



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

Animal and Plant Health Agency
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Our Ref: ATIC2683

Don Staniford
{By Email}

14 March 2022

Dear Don Staniford

PROVISION OF REQUESTED INFORMATION

Thank you for your request for information about cleaner fish, which APHA received on 14 February 2022. Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000.

The information you requested and the response is detailed below. To identify each part of your request, this has been broken down and numbered.

1. "Scamon Scotland asks the UK Government to provide information on mortalities, welfare problems and diseases of cleaner fish on salmon farms in Scotland since 1 January 2020.
2. Please include any photos, videos, documentary evidence and any data on cleaner fish mortalities, welfare and diseases (including sea lice)."

Details on mortality levels are published by the Fish Health Inspectorate (FHI) and details of these reports can be found here:

[Fish Health Inspectorate: mortality information - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

As this information is publicly available it is exempt from release via the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000 under the exemption Section 21,(1) information already reasonably accessible

APHA did not take photos, videos, documentary evidence or data on cleaner fish mortalities, welfare and diseases (including sea lice) as part of these investigations. Please see APHA's role at the foot of the page.

3. "Please include any briefings, correspondence with salmon farmers, the Nordic Council of Ministers and any other parties in relation to cleaner fish mortalities, welfare and diseases."

APHA do not hold any correspondence with the Nordic Council of Ministers.

Correspondence with Salmon farmers about welfare concerns of cleaner fish and welfare can be found at Appendices 1 – 7.

You have also asked for correspondence with 'others', as you have not stated who these 'others' are APHA are unable to respond to this part of your request without further details.

4. "Further to [FOI 2021-00259890](#) disclosed by the Scottish Government on 10 January 2022 please also provide information on trade in cleaner fish including imports from England, Wales, Ireland (the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland), Iceland, Norway, France and any other countries. Please include any 'risk assessments' and health certificates of transfers/imports of cleaner fish.

Information on the trade of cleaner fish including risk assessments and health certificates is not held by APHA. This information may be held by Scottish Government (SG) or the Centre for Environment Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) although APHA cannot confirm this.

Following careful consideration, APHA have decided that some information should be redacted (blacked out) under the following exemptions:

Section 40 – Personal Information

The information being withheld falls under sections 40(2) and 40(3A) of the FOIA as the information constitutes personal data relating to persons other than you. These sections exempt personal information from disclosure if it relates to someone other than the applicant, and if disclosure of that information would breach any of the data protection principles in Article 5(1) of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

APHA consider that disclosure of this information is likely to breach the first data protection principle, which provides that personal data must be processed lawfully, fairly, and in a transparent manner. Disclosure would not constitute 'fair' processing of the personal data because individuals names and details such as telephone numbers, are held to allow APHA to conduct our business. Those persons, such as APHA staff, farmers and veterinary surgeons would not reasonably have expected their names and identifiable details to be made public.

This is an absolute exemption and does not require a public interest test.

APHA's Role on Farmed Fish

APHA is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and also works on behalf of the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Food Standards Agency to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of people, the environment and the economy.

As a further reminder of APHA's role please take note of the following:

The APHA are responsible for investigating allegations relating to the welfare of farmed fish including cleaner fish and scheduled visits to fish farms in Scotland in accordance with the requirements of Scottish Government. We take all reports of animal welfare concerns seriously and investigate them.

Scottish Government Fish Health Inspectors are appointed by the Scottish Ministers to act as inspectors under the aquaculture and aquatic animal health regulations and will refer any concerns on fish welfare to APHA for consideration.

Information disclosed in response to this FOI request is releasable to the public. In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOI and the government's Transparency Agenda, this letter and the information disclosed to you may be placed on GOV.UK, together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. No information identifying you will be placed on the GOV.UK website.

An Annex is attached which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you and contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact the Access to Information Team at the email address below or postal address at the top of this letter.

Yours sincerely

ACCESS TO INFORMATION TEAM

Email: enquiries@apha.gov.uk

Annex

Copyright

The information supplied to you continues to be protected by copyright. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including for private study and non-commercial research, and for any other purpose authorised by an exception in current copyright law. Documents (except photographs or logos) can also be used in the UK without requiring permission for the purposes of news reporting. Any other re-use, for example commercial publication, would require the permission of the copyright holder.

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Copyright in other documents may rest with a third party. For information about obtaining permission from a third party see the [Intellectual Property Office's website](#).

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request, you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 11 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to the Access to Information Manager at the address at the top of this letter or email enquiries@apha.gov.uk and the team will arrange for an internal review of your case.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Please note that generally the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted APHA's own complaints procedure. The ICO can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Coronavirus

If you need to contact the ICO during the Coronavirus pandemic, it's best to do so online. Please click [here](#) for contact details. You can also call them on 0303 123 1113.