

[FishyLeaks](#), 25 November 2014

[Double Trouble:](#)  
[Ireland's Lice-Infested Salmon Farms Leap By Over 100%](#)



[FishyLeaks](#) this week published confidential data from the Irish Government on leaping lice infestation levels at salmon farms in Ireland during 2013 and 2014 - including Marine Harvest's farm in Inver Bay in Donegal Bay breaching levels by over 12 times in [May 2014](#) and a 24-fold breach by Ocean Farm Ltd at McSwynes in Donegal Bay in [September 2014](#). Thus far during 2014 (data available up the end of October), breaches of the sea lice levels set by the Irish Government's are already more than double those reported during the whole of 2013 [1].

The Marine Institute publishes sanitized annual reports but monthly data is marked private and confidential - with the following warning attached to reports:

*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.*

Published data for 2013 is available at <http://hdl.handle.net/10793/955>

Marine Institute, Rinville, Oranmore, Co. Galway, Ireland. Tel:+353 91387200 [www.marine.ie](http://www.marine.ie)

"No wonder the Irish Government is reluctant to publish the information: the data reveals that in the first ten months of 2014 there have already been 39 breaches of the sea lice levels set by the Marine Institute," said Don Staniford, Director of the Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture (GAAIA). "That's more than double the breaches reported in the whole of 2013! This damning data blows out of the water the Irish Government's super-sized plans to expand salmon farming production around Ireland."

In December 2012, [FishyLeaks disclosed damning sea lice data for 2012](#) and GAAIA [wrote to the Irish Fisheries Minister](#) regarding persistent flouting of sea lice levels by Irish salmon farms.

"Even at current low levels of production, salmon farming across Ireland is losing the battle against sea lice infestation and infectious diseases," continued Staniford. "The Irish Government's plans to double or treble salmon farming production is a recipe for ruin and akin to signing a death warrant for wild salmon and sea trout. Consumers may be getting more than they bargained for when buying lice-infested Irish farmed salmon. Boycott Irish farmed salmon this Christmas, even so-called 'organic' salmon."



The breaches reported in 2014 (39 thus far) include:

**October 2014 - four breaches** including Marine Harvest's farm at Ardmore in Kilkieran Bay

**September 2014 - five breaches** including a 24-fold breach at McSwyne's and a ten-fold breach at Richies Bay (both operated by Ocean Farm Ltd in Donegal Bay)

**August 2014 - six breaches** including a five-fold breach by Marine Harvest at Eany and a nine-fold breach by Ocean Farm Ltd at Richies Bay (both in Donegal Bay)

**July 2014 - three breaches** including a four-fold breach by Ocean Farm Ltd at Richies Bay

**June 2014 - four breaches** including a two-fold breach by Mannin Bay Salmon's 'organic' farms at both Hawks Nest and Corhounagh

**May 2014 - nine breaches** including a 12-fold breach by Marine Harvest's farm at Eany in Inver Bay in Donegal Bay

**April 2014 - three breaches** including an eight-fold breach by Mannin Bay Salmon at Corhounagh

**March 2014 - four breaches** including a 12-fold breach by Bifand Ltd's farm at Fraochoilean in Ballinakill Bay

**February 2014 - one breach** by Bifand Ltd's farm at Fraochoilean in Ballinakill Bay

The breaches for 2013 (19 in total) include:

**October 2013 - two breaches** including a three-fold breach by Marine Harvest's farm at Glinsk in Mulroy Bay

**September 2013 - three breaches** including a 12-fold breach by Marine Harvest's farm at Seastream Inner (Iniscoragh) in Clew Bay

**August 2013 - three breaches** including a 9-fold breach by Marine Harvest's farm at Seastream Inner (Iniscoragh) in Clew Bay

**July 2013 - four breaches** including a 5-fold breach by Marine Harvest's farm at Seastream Inner (Iniscoragh) in Clew Bay

**May 2013 - two breaches** including Clare Island Seafarms 'organic' farm in Clew Bay

**April 2013 - two breaches** including Rosroe Salmon's farm in Killary Harbour

**March 2013 - one breach** at Marine Harvest's farm at Moross in Mulroy Bay

**January 2013 - two breaches** including a 6-fold breach by Marine Harvest's farm at Cranford in Mulroy Bay

The Marine Institute's official annual report for 2013 was [published in February 2014](#) with the 2014 annual report not expected until February 2015. Annual reports for previous years are available [online here](#).

