-14	361742.2665	Marulaig Bay	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Loch Boisdale	Eilean Siar
01-Oct-12	340000	Setterness South	Grieg Seafood Shetland Ltd	Off Lunnaness	Shetland Islands
01-Nov-14	330998.5855	Eilean Raineach	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	East Loch Tarbert	Eilean Siar
01-Aug-02	326520	Arbhair	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Loch Leurbost	Eilean Siar
01-Aug-08	317940	Fiunary	Scottish Sea Farms Ltd	Sound of Mull	Highland
01-Nov-14	294281.1441	Greshornish	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Loch Snizort	Highland
01-Oct-11	291056	St Molios	The Scottish Salmon Company Ltd	Lamlash Bay	North Ayrshire
01-Sep-16	289180.2091	Soay Sound	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	West Loch Tarbert	Eilean Siar
01-Nov-14	285003.843	Scotasay	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	East Loch Tarbert	Eilean Siar
01-Nov-07	271358	Chalmers Hope	Cooke Aquaculture Scotland	Scapa Flow	Orkney Islands
01-Feb-15	266341.487	Noster	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Loch Seaforth	Eilean Siar
01-Feb-12	266000	Skewart Holm (Linga)	Grieg Seafood Shetland Ltd	Brindister Voe	Shetland Islands
01-Oct-12	260000	Collafirth Delting Site 3	Grieg Seafood Shetland Ltd	Colla Firth	Shetland Islands
01-Dec-15	257964.7395	Caolas a Deas East	Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd	Loch Shell	Eilean Siar
01-Nov-15	254409	Cole Deep	Grieg Seafood Shetland Ltd	Gon Firth	Shetland Islands

Read more via [Press Release: Scottish Salmon's Lethal Legacy](#)

[3] In November 2017, the Scottish Salmon Think Tank [Tweeted](#):





SST-T

@ScotSalmonTank

Following



The stench of rotting #fish permeates the air of the #Scottish #Highlands #toxic #fishfarms #pollution #WelcometoScotland visitors 🤢

Marine Harvest “demonstrab to resolve sea louse control

HAVE THE SENSES of any of your readers recently been assaulted by an inescapable, food stench? They may have been waiting through town or along a country road, maybe driving behind or passing a truck carrying a yellow tank-like container, emitting a sickening effluvia which filled their car.

In the fish-filled Highlands we don't often experience massively horrible smells, so this one is especially noticeable. Since I have suffered twice now, and several friends similarly, then many others must also have witnessed the cause of this revolting unpleasantness – the transport of rotting salmon from disease-ridden fish farms to a carcass rendering establishment in the far south.

Farmers who grow a single crop in a field battle epidemic mildews, blights and rusts by spraying toxic chemicals. Those who keep tens of thousands of chickens in batteries administer medicines constantly, just to keep enough of them alive till slaughter. Surely pain experience should have warned aquaculturists, who cram up to a hundred thousand salmon into each cage of an industrial fish farm (and are demanding permission to pack them even tighter), that they too would have to cope with epidemics of pests and diseases? Apparently not.

Last week, Scottish aquaculture spokesman Scott Landsburgh boasted on BBC's Farming Today that his industry spent £55 million on sea



LETTERS: West Highland Free Press 10/11/2017

5:06 PM - 11 Nov 2017

The Scottish Think Tank reported:

Several of us have seen these transports in Wester Ross, Skye, Lochalsh, Lochaber and Lorne, and others have been noted preparing to leave the Outer Hebrides. They are symptomatic of massive mortalities on fish farms the exact causes of which we have yet to find out.

First, a friend alerted me to two containers that he'd seen (and smelt) waiting to be picked up from Kyle of Lochalsh, ironically in front of the local seafood shack. We couldn't see their contents, but the stench was characteristic and horrible. A driver confirmed that they contained dead fish from a farm in Loch Kishorn, owned by Scottish Sea Farms who declined the opportunity to comment offered by the West Highland Free Press.



Next, more tucks were seen heading through Fort William and then another observer reported a similar scene in the Torridon region, all heading south, probably to a rendering plant in Dumfries.

