

For immediate release: 27 August 2019

## Swim protest against salmon farming pollution on Scotland's west coast

- **Protests around salmon farms around the Argyll Coast on 31 August & 1 September**
- **Swimmers, kayakers and rowers shine spotlight on Scottish salmon pollution**
- **Sampling of salmon farm effluents for viruses, pathogens, chemicals and contaminants**

Campaigners are calling for greater scrutiny of the Scottish salmon farming industry with peaceful protests planned for this weekend (31 August and 1 September). Organised by Scottish Salmon Watch, swimmers, kayakers and rowers will circle salmon feedlots in the public waters off Oban.

Protestors will be in fancy dress, including a salmon, a lobster in a gasmask, a harbour porpoise in ear defenders and a seal in a bullet-proof vest, highlighting some of the harmful impacts of salmon farming. They will take samples of sewage waste effluent discharged by Norwegian-owned Mowi and Scottish Sea Farms at their sites in the Sound of Jura, Firth of Lorn and Loch Linnhe, to test for pollution.

The protest comes at a time of growing pressure on the Scottish government to clean up the nation's salmon industry. [This summer, over 43,000 people have backed calls by Scottish Salmon Watch and consumer group SumOfUs](#) for Holyrood to force emergency inspections of salmon farms, due to evidence captured by Scottish Salmon Watch of welfare abuses on a salmon farm in Wester Ross.

**Don Staniford, Director of Scottish Salmon Watch**, said: *"Salmon farming in Scotland is dead in the water. If consumers could see the shocking welfare abuse and disease-ridden nature of factory fish farms they would be horrified. Scottish salmon is ethically and environmentally repugnant and should be avoided like the plague."*

**Sondhya Gupta, Campaign Manager at SumOfUs**, said: *"There's a rising tide of public opposition to Scottish salmon farms' dirty business. Scottish salmon should be the pride of Scotland – not a shameful secret branded 'sustainable' while fish live in filthy conditions, unfit for any animal. This summer, over 43,000 SumOfUs members called for the Scottish government to force emergency inspections of salmon farms. While they delay, we're stepping in – but at some point regulators need to do their own job."*

**Bob Elliot, Director of OneKind** said: *"There's a welfare nightmare playing out on Scotland's salmon farms. Our 2018 report, [Fish Welfare on Scotland's Salmon Farms](#), exposed a number of animal welfare breaches on these farms, including mass mortality, sea lice infestations, disease and the shooting of seals. Two of the farms that the campaigners will be visiting were also listed as #1 and #3 in our [list](#) of the worst salmon farms in Scotland for animal welfare. OneKind calls for a halt to the expansion of the salmon farming industry until it has successfully addressed its animal welfare challenges."*

**John Robins of Animal Concern** said: *"It is time for people to reclaim the seas from the filthy floating factory fish farms which are polluting our coastal waters, destroying our wildlife and turning the King of Fish into the marine equivalent of battery hens. It's great to see people doing what the Government won't – telling salmon farmers to get the hell out of our seas. Salmon farming is unsustainable, incredibly cruel and very damaging to the marine environment. The Scottish government must take the lead from the protesters and act now to stop salmon farmers destroying our coastal ecosystem."*

**Mimi Bekhechi, Director of International Programmes at PETA**, said: *"Whether on land or in water, animals raised for their flesh suffer horribly – and needlessly. Fish farming is devastating to fish and the environment, and the best way for individuals to help these animals and our oceans is simply to stop eating them."*

**Andrew Holder of Extinction Rebellion Oban** said: *"The fish farming companies are complicit in the headlong rush towards the sixth mass extinction. The profligate use of toxic chemicals; the spread of sea lice to wild fish stocks; and the decimating of indigenous fishing industries in their plundering of wild fish to make salmon farm feeds are all playing a part in the destruction of our environment and ecosystems."*

**Dennis Archer, co-convenor of Argyll & Bute Branch of the Scottish Green Party**, said: *"Argyll needs to treat its marine environment better and will get no help from the Scottish government in Edinburgh. There are better ways of managing this polluting industry without the chemicals, with more jobs and bigger benefits to the Scottish economy. The first thing people can do to help is to stop eating farmed salmon."*

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**Notes to editors:**

[1] The protests will take place in public waters around the salmon farms, where it is legal for members of the public to swim and take water samples. The six farms concerned and the local police have been notified in advance. Read more details via [Letter to Police Scotland re. protocol for filming salmon farms](#) and [Biosecurity Precautions for Filming Salmon Farms](#).

[2] Protestors will only swim if the weather conditions mean it is safe to do so.

**[3] Itinerary:**

**Saturday, 31 August 2019**

10am: Dunstaffnage salmon farm (Scottish Sea Farms) in the Firth of Lorn (grid reference: [NM86473414](#)). (Meet at Dunstaffnage Marina at 8.30am)

2pm: Shuna salmon farm (Scottish Sea Farms) in Loch Linnhe ([NM92544966](#))

## **Sunday, 1 September 2019**

10am to 2pm (weather dependent on which sites visited first):

Bagh Dail nan Ceann salmon farm (Mowi) in the Sound of Jura ([NM77450451](#))

Poll na Gille salmon farm (Mowi) in the Sound of Jura ([NM77660819](#))

Rubh an Trilleachain salmon farm (Mowi/Kames) in Shuna Sound ([NM75630742](#))

Port na Cro (Mowi) in Shuna Sound ([NM76070983](#))

Further background on the salmon farms is available [online here](#).

**[4]** The six salmon farms visited on 31 August and 1 September are all [located within the Argyll Coast & Islands Hope Spot](#) – the [first hope spot in the UK](#) ([recognised for its rich marine wildlife](#)).

**[5]** High-res images, posters and further details are available here via [Swim for Salmon, Cetaceans, Lobsters & Seals!](#)

***Scottish Salmon Watch** was set up in 2018 to shine a light on the murky waters of salmon farming in Scotland. [scottishsalmonwatch.org](#)*

***SumOfUs** is a global movement of consumers, investors, and workers all around the world, united together to hold corporations accountable for their actions and forge a new, sustainable and just path for our global economy. [sumofus.org](#)*