

Scottish Salmon Watch, 8 March 2021

[Photo Exclusive: Seals 'Executed' by Scottish Salmon](#)



- [FOI disclosure by Scottish Marine Animal Strandings Scheme](#) reveals 'physical trauma' of seals slaughtered by The Scottish Salmon Company, Scottish Sea Farms, Cooke & Mowi since 2018
- The bullet "obliterated the cranial vault" reveals Cooke post-mortem in Shetland
- "Single entry wound to top of skull consistent with ballistic trauma, skull fractured into >5 sections, cranial vault destroyed" reveals Mowi post-mortem for Loch Ewe
- Carcasses weighted & sunk before photographs can be taken at Scottish Sea Farms
- "Due to seal decomposing and starting to smell we have disposed of the carcass," wrote The Scottish Salmon Company's Isle of Lewis office in 2020
- Seals penetrating salmon farms due to lack of anti-predator nets
- Campaigners fear illegal killing will continue even after ban on 31 January



Gruesome photographs obtained by Scottish Salmon Watch via Freedom of Information from the Scottish Marine Animal Strandings Scheme reveal the graphic nature of salmon farming in Scotland.



M reference	Species common	Date Found	Location	Local Authority	Critical	Stranding Type	Condition Found	Findings
M801/18	Grey seal	11/12/2018	Cooke aquaculture. Unst	Shetland	HU 584 99	dead stranded	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot (Known)

"Salmon farms - even RSPCA Assured sites - are getting away with murder," said Don Staniford, [Director of Scottish Salmon Watch](#). "Cheap and nasty Scottish salmon is sealed with a kiss of death and leaves a bad taste in the mouth. Next time you're in a supermarket please picture your Scottish salmon served with a side of dead seal. I would not buy Scottish salmon even if a gun was pointed at my head. If you buy Scottish salmon you have the blood of over 1,000 seals on your hands."



"This is yet more graphic hard evidence that the previous protection given to seals by the Scottish Government was not worth a brass farthing," said John Robins of [Animal Concern](#)

who has [offered a £5,000 reward for information on illegal killing of seals](#). "Seals appear to have been killed and disposed of illegally as a matter of course. Once again I call for a total moratorium on Government plans for the expansion of cruel, polluting, wildlife-destroying filthy floating factory fish farms. We need criminal investigations into cruelty to fish and wildlife crimes. At the very least The Scottish Government has turned a blind eye to the massive failings of fish farms. What I have seen over many years indicates that the Scottish Government and other public authorities have in fact colluded with multi-national salmon farm companies in the harming of marine mammals, poor fish husbandry, marine pollution, neglect of staff safety and persecution of those who expose the negative side of aquaculture."



"Companies are killing seals without collecting their carcasses and without taking photos," continued Staniford who is [calling on industry whistleblowers to go public](#). "It beggars belief that seals can penetrate salmon cages and live for a week inside a farm. If farms invested in anti-predator netting and farmed away from seal nursery areas it would prevent the slaughter."



M reference	Species common	Date found	Location	Local Authority	Gridref	Stranding Type	Condition Found	Findings
M179/20	Grey seal	25/03/2020	Swarta Skerry	Shetland	HU 484 67	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot (Known)

The FOI disclosure is summarized via: [FOI Backgrounder: Disclosure by the Scottish Marine Animal Strandings Scheme dated 3 March 2021](#)



This seal (ref # M45-20) was killed by The Scottish Salmon Company at [Taranaish salmon farm in Loch Roag](#) on the Isle of Lewis in January 2020 (Contact Tel: 01546 602172).



Class	SubClass	Event	National Reference	M reference	Event number in Year	Species scientific	Species common	Species uncertain	Date found	Date certainty	Month	Year	Location
Pinniped	Grey seal	Single	SS2020/31M45/20		45	Halichoerus	Grey seal	FALSE	16/01/2020	exact	1	2020	Taranaish Great Bernera Lewis

2. Grey seal confirmed by photos of live animal prior to shooting Taranaish, Great Bernera, Lewis 16/01/20 NB 1626539463 carcasse sunk. Scottish Salmon Ltd.