At the '[Sea Lice 2014](#)' conference held in Maine (USA) in early September 2014, the Marine Institute admitted to "persistent difficulties in achieving sea lice control targets at certain locations" but claimed "a downward trend of mean sea lice levels on Irish farms" [2].

A few weeks later (18 September 2014), Inshore Fisheries Ireland (IFI) issued a [press release](#) welcoming a new sea lice report detailing over 300 scientific papers on the impact of salmon farms. "The Board of IFI believes this new review confirms the need for very tight regulation of sea lice levels on salmon farms and raises legitimate concerns with regard to the potential impact of new, large scale salmon farms, proposed along Ireland's west coast, on salmon and sea trout stocks," stated the [press release](#). "Regulators will now need to consider the results of this comprehensive review when making decisions on the sustainability and approval of future marine salmon aquaculture licences and the regulation of sea lice at existing sites so as to ensure no negative impact on salmon and sea trout stocks."

Despite ongoing sea lice problems and the weight of scientific evidence against salmon farms, the Irish Government is seeking to expand production with plans for four 'super-size' salmon farms in [Galway Bay](#) (off the Aran Islands); [Inis Turk and Inis Boffin](#) (off the Mayo coast) and [Cape Clear Island](#) (off the Cork coast). At a staggering [15,000 tonnes](#) (the world's largest "organic" salmon farm), the Galway Bay salmon farm alone would more than double Irish salmon farming production (which fell 44% in 2013 to just over 10,000 tonnes due to sea lice infestation, Amoebic Gill Disease and Pancreas Disease) [3].

Read online via "[Exposed: Ireland's Lice-Infested Farmed Salmon](#)"

**Contact:**

Don Staniford: +44 7771 541826 (UK mobile) or via email: [dstaniford@gaaia.org](mailto:dstaniford@gaaia.org)

**Notes to Editors:**

[1] Read the confidential data in full online here:

[October 2014](#)  
[September 2014](#)  
[August 2014](#)  
[July 2014](#)  
[June 2014](#)  
[May 2014](#)  
[April 2014](#)  
[March 2014](#)  
[February 2014](#)  
[January 2014 to December 2013](#)  
[November 2013](#)  
[October 2013](#)  
[September 2013](#)  
[August 2013](#)  
[July 2013](#)  
[June 2013](#)  
[May 2013](#)  
[April 2013](#)  
[March 2013](#)  
[February 2013](#)  
[January 2013 to December 2012](#)

[2] Here's the abstract of the paper presented by the Marine Institute at the ['Sea Lice 2014'](#) conference held in Maine (USA) in September 2014:

### **The role of the management cell in sea lice control in Ireland**

F. Kane<sup>1\*</sup>, D. Jackson<sup>1</sup>, P. O'Donohoe<sup>1</sup>, T. Mc Dermott<sup>1</sup>, S. Kelly<sup>1</sup> and A. Drumm<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Marine Institute, Oranmore, Galway, Ireland.*

A Sea Lice Monitoring Programme for finfish farms in Ireland was instigated in 1991 and expanded to all stocks nationally in 1993. The *Monitoring Protocol No.3 for Offshore Finfish Farms - Sea Lice Monitoring and Control* was formally published in 2000. Data collected from the monitoring programme are provided to the farm and circulated to relevant parties directly. The data are also published annually<sup>1</sup>.

Following persistent difficulties in achieving sea lice control targets at certain locations; "*A strategy for the improved pest control on Irish salmon farms*"<sup>2</sup> was published in 2008. This outlined a comprehensive range of measures to provide for enhanced sea lice control. It was developed by both regulators and industry in response to difficulties experienced by farms in maintaining low levels of sea lice infestation. These measures draw on the on-going Single Bay Management process and through a number of recommendations seek to advance the suite of tools necessary for improved sea lice control on farms.

