

Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture, 11 December 2012

Lice-Infested Irish Salmon - Ireland's Parasite Problems Exposed by 'FishyLeaks'

FishyLeaks today [published](#) leaked Government reports cataloguing sea lice infestation on Irish salmon farms [1]. The damning data reveals that Marine Harvest's feedlot in Lough Swilly was infested with 54 sea lice per fish in [October 2012](#) – breaching the Irish Government's protocol levels by almost five times along with Mannin Bay's 'organic' salmon feedlot at Corhounagh. In [September 2012](#), Marine Harvest's feedlot in Mulroy Bay was infested with 58 sea lice per farmed salmon with Lough Swilly infested with a staggering 71 sea lice per farmed salmon (both over five times the Government's sea lice protocol level)!

Read a year's sea lice data in full online via [FishyLeaks](#)

“The public has a right to know that the Irish salmon farming industry is already being plagued by severe sea lice infestation,” said Don Staniford of the Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture (GAAIA). “It is a policy of reckless abandon for the Irish Government to be sponsoring a new 15,000 tonne feedlot in Galway Bay – the world's largest salmon farm which would double salmon farming production in Ireland. Sea lice infested Irish farmed salmon – including so-called 'organic' salmon - should be avoided like the plague.”



The revelations come in the wake of a scientific paper published by the [Royal Society](#) in November which concluded that sea lice from salmon farms are killing wild salmon. Minister of State with responsibility for Natural Resources Fergus O Dowd, TD, [welcomed](#) the report stating “from the results of this detailed study, it is crucial that sea lice levels are maintained below these protocol levels”. However, the latest ‘National Survey of Sea Lice on Fish Farms in Ireland – 2011’ [published](#) in February 2012 revealed that 50% of Irish salmon farms breached sea lice levels in 2011 compared to 40% in 2010 and 24% in 2009.

“The sea lice crisis is spiralling out of control,” continued Staniford. “No wonder the Marine Institute is desperately trying to keep a lid on the can of worms that is Irish salmon farming. Ireland is a law unto itself and is consistently flouting sea lice protocol levels despite a 2009 [complaint](#) to the European Commission by [Salmon Watch Ireland](#). Shame on Ireland and

shame on Norway which now controls over 60% of Irish salmon farming production via the Norwegian-owned multinational Marine Harvest.”

The [leaked](#) monthly sea lice reports include the following statement: “This data is supplied for the information of the recipient only and is not to be used, cited, or conveyed to third parties without the prior permission of the Marine Institute”. However last month, the Donegal News (30 November) [reported](#) on sea lice problems in Mulroy Bay and Lough Swilly. “They are intended for information only,” [said](#) a spokesperson for the Irish Government. “The full set of inspection results together with a detailed commentary is published annually and posted on the Marine Institute web-site.”

Marine Harvest’s latest [financial reports](#) refer to disease problems including sea lice infestation and Amoebic Gill Disease [2]. Watch a video report from Marine Harvest’s operations in Mulroy Bay – online via “["Nature has struck back and said "No More!" - Noel Carr on Salmon Farms](#)”

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Notes to Editors:

[1] The leaked data includes for October 2012:



 Aquaculture, MEFS, Marine Institute

Sea Lice Report October 2012						
Bay	Company	Site	Stock	Date	Mean no.s of Ovigerous Lepeophtheirus salmonis per fish	Mean no.s of Lepeophtheirus salmonis per fish
Mannin Bay	Mannin Bay Salmon Co. Ltd	Corhounagh	Atlantic salmon, 2011	24/10/12	9.36	26.59
Killybegs Harbour	Rosroe Salmon Ltd	Inishdeighil	Atlantic salmon, 2012	23/10/12	0.00	0.10
Clew Bay	Clare Island Seafarms Ltd	Portlea	Atlantic salmon, 2011	05/10/12	0.34	1.69
	Clare Island Seafarms Ltd	Seastream Inner	Atlantic salmon, 2011	10/10/12	0.00	0.66
Bealachragher Bay	Curraun Blue Ltd	Curraun	Rainbow Trout, 2011 (1)	Harvested Out		
			Rainbow Trout, 2012 (1)	18/10/12	0.06	0.52
Donegal Bay	Einy Fish Products Ltd	Inver Bay	Rainbow Trout, 2012 (1)	09/10/12	0.00	0.23
			Rainbow Trout, 2012 (2)	09/10/12	0.00	0.32
			Atlantic salmon, 2012	09/10/12	0.02	0.13
Mulroy Bay	Ocean Farm Ltd	Ocean Inver	Atlantic salmon, 2012	09/10/12	0.02	0.13
	Ocean Farm Ltd	Mc Swyne's	Atlantic salmon, 2011	09/10/12	3.49	16.72
Lough Swilly	Marine Harvest Irl.	Cranford A	Atlantic salmon, 2012 S½	24/10/12	0.94	6.03
	Marine Harvest Irl.	Glinsk	Atlantic salmon, 2012	24/10/12	0.83	6.38
Lough Swilly	Marine Harvest Irl.	Lough Swilly	Atlantic salmon, 2011	24/10/12	9.35	54.00

Elevated Lice Levels

Elevated sea lice levels are levels which are in excess of treatment trigger levels set out in "Monitoring Protocol No. 3 for Offshore Finfish Farms-Sea Lice Monitoring and Control" (DMNR 2000) & "A strategy for improved pest control on Irish salmon farm" (DAFF 2008). A notice to carry out a sea lice treatment (NTT) is issued on the basis of elevated sea lice levels. Treatment triggers during the spring period (March, April, May,) are from 0.3 to 0.5 egg bearing female (ovigerous) sea lice per fish. Outside of the critical spring period, a level of 2.0 egg bearing female sea lice per fish acts as a trigger for a NTT.

Elevated sea lice levels were recorded at:

- Corhounagh, Mannin Bay, Mannin Bay Salmon Company Ltd.
- McSwynes, Donegal Bay, Ocean Farm Ltd
- Lough Swilly, Marine Harvest Ireland

And for September 2012:

Aquaculture, MEFS, Marine Institute



Sea Lice Report September 2012						
Bay	Company	Site	Stock	Date	Mean no.s of Ovigerous <i>Lepeophtheirus salmonis</i> per fish	Mean no.s of <i>Lepeophtheirus salmonis</i> per fish
Mulroy Bay	Marine Harvest Irl.	Cranford A	Atlantic salmon, 2012 S/4	21/09/12	10.79	58.06
	Marine Harvest Irl.	Glinisk	Atlantic salmon, 2012	21/09/12	0.41	2.35
Lough Swilly	Marine Harvest Irl.	Lough Swilly	Atlantic salmon, 2011	21/09/12	11.05	71.72

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- Corhounagh, Mannin Bay, Mannin Bay Salmon Company Ltd.
- Cranford A, Mulroy Bay, Marine Harvest Ireland
- Lough Swilly, Marine Harvest Ireland

Read the sea lice data in full online via [FishyLeaks](#)

[2] Marine Harvest's [Q3 2012 report](#) includes:

"As indicated in previous reports, the Irish operation has struggled with amoebic gill disease (AGD) for several months. Due to favourable conditions for the amoeba in the quarter, mortality losses and treatment costs were substantial in the period. Exceptional mortality in the amount of NOK 14 million was recognised in the quarter."

Marine Harvest's [Q2 2012 report](#) includes:

"Cost wise, feed and sea lice mitigation costs have increased compared to 2011. High mortality in the 2012 harvest generation influenced the cost level in the period and will increasingly do so going forward."

