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Don Staniford  
Scottish Salmon Watch and Global Alliance Against  
Industrial Aquaculture

Our ref: Fol/18/01141

15 June 2018

Dear Mr Staniford

Thank you for your request dated 1 May 2018 under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (the EIRs).

### Your request

You requested photographs of diseased farmed salmon relating to all FHI visits since 1 January 2017, and in addition all FHI visits to Marine Harvest sites since 1 January 2015.

As the information you have requested is 'environmental information' for the purposes of the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (EIRs), we are required to deal with your request under those Regulations. We are applying the exemption at section 39(2) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA), so that we do not also have to deal with your request under FOISA.

This exemption is subject to the 'public interest test'. Therefore, taking account of all the circumstances of this case, we have considered if the public interest in disclosing the information outweighs the public interest in applying the exemption. We have found that, on balance, the public interest lies in favour of upholding the exemption, because there is no public interest in dealing with the same request under two different regimes. This is essentially a technical point and has no material effect on the outcome of your request.

### Response to your request

Please find the attached web links containing photographs which have been taken as part of the Fish Health Inspectorate's statutory inspection programme. The photographs are grouped according to their case number which is a unique number identifying any one particular FHI visit.

It is essential that these images are viewed in line with the following context:

The images should be viewed in line with the case inspection notes – available at <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/Fish-Shellfish/FHI/CaseInformation> which provide additional context to the population of fish stocked on site at the point of inspection, as well as the findings and observations from the inspection and sampling undertaken. The case inspection notes for cases 20180078; 20180111; 20180112; and 20180113 are complete but are still awaiting publication which will take place in July 2018.

The Fish Health Inspectorate's (FHI) mission is to support the Scottish Government's vision of a sustainable, growing and diverse aquaculture industry whilst maintaining the high health status of farmed and wild fish and shellfish stocks in Scotland by preventing the introduction and spread of listed and emerging diseases. The FHI do this by undertaking statutory inspection and sampling programmes, providing advice to stakeholders and implementing regulatory functions in accordance with the current aquaculture and aquatic animal health regulations.

The attached images have been identified as within scope of this request. The majority show fish which have been removed and euthanised for post mortem analysis and investigative testing by the FHI.

Photographs are taken as they are a useful tool in the analytical process and it is important to view these photographs in context. The photographs attached have been taken as part of the Fish Health Inspectorate's risk based surveillance programme, which involved 160 inspections relating to fish farms in 2017.

In the wild, the reproductive strategy of fish, particularly salmon, is to produce a large number of offspring with the aim that a proportion will survive to adulthood. Fish are subject to a number of pressures in the environment, particularly naturally present pathogens and other environmental parameters, with farmed fish being no exception. It can therefore be expected that some fish will experience challenges to good health. Those fish which have been removed by the FHI represent a very small proportion of the total number of fish on an aquaculture site (for example 5 fish from sites holding between 250,000 to 1.8 million fish). The images attached do not present any human health concerns and are not a representation of the entire fish population on site.

In many cases these actions have been undertaken in support of on-going investigations which were being conducted by the farm veterinarian and in-house animal health professionals.

The photographs can be accessed through the following weblink:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/slya8qyh1vevo9/AAANuzeWp-wPSjYvluloVPHNa?dl=0>

## Your right to request a review

If you are unhappy with this response to your EIRs request, you may ask us to carry out an internal review of the response, by writing to:

Graham Black  
Director Marine Scotland  
Scottish Government

Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road,  
Aberdeen AB11 9DB  
[www.gov.scot/marinescotland](http://www.gov.scot/marinescotland)



Area 1B South  
Victoria Quay  
Edinburgh  
EH6 6QQ

Email: [directormarinescotland@gov.scot](mailto:directormarinescotland@gov.scot)

Your review request should explain why you are dissatisfied with this response, and should be made within 40 working days from the date when you received this letter. We will complete the review and tell you the result, within 20 working days from the date when we receive your review request.

If you are not satisfied with the result of the review, you then have the right to appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner. More detailed information on your appeal rights is available on the Commissioner's website at:  
<http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/YourRights/Unhappywiththeresponse/AppealingtoCommissioner.aspx>.

Yours sincerely

Neil Purvis