Management Cells are one of the key recommendations and are a central tool in the management of sea lice on an individual farm basis. A Management Cell is a local group comprised of salmon producers, statutory monitors, aquaculture development organisations, the farm's veterinary surgeon, the affected farm and possibly other farms within the bay. It is convened when there is prolonged elevated sea lice infestation, to give advice and agree a way forward.

The Management Cell works by bringing all the relevant expertise to bear on the problem situations in real time, actively engaging the affected farm and ensuring that a high priority is given to dealing with the infestation. It is a proactive and integrated mandatory 'real time' management regime, which vigorously deals with failures to control sea lice on a case-by-case basis<sup>3</sup>.

A series of case studies are presented describing the management options employed over a period and their outcomes in terms of sea lice control. To date the Management Cell process has contributed to a downward trend of mean sea lice levels on Irish farms.

#### References

<sup>1</sup> O'Donohoe P, Kane F, Kelly S, Mc Dermott T, Drumm A & D Jackson 2014. National Survey of Sea Lice (*Lepeophtheirus salmonis* Krøyer and *Caligus elongatus* Nordmann) on Fish Farms in Ireland – 2013.

[3] Irish salmon farming production has declined due to the disease crisis - as reported by [Intrafish in July 2014](#):

## Kontali: Huge decline in Irish salmon farming

Production levels drop 44 percent year-on-year as sector, led by Marine Harvest, is battling to revive from 2012 AGD crisis.



Elisabeth Fischer

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Kontali Analyse's latest report on the global salmon farming industry paints a dire picture for the Irish sector, with figures showing a drop of 44 percent year-on-year.

In the first four months of the year, the country's combined producers harvested about 1,500 metric tons, a dramatic slump from 2,700 metric tons between January and April last year.

Harvesting had already declined significantly between 2012 to 2013. 2012 was a record year, with 4,200 metric tons harvested in the first four months of the year.

Ragnar Nystoyl, managing director at Kontali, said the industry is now seeing the impact of the amoebic gill disease (AGD) crisis in 2012, as there is "not much fish left to slaughter."

Marine Harvest Ireland, the country's biggest producer, suffered "considerable stock losses" in 2013 on a combination of jellyfish invasions and pancreas disease (PD) on younger fish, Catherine McManus, technical manager at the firm, told **IntraFish**.

In 2012, the company still produced about 12,000 metric tons of fish. This dropped by about a third the following year.

"The jellyfish caused significant skin and gill damage in crops of fish sporadically around the Irish coastline. These issues have had the greatest economic impact for the Irish aquaculture industry," McManus said.

AGD was a "technical shock," Donal Maguire, director of aquaculture development at the Irish Sea Fisheries Board, Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), told **IntraFish**. But as the industry "has learned to deal with it" increasing

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harvest volumes are expected in the coming years.

According to Kontali, in the 12 months of 2013, only 10,600 metric tons of Atlantic salmon were harvested, compared to 2010 when production peaked at 17,800 metric tons. In contrast, the statistics show 1,143,500 metric tons of Atlantic salmon harvested were produced in Norway last year.

Maguire is convinced figures will go up. He predicted 11,500 to 12,000 metric tons for the current year, and then a jump to 15,000 metric tons in 2015. "The volumes are still very modest but it's a very important and valuable sector for us," he said.

McManus said Marine Harvest Ireland has been working on getting amoebic gill under control over the past two years, which includes weekly gill health monitoring and timely intervention with freshwater baths. "This has been a successful management tool," she said.

The company is also developing curtain systems for deployment in the event of future harmful jellyfish invasions, and a three-year research project -- MaREI Aqua -- in partnership with the SFI MaREI Research Centre in Ireland.

The company has a volume guidance of about 7,800 metric tons this year. "In 2015 we hope to return to 2012 production volumes," McManus said.