

**EXT05-A-F0186563**

**Scottish Aquaculture Innovation Centre (SAIC)**

**Contribution:**

SEPA has established good communication links with SAIC, and their CEO Heather Jones has been in discussions with Terry A'Hearn, Douglas Sinclair and Andy Rosie (in his new role as Head of SEPA's Sector Team).

We're interested in fostering a new relationship with the Scottish aquaculture sector; encouraging companies, not just to comply with environmental licence requirements, but to go beyond what's required by statute, setting out their own ambitious targets on improving both environmental stewardship, and the health/well-being of local communities where they do business.

Andy Rosie and his new team hope to explore incentives for change by working cooperatively; helping businesses grow sustainably as part of this new approach. SAIC are I think keen to work with us to help and support where their remit permits.

We're also developing the concept of Scottish Sustainable Growth Agreements, and will, in due course, be open to discussing with Scottish businesses who already have a good compliance record, (including Fish Farming companies) the potential to develop an agreement identifying for both participants where we can usefully work together to achieve the identified objectives. This concept is still in development, and no agreements have been signed as yet.

We also continue to talk to SAIC on innovation priorities to support a sustainable growth model for the Scottish industry, including alternative management techniques to control sea lice infestations (and other major debilitating pathogenic threats) reducing reliance on chemical treatments which pose a risk to the environment.

We have had useful discussions with them on the possibility of jointly developing an alternative environmental impact screening methodology, based on environmental DNA, which might be a useful alternative tool for monitoring impacts around marine cage fish farms, and may form part of the new DZR approach in due course. As you know, the DZR approach changes the parameters with which SEPA will gauge compliance, however, this will continue to be applied under the CAR regime, so there has been no discussions on the way SEPA applies the regulations.

We hope this meets your needs in briefing Bridget for the forthcoming meeting. However, if you want any further information on any of this, please contact Andy Rosie directly.

SEPA  
28 July 2016