I myself had three more encounters in one day:

“At 11.30 a.m. on my way home from Oban this morning (2 Nov. 2017), I passed a Billy Bowie container lorry heading towards Ft William (ultimately to Dumfries, we understand) on the A82 about 5 miles north of Spean Bridge. The stench was unmistakable and appalling and it took about 3 mins to pass the lorry's wake and refresh the car's atmosphere. Then later, as I passed a truck on the road above Invergarry, which I didn't specifically identify, again the stench of rotting fish filled the car. Next, I passed two trucks carrying familiar yellow containers, presumably empty (no noticeable smell this time), just out of Reraig en route in the Kyle direction.”

Perhaps the best example came from the Isle of Lewis, just a photograph but it shows precisely what those trucks are for. ►

If salmon farms, of several companies at many locations, are shipping out tonnes of dead salmon, it suggests all is not well down on the conventional fish farm. These operators are able to throw £millions at their problems and they still have massive mortalities. These operators are using chemical treatments forbidden by the Soil Association (SA) to organic salmon farmers.

Notably, before even obtaining planning permission, Organic Sea Harvest (OSH) has already prepared to ditch organic status if their farms become infested or infected so that they have to use SA forbidden chemical therapeutants to which fish farm pests and diseases are rapidly becoming immune:



Another [Tweet from the Scottish Salmon Think Tank](#) detailed an article in the West Highland Free Press:

 **SST-T**
@ScottSalmonTank Following

More #misery from the #toxic #fishfarm industry. 140 TONNES of dead fish from ONE farm @MHScotland in #Glenelg. And this is what they call a 'thriving' industry. Shame. #pollution #disease #deadfish

 in brief

Glenelg salmon farm hit by disease

Around 140 tonnes of farmed salmon have died during an outbreak of anaemia at a Marine Harvest site in Ardintoul, near Glenelg.

Steve Bracken, business support manager at the firm, said: "Some of the salmon at our

4:55 PM - 10 Nov 2017

Read more via [Letter: "Marine Harvest 'demonstrably failing' to resolve sea louse control problem"](#)

BBC News [reported](#) in October 2017: "About 125,000 salmon have died due to a disease outbreak at two fish farms on the Isle of Lewis, BBC Scotland has learned. Marine Harvest confirmed that the [sites in Loch Erisort have been hit](#) by the bacterium *Pasturella Skyensis*" (read more via "[125,000 salmon die in disease outbreak at Lewis fish farms](#)").

BBC News [reported](#) earlier in October 2017: "Lorry loads of dead fish are being collected from a sea loch on the Isle of Lewis after suffering a bacterial infection, the BBC understands.....Locals have raised concerns about the smell of rotting fish at the shore" (read more via "[Thousands of salmon on Lewis killed by infection](#)").

The Sunday Herald [reported](#) in October 2017: "Official figures reveal the tonnages of dead fish that had to be disposed of has more than doubled from 10,599 in 2013 to a record high of 22,479 in 2016. Most are transported south to be burnt at an incinerator in Widnes near Warrington in northwest England..... The company that suffered the biggest losses was Marine Harvest, headquartered in Norway, whose mortalities leapt threefold to 7,609 tonnes between 2013 and 2016. Over the same period, the Scottish Salmon Company, which is registered in the Channel Islands, saw its dead fish more than double to 5,873 tonnes" (read more via "[A disgrace: Ten million salmon thrown away by fish farm industry in last year alone](#)").

The Times [reported](#) in July 2017: "The number of salmon dying on Scottish fish farms has doubled to 20 million a year because of parasites, diseases, and overcrowding in their cages, a campaign group claimed yesterday. For every seven fish that reach supermarket shelves one will have died on the farm, according to [research by the Salmon & Trout Conservation Trust](#), which questioned how farms could be endorsed by the RSPCA given the levels of mortality" (read more via "[Death rate at salmon farms doubles to 20m fish a year](#)").

In July 2017, Salmon & Trout Conservation published a report - [RSPCA Assured certification of Scottish farmed salmon](#) estimating mortalities at 20 million per year:



"A new report for S&TC Scotland on RSPCA Assured certification of Scottish farmed salmon reveals that Scottish salmon farming mortalities as a percentage of total production have almost doubled in the last four years," [stated the press release](#). On the basis of official data, the report estimates that over 41 million fish died during 2015 and 2016, an average of over 20 million fish per annum."

The Times [reported](#) in June 2017: "More than a million salmon died in a Scottish sea loch last year because of a plague of sea lice at commercial farms" (read more via "[A million salmon die in lice plague](#)").

