

RURAL ECONOMY AND CONNECTIVITY COMMITTEE

SALMON FARMING IN SCOTLAND

SUBMISSION FROM STUART HUNTER

Scotland's Shame

If there is one animal more important to the ecology of this nation than the Atlantic salmon, I'd love to know what it is.

Historically, the annual return of sea-fattened fish sustained the human population through the winter and brought countless tons of protein into the food chain.

Scotland's rivers were the very veins of the country, and the salmon the lifeblood.

The emergence of salmon angling as a fashionable sport among the well-heeled brought vast tourist revenues and employment.

It is perhaps this outdated perception of salmon fishing as the preserve of the rich that has allowed the Scottish government to throw the wild species to the wolves without the outcry such environmental vandalism merits.

At this point I would name the eco-rapist-in-chief, Alex Salmond. His mission to double the export of farmed salmon wilfully ignored years of testimony from reliable sources as to the catastrophic effects of salmon farming on populations of wild migratory fish.

Those in the SNP who knew that the blandishments of the industry were out-and-out lies chose to ignore that fact for narrow political gain - and indeed collude with said industry by refusing to introduce meaningful controls.

The promised employment boom has never materialised. The product is a disgrace. The environmental impact may be irreversible. Countless jobs have been lost and continue to be lost in the salmon fishing and tourist industries.

The Scottish government's own inquiry - which they were dragged into kicking and screaming by the people who really care about salmon - tells the world what Hollywood has been trying to hide for decades.

Salmon farming is a toxic industry, and Scotland's association with it is nothing short of a national disgrace. We need to get out now, before our reputation on the world stage sinks any lower.

Stuart Hunter
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