These seals (ref # M61-20 and M62-20) were killed by The Scottish Salmon Company at Miavaig on the Isle of Lewis in January 2020 (the grid reference # - NB 125 344 - identifies the seal was killed at [Vuia Mor salmon farm in Loch Roag](#); Tel: 01546 602172):



Class	SubClass	Event	National Reference	M reference	Event number in Year	Species scientific	Species common	Species uncertain	Date found	Date casualty	Month	Year	Location
Pinniped	Grey seal	Single	SS2020V4[M61/20		61	Halichoerj Grey seal	FALSE		22/01/2020	exact	1	2020	Miavaig Uig Lewis

3. Grey seal confirmed by photos at Miavaig, Uig Lewis NB12555 34433 22/01/20 carcass sunk. Scottish Salmon Ltd.

4. Grey seal confirmed by photos at Miavaig, Uig Lewis NB12555 34433 22/01/20 carcass sunk. Scottish Salmon Ltd.

"The Scottish Salmon Company has clearly gone rogue in Loch Roag but at least they have shared some photographs," concluded Staniford. "Scottish Sea Farms - Scottish salmon's #1 seal killer with over 230 seals killed since 2011 - has a culture of secrecy with seal carcasses sunk before photos can be taken. Norwegian giant Mowi has continued on a killing spree including an illegally shot juvenile harbour seal in Loch Ewe which triggered a report to Police Scotland's Wildlife Crime Unit in February 2020. Even after the expiration of seal licences to kill seals on 31 January 2021 there is a real risk that the execution of seals by salmon farms will continue. Thankfully Animal Concern's offer of a £5,000 reward brings the issue into the cross-hairs."



The [FOI disclosure \(3 March 2021\)](#) included an Excel spreadsheet detailing only 27 seals killed by salmon farms reported to the Scottish Marine Animal Strandings Scheme since January 2018 (over 182 seals have been killed since January 2018):

Reference	Species/Strain	Date Found	Location	Local Authority	Gridref	Stranding Type	Condition Found	Findings
M224/18	Grey seal	09/04/2018	Near Valla Island	Shetland	HJ 233 47	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M801/18	Grey seal	11/12/2018	Cooke aquaculture Uinst	Shetland	HJ 584 98	dead stranded	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M806/18	Grey seal	13/12/2018	Cooke aquaculture Uynasound	Shetland	HJ 584 98	dead stranded	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M179/19	Seal (indeterminate species)	13/03/2019	Thula Geodha North Uist	Western Isles	NF 764 74	live stranded	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M484/19	Grey seal	05/06/2019	Near the Bow of Hascosay	Shetland	HJ 544 92	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M28/20	Grey seal	09/01/2020	Wyne near Mousa	Shetland	HJ 455 25	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M45/20	Grey seal	16/01/2020	Taranaisih Great Bernera Lewis	Western Isles	NB 162 39	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M80/20	Harbour seal (Common seal)	11/01/2020	Poolwee	Highland	NG 844 81	live stranded	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M81/20	Grey seal	22/01/2020	Mavaag Uig Lewis	Western Isles	NB 125 34	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M82/20	Grey seal	22/01/2020	Mavaag Uig Lewis	Western Isles	NB 125 34	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M75/20	Grey seal	02/02/2020	Near Hawn Wyne	Orkney	HY 456 25	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M132/20	Seal (indeterminate species)	28/02/2020	Vidin	Shetland	HJ 484 67	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M176/20	Grey seal	24/01/2020	Swartha Skerry	Shetland	HJ 485 67	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M179/20	Grey seal	25/01/2020	Swartha Skerry	Shetland	HJ 484 67	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M184/20	Harbour seal (Common seal)	28/01/2020	Isle of Shuna Loch Linnhe	Argyll and Bute	NM 925 49	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M198/20	Harbour seal (Common seal)	01/04/2020	near Shuna Island	Argyll and Bute	NM 925 49	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M197/20	Grey seal	04/04/2020	Vidin	Shetland	HJ 484 67	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M215/20	Grey seal	16/04/2020	At sea Wyne near Hawn	Orkney	HY 456 25	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M217/20	Grey seal	21/04/2020	At sea Vidin	Shetland	HJ 484 67	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M226/20	Grey seal	10/04/2020	Vidin Scottish Sea Farms	Shetland	HJ 485 67	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M228/20	Grey seal	01/05/2020	Swartha Skerry Scottish Sea Farms Ltd	Shetland	HJ 473 62	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M230/20	Grey seal	04/05/2020	Vidin Scottish Sea Farms Limited	Shetland	HJ 485 67	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M233/20	Harbour seal (Common seal)	05/05/2020	Loch Linnhe Scottish Sea Farms Ltd	Argyll and Bute	NM 821 40	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M238/20	Harbour seal (Common seal)	08/05/2020	Loch Kishom Scottish Sea Farms	Highland	NG 826 38	dead stranded	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M261/20	Grey seal	20/05/2020	Wyre	Orkney	HY 456 25	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M356/20	Harbour seal (Common seal)	09/07/2020	Loch Canon	Highland	NG 790 37	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot
M532/20	Grey seal	14/10/2020	Wyre Scottish Sea Farms	Orkney	HY 456 25	at sea	freshly dead- died on beach (code 2a)	Physical Trauma: Shot

