

Follow-up inquiry into salmon farming in Scotland

Salmon Scotland, 28 June 2024

Dear Committee

Many thanks for your continued efforts in looking to understand progress that has been made following the session 5 RECC report recommendations for salmon farming in Scotland.

There has been a significant amount of valuable evidence provided to date and we continue to review that in order to provide the Committee with suitable evidence and information which may be relevant to the review. While we await the Official Report for the session, there were a couple of comments provided which we would like to provide clarity on.

During the first panel, it was positive to hear Mr Mountain agree with Mr Goodlad that *“salmon farming should definitely continue”* (c1003) given its importance. However, evidence was also provided which suggested that the *“amount of jobs and the amount of money it [salmon fishing] brings into the local economy, probably as significant in remote areas as salmon farming.”* While we are unable to find the report on angling economic impact referred to in the evidence session, Scottish Government publications identify that salmon farming is not just significant to the national economy but that its activity across some of Scotland’s most economically fragile and rural areas is significant. Scotland’s Marine Economic statistics¹ show that aquaculture generates *“10% of the marine economy GVA”* (third behind oil and gas and marine tourism) and that *“Atlantic salmon made up 96% of the aquaculture value”*. The Scottish Fish Farm Production Survey² also provides detail on the direct jobs in farming which occurs round the west coast, highlands and islands. The supply chain across Scotland extends to 3,600 Scottish businesses across every constituency meaning that the positive impact to the whole economy goes beyond the local community impact where salmon farming occurs.

In the second session, there was evidence provided which appeared to question the integrity of sea lice counting and reporting. We would like to refer the Committee back to evidence provided by the Fish Health Inspectorate which provided clarity on the requirements, processes and controls which are in place for all farms with respect to sea lice monitoring and recording.

Please let me know if you would like any follow up information with regard to any of the above.

With best regards

James

¹ Scotland's Marine Economic Statistics 2021; <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-marine-economic-statistics-2021/>

² Scottish Fish Farm Production Survey 2022: <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/statistics/2023/10/scottish-fish-farm-production-survey-2022/documents/scottish-fish-farm-production-survey-2022/scottish-fish-farm-production-survey-2022/govscot%3Adocument/scottish-fish-farm-production-survey-2022.pdf>