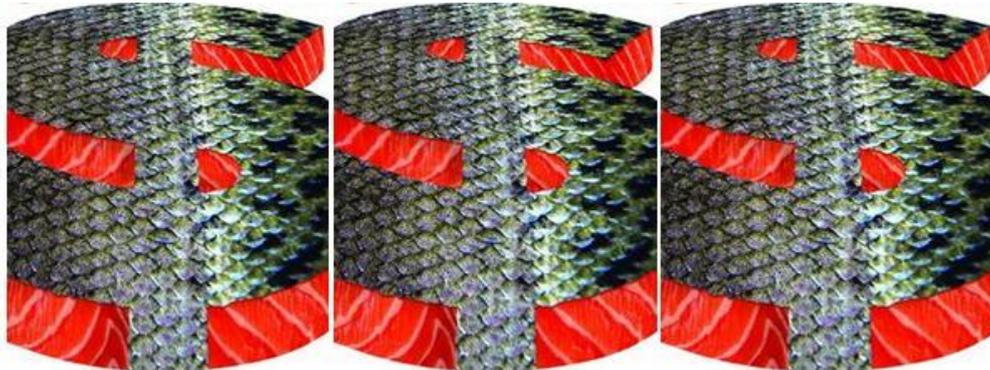


[Scottish Salmon Watch](#), 1 May 2018

## Freeloading Fish Farms: Tax Polluting Scottish Salmon

### - Scotland should follow Norway's 'Polluter Pays Principle'

Campaigners are calling on Scotland to follow the lead of Norway and tax the salmon farming sector for environmental pollution.



Yesterday's [Financial Times](#) reported that the prospect of a resource tax led to shares in Salmar (owners of Scottish Sea Farms) falling 8.8%, Grieg Seafood falling 6.3% and Marine Harvest falling 4.3%.

"The government will ... study and possibly recommend a tax on the use of natural resources to be introduced in 2020," the Norwegian finance ministry said in a statement late on Friday ([as reported by Reuters](#)). "Such a tax is under consideration without a detailed plan yet ready."

"We expect a political majority in favour of imposing increased tax on the sector ... although it is too early to conclude on any details, we think it could mean an additional tax of 2-5%," said Sparebank 1 Markets analyst Tore Toenseth ([as reported by Reuters](#)).

"Fish farming, which is Norway's second largest export industry after the oil and gas sector, has come under fire over the past few months for its use of natural resources and the lack of benefits for the areas where the farms are situated," [reported the Financial Times](#).

Last month, Norway's Socialist Left Party suggested next year's budget be augmented with a three-pence-per-kilo "royalty" on farmed salmon ([as reported by Salmon Business](#)).

Read more via:

[Threat of fish farm tax sends Norwegian salmon producers tumbling](#) (Financial Times, 30 April 2018)

[Norway considering natural resource tax on fish farms](#) (Reuters, 30 April 2018)

[Norwegian Stocks - Fish farmers sink as government considers resource tax](#) (Reuters, 30 April 2018)

["The big question now is, how big a tax hike"](#) (Salmon Business, 30 April 2018)

[Norway considering natural resource tax on fish farms](#) (FIS, 30 April 2018)

[Call for 'oil tax' on Norwegian fish farmers](#) (Fish Update, 1 May 2018)

[Norway ponders new aquaculture tax; farmers' share prices drop](#) (Undercurrent News, 1 May 2018)

"If the salmon farm industry was subjected to a scrupulous cost-accounting the economic benefits to Scotland might well be negative," said Sir Michael Wigan in a [written submission to the Scottish Parliament's inquiry into salmon farming](#). "Far from being a pillar of the economy this industry may be a costly cul-de-sac. That is before any costs of the clean-up which will be needed when net-pen cages are removed from sea-lochs and Scottish authorities are obliged to restore lost and polluted habitats."

"The 'polluter pays principle' must surely be implemented across the Scottish salmon farming sector," said Don Staniford, [Director of Scottish Salmon Watch](#). "Currently we have the perverse situation where freeloading fish farms get paid for pollution and have immunity from prosecution. The costs of discharging untreated sewage wastes including toxic chemicals, infectious diseases, lice larvae, viruses and pathogens are being paid not by the predominantly Norwegian-owned salmon farming industry but by Scotland's marine environment and wild fish."

"The Scottish Government's proposed expansion of the industry - with a doubling or even trebling proposed by 2030 - will place even more of a burden," continued Staniford. "Norway's proposed resource tax seems a fair system for salmon farming companies to pay for ever increasing pollution. Unless Scotland follows suit then Norwegian companies will target Scotland's favourable tax regime and ramp up pollution yet further. Salmon farming companies cannot be permitted to pollute with impunity in perpetuity."

Tomorrow's Scottish Parliament [inquiry into salmon farming](#) sees [oral evidence](#) from Marine Harvest, the Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation, the Scottish Salmon Company and Grieg Seafood (9am start in Committee Room 2 [live on Scottish Parliament TV](#)).



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## RURAL ECONOMY AND CONNECTIVITY COMMITTEE

### AGENDA

13th Meeting, 2018 (Session 5)

Wednesday 2 May 2018

The Committee will meet at 9.00 am in the Mary Fairfax Somerville Room (CR2).

3. **Salmon farming in Scotland:** The Committee will take evidence from—

Scott Landsburgh, Former Chief Executive, Scottish Salmon Producers' Organisation;

Ben Hadfield, Managing Director, Marine Harvest;

Craig Anderson, Chief Executive, Scottish Salmon Company;

Grant Cumming, Managing Director, Grieg Seafood Shetland, Grieg Seafood;

Stewart Graham, Group Managing Director, Gael Force Group.

Scottish Salmon Watch [revealed last month](#) that the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) had not successfully prosecuted a single salmon farming company in the last decade - despite at least 23 prosecutions and fines totalling £106,500 in the previous decade. BBC News [revealed in February](#) that 51 fish farms had been rated by SEPA as "Very Poor", "Poor" or "At Risk" (read more via [Media Backgrounder: SEPA's Shame on Salmon Farming](#)).

In April the Herald [reported](#) that: "Campaigners have criticised the use of £200,000 of public money to help introduce a new method of disposing of dead fish. Highland and Islands Enterprise - a Scottish Government quango - has contributed half the money to a new system of removing fish being developed by Ferguson Transport. The firm became one of the first recipients of a new £1 million HIE innovation fund aimed at small and medium enterprises that deal in the breeding, rearing, and harvesting of fish, shellfish and plants."

Read more on the environmental and public costs of Scottish salmon farming via: [Hard Evidence: Dossier of Data on Lice, Diseases & Mortalities at Scottish Salmon Farms](#)  
[The Scottish Salmon Polluters Organisation](#)  
[Scottish Salmon Farming 101](#)

Next week (9 May), the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy & Connectivity testifies to the RECC as the final oral evidence to the [Scottish Parliament's inquiry into salmon farming](#).

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