Download Excel spreadsheet [online here](#)

Last month, Scottish Salmon Watch [revealed that over 1,000 seals had been officially reported as killed by salmon farms since 2011](#) with Scottish Sea Farms leading the killing spree followed by Mowi, The Scottish Salmon Company, Grieg Seafood, Loch Duart and Cooke.

[Data Analysis - Lethal Scottish Salmon: the Norwegian-owned companies killing seals in Scotland! \(1,000+ seals slaughtered between 2011 and 2020\)](#)



Summary:

Over 1,000 seals have been killed by salmon farms since 2011 according to official statistics [published online by the Scottish Government](#). Norwegian-owned company Scottish Sea Farms leads the slaughter with 235 seals killed followed by Norwegian giant Mowi (known as Marine Harvest until 2019) with 185 seals killed and The Scottish Salmon Company (the Norwegian Government is the largest shareholder) with 182 seals killed.

SEALS KILLED BY SALMON FARMS (2011 to 2020*) - as officially reported to the Scottish Government										
	Scottish Sea Farms	Mowi/Marine Harvest	The Scottish Salmon Co	Hjaltland/Grieg	Loch Duart	Cooke	Wester Ross	Kames	Others	TOTAL
2011	37	34	54	50	10		1	2	47	235
2012	45	16	30	50	20		1	2	33	206
2013	33	5	14	32	13		3	1	14	115
2014	33	7	14	7	13		4		10	88
2015	15	20	11		9	3	2	2	8	70
2016	14	26	2		12	8	2		1	65
2017	12	13	7	1	15	1				49
2018	11	24	6		2	9	2			54
2019	13	25	18		7	2				65
2020	22	35	17		5	1	2	1		63
TOTAL	235	185	182	140	106	24	17	8	113	1010

* Q4 2020 data missing

Download Excel spreadsheet summarizing the data [online here](#)

Despite killing 185 seals since 2011, Norwegian giant Mowi does not routinely report seal killings, take photographs or collect carcasses for the Scottish Marine Animal Strandings Scheme. Mowi features in the [FOI disclosure](#) in relation to a juvenile male harbour seal [killed illegally in Loch Ewe in January 2020 prompting a report to Police Scotland's Wildlife Crime Unit in February 2020](#). Controversially, Mowi's harbour seal was 'euthanized' with the support of the SSPCA (who is [chaired by the head veterinarian at salmon farming giant Scottish Sea Farms](#)).