Marine Harvest Scotland has [published mortality reports during 2017](#) - including 4.81% treatment mortality at Loch Hourn and 9.77% mortality at MacLean's Nose due to Cardiomyopathy Syndrome (viral infection causing weak hearts) in [June 2017](#) and 13.96% mortality at MacLean's Nose due to Cardiomyopathy Syndrome (viral infection causing weak hearts) in [May 2017](#).

The Daily Telegraph [reported](#) in November 2016: "Thousands of salmon were poached alive when a lice treatment process at Scottish fish farms went disastrously wrong, it has emerged. More than 175,000 salmon died when the water they were swimming in was overheated, prompting calls for those responsible to be prosecuted for cruelty" (read more via "[Thousands of fish poached alive in lice treatment bungle that could hit Christmas salmon prices](#)" and "[Oops: fish farm firm kills 175,000 of its salmon by accident](#)").

The Herald [reported](#) in October 2016: "Conservationists have called for government action after raising concerns that hundreds of thousands of fish have died from an infectious disease in salmon farms in Hebrides and Wester Ross. The Salmon and Trout Conservation Scotland has called on Scottish ministers to intervene to protect wild fish after an outbreak of Amoebic Gill Disease (AGD). It is understood that four farm sites have been affected including West Loch Tarbert and East Loch Tarbert on Harris, Loch Greshornish on Skye and the Isle of Ewe in Wester Ross. Marine Harvest salmon farms have been particularly affected, it is said" (read more via "[Alert over salmon deaths crisis on Scots fish farms caused by infectious disease](#)").

The Sunday Herald [reported](#) in 2013:

Farmed salmon killed by disease leaps to 8.5 million

from Sunday Herald, 10 February 2013



The number of salmon killed by diseases at Scottish fish farms leapt to over 8.5 million last year, sparking fresh doubts about the sustainability of the £1 billion industry.

New figures released by the [Scottish Environment Protection Agency \(Sepa\)](#) reveal that losses from all salmon farms have reached nearly ten per cent of their production. The main problem has been the spread of Amoebic Gill Disease, blamed by some on the warmer seas caused by climate pollution.

A mountain of 13,627 tonnes of dead fish had to be disposed of in 2012 by 230 fish farms along the west coast and on the islands, compared to 9,717 tonnes in 2011 and 7,159 tonnes in 2010. The worst problems were in Shetland, where 2.4 million salmon died.

The mass mortalities – known in the industry as morts – have also [raised questions](#) about how such large amounts of diseased waste are safely disposed of, and how the process is regulated. Sepa and local authorities both say it is not their responsibility.

Farmed salmon is Scotland's single largest food export, with a worldwide retail value of over £1 billion and major sales in the US, China and France. Production has risen fivefold since 1990, and now involves 27 companies employing more than 1,000

people in rural areas to produce over 158,000 tonnes of salmon a year.

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](#)

However, later in 2013 the Scottish Environment Protection Agency [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](#)"

In 2012, GAAIA published a report - "[Gill Diseases: Scottish Salmon's Dirty Big Secret](#)" - detailing mass mortalities due to gill diseases (read news story via "[Chlamydia and gill disease ravage Scottish salmon: GAAIA](#)"):

Gill Diseases: Scottish Salmon's Dirty Big Secret (November 2012)

Data obtained by GAAIA via Freedom of Information reveals that Scottish salmon farming is being ravaged by infectious gill diseases led by Salmon Transmitted Diseases (STDs) including: Chlamydia, Amoebic Gill Disease (AGD), Epitheliocistis, Proliferative Gill Inflammation (PGI) and Proliferative Gill Disease (PD). Scottish salmon is farmed and dangerously diseased.

AGD has swept up the West coast of Scotland and over to the Western Isles and the Orkney Isles since the first case - '[ground zero](#)' - was reported at Lamlash Bay off the Isle of Arran in October 2011. The parasitic killer is suffocating the industry's profits with Marine Harvest, Scottish Sea Farms and the Scottish Salmon Company reporting mass mortalities of up to 70%.



AGD is Scottish salmon's dirty big secret. Official data from the Scottish Government reveals that Amoebic Gill Disease was first reported at Lamlash Bay in October 2011 killing 279,000 farmed salmon. By April 2012 the deadly disease had spread to 15 sites including Loch Roag in the Western Isles, the Firth of Lorne, Seil Sound, the Sound of Mull, Loch Kishorn, the Isle of Gigha and the Orkney Isles:

Download report in full [online here](#)