

## **RURAL ECONOMY AND CONNECTIVITY COMMITTEE**

### **SALMON FARMING IN SCOTLAND**

#### **SUBMISSION FROM ANNA NOVAK**

I would like to inform you that I feel very strongly that the expansion of the salmon farming industry is unjustified with regard to the adverse environmental and economical damage it will create.

I run a bothy for paying guests on the south side of Loch Broom, I am unable to sustain this business if salmon farms are nearby. We already have several salmon farms in this loch, although not within sight of our bothy, and to introduce even more bigger ones will have a very negative impact on my business, as well as our ability to remain self-sufficient in terms of our garden produce. We are 5 miles away from the nearest road, this attracts tourists who walk into this peninsula to stay here with us (for reference please see 'toms-bothy.co.uk').

We collect storm washed seaweed (usually between tides after an easterly at all times of year) this is used for about half our garden compost, all our fruit bushes and trees are mulched with this seaweed as well.

If the expansion of salmon farms goes ahead in Loch Broom we don't feel we will be able to continue using this natural resource any longer. It will simply be too contaminated to risk using it. I understand that in parts of Shetland the seaweed has turned pink from the dyes used in salmon feed and that sheep grazing it on the shore have become ill or died.

What guarantee could be given that storm-washed seaweed would be clear of toxins from salmon farms? We cut, dry and eat kelp too.

Our fresh food production is essential for us to survive in such a remote place and we sell it in season to our bothy guests as well as any excess to a local veg box scheme.

Without wishing to sound elitist the types of tourists who come here to stay with us are environmentally aware, they do not want to watch the scum from salmon farms lapping against our shore line or look out onto floating factories which are well known not only for animal cruelty, why put an eagle in a budgie cage, But also because they are such disgusting polluters of what would otherwise be a largely clean and thriving marine environment. Not least to say Loch Broom is now a part of a newly formed MPA, I am saddened that this fact alone does not seem to carry any positive influence in relation to fish farms, how can the two things possibly be compatible when faced with all the evidence to the contrary?

I fail to understand this blatant disregard for a fledgling MPA that I feel should be supported by our government and environmental organisations - not thwarted by further industrialisation.

In short we are directly threatened by this new pressure of even more, larger fish farms, it will severely hinder our ability to remain independent after 45 years of hard work. We would be unable to continue to run our small but successful eco-tourism business and grow fresh food organically for ourselves, guests and the local community. We are unable to import fertiliser for our land, crofters here even spread seaweed on their fields where cows graze.

We would seriously consider giving up and moving on. Please remember monocrops produce monocultures. Not everyone wants to live nearby or work on a salmon farm, most of the jobs are in the fish processing plants which are not on the west coast.

It is generally believed that the west coast of Scotland has been sacrificed a great shame and a lost opportunity for all if this persists in such a relentless way what is the point of living in a beautiful and remote part of the world to be beholden to factory work, generator barges, floodlights, pollution etc.

Anna Novak  
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