

[Her Majesty the Queen](#)
[Royal Patron of the RSPCA](#)
Buckingham Palace
London
SW1A 1AA

7 December 2015

**Seal-killing at RSPCA Assured Salmon Farms in Scotland
- Please Help Stop the Slaughter!**

Madam,

The [Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture](#) (GAAIA) implores Your Majesty to intervene to end the slaughter of seals at salmon farms across Scotland. As [Royal patron of the RSPCA](#) (who certify over 70% of Scottish farmed salmon via the [RSPCA Assured scheme which sanctions the killing of seals](#)), you have the blood of dozens