

## **RURAL ECONOMY AND CONNECTIVITY COMMITTEE**

### **SALMON FARMING IN SCOTLAND**

#### **SUBMISSION FROM GORDON MACKAY**

I have answered the specific questions of to your enquiry on the very negative and increasing impact of the fish farm industry on the environment on which my business and family's livelihood depends. I have submitted separately an account of the impact of fish farming on my business to demonstrate the effect fish farming has on my business and other local business users.

#### **1. Do you have any general views on the current state of the farmed salmon industry in Scotland?**

The current state of the Scottish Salmon Farming industry is in a downward spiral towards self-destruction, the current problems which they are facing and as yet have been unable to rectify are a shameful reflection on the lack of effort or willingness to acknowledge and address the effect they are having on the marine environment, and to even contemplate expansion while facing their current crisis, demonstrates their failure to comprehend the damage they are conflicting on the environment and ironically their own product and the Scottish brand!

#### **2. There have been several recent reports which suggest how the farmed salmon industry might be developed. Do you have any views on action that might be taken to help the sector grow in the future?**

The industry have to clean up its operations, be more transparent, admit their mistakes, and take responsibility in a proactive effort to radically overhaul their industry. This is essential to take it to a future where the public can have pride and confidence in the Scottish farmed salmon product and the practices involved in getting that farmed salmon to its table.

#### **3. The farmed salmon industry is currently managing a range of fish health and environmental challenges. Do you have any views on how these might be addressed?**

As with any intensive farming practice, there is always the inherent problem of disease due to stocking density and the stress this cause's to the animal and the surrounding environment. The industry has put volume and profit before good practice, and before any expansion within the industry should be allowed the current production problems and unacceptably high level of mortalities must be eradicated.

#### **4. Do you feel that the current national collection of data on salmon operations and fish health and related matters is adequate?**

NO! The industry at present appears to police itself and therefore statistics and findings are easily manipulated to suit the needs of the industry at that moment. The

system at present is often perceived as lacking impartiality and objectivity as it is scientifically informed and funded by the industry itself. It appears to operate with a continued and blatant insouciance towards the marine environment and other users who depend upon that environment.

**5. Do you have any views on whether the regulatory regime which applies to the farmed salmon industry is sufficiently robust?**

No I do not believe the regulatory regime is effective or robust and adopts a blinkered and biased view in the facilitation of the ongoing growth of the salmon farm industry and expense tot the environment and other users. While I recognise the need for growth in the GDP it is short sighted to achieve that at the expense of the quality of the product, protection of the Scottish brand, and to the destruction of the local environment for other commercial users, who may also be able to grow the GDP!

**6. Do you have any comments on how the UK's departure from the European Union might impact on the farmed salmon sector?**

I am concerned that the loss of European Environmental Legislation and constraint will be used to facilitate rapid and detrimental expansion of the industry which will further compound the problems both the salmon industry and other users already experience.

Gordon MacKay  
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