 **Don Staniford** @TheGAAIA

Photo Exclusive: Juvenile harbour seal killed by @ScotlandMowi in Loch Ewe - authorised by the SSPCA & certified via @rspcaassured but reported by @marinescotland to @policescotland for being killed without licence tinyurl.com/rcf48kuv
@SealScotland @SOSealsFund @SSPCA_Mike



9:48 AM · Feb 25, 2021 

 **Don Staniford** @TheGAAIA ...

Whistleblower on RSPCA Assured salmon farmer killing seals illegally: "I know an insider at Mowi who confirms the company shoots a lot more seals than what they report" @ScotlandMowi "Plenty goes unreported" @MowiScotlandLtd @marinescotland @rspcaassured tinyurl.com/9rh7nyx4



 Sealife-Adventures and 9 others

12:35 PM · Feb 26, 2021 · Twitter Web App

Read more via:

[Police Scotland refuse to name 112 marksmen licenced to kill seals!](#)

[Sunday Times: "Sharp rise in seal shootings blew hole in permit scheme - Officials were warned that salmon farmers 'had no willingness or intention' to collect detailed data"](#)

[Calling All Whistleblowers - Please pass on photos of dead seals killed at salmon farms!](#)

[Daily Mirror: "Nearly 80 seals were legally shot in Scotland in 2020 – highest number in seven years"](#)

[Scottish Salmon's #1 Seal Killer - Norway's 'Scottish' Sea Farms Named & Shamed!](#)

[Official Data: 1,000+ seals killed by salmon farms since 2011!](#)

[The Ferret: "Salmon companies rapped for breaking rules on shooting seals"](#)

[Caught in the Cross-Hairs: Illegal Killing of Seals by Scottish Salmon Farms!](#)

[FOI opens sealed documents on killing by salmon farms](#)

[£5,000 reward offered for information on illegal shooting of seals](#)

[Victory Sealed After 50-Year Campaign - But the Battle to Save Marine Mammals from Salmon Farms Continues!](#)

[Photo Gallery: Seals Against Salmon Farms!](#)

[Seal shooting at salmon farms doubles before ban](#)

[Seals in the Cross-Hairs of the Scottish Parliament](#)

[Scottish Salmon's Slaughter of Seals Has Not Stopped!](#)



Contact:

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John Robins (Animal Concern): 07721 605521 (info@animalconcern.org)

Notes to Editors:

[1] Photos available as High Res Images via:



[Photo: Seal in bin with farmed salmon \(The Scottish Salmon Company, Taranaish salmon farm in Loch Roag\) January 2020](#)

[Photo: Decomposed head \(The Scottish Salmon Company, Miavaig, Vuia Mor salmon farm in Loch Roag\) January 2020](#)

[Photo: Decomposed in body bag two seals \(The Scottish Salmon Company, Miavaig, Vuia Mor salmon farm in Loch Roag\) January 2020](#)

[Photo: Decomposed in body bag \(The Scottish Salmon Company, Miavaig, Vuia Mor salmon farm in Loch Roag\) January 2020](#)

[Photo: Bloody seal dripping with eyes popped out #1 \(Cooke Aquaculture, Unst, Shetland\) December 2018](#)

[Photo: Bloody seal dripping with eyes popped out #2 \(Cooke Aquaculture, Unst, Shetland\) December 2018](#)

[Photo: Seal trapped inside salmon farm #1 \(Scottish Sea Farms, Swarta Skerry, Shetland\) March 2020](#)

[Photo: Seal trapped inside salmon farm #2 \(Scottish Sea Farms, Swarta Skerry, Shetland\) March 2020](#)

[Photo: Harbour seal flipper \(Mowi, Loch Ewe\) January 2020](#)

[Photo: Harbour seal in boat \(Mowi, Loch Ewe\) January 2020](#)

[Post Mortem #1 Shetland seal killed obliterated cranial vault \(Cooke, Uyea Sound\) January 2019](#)

[Post Mortem #2 Mowi Loch Ewe January 2020](#)

Read in full via: [FOI Backgrounder: Disclosure by the Scottish Marine Animal Strandings Scheme dated 3 March 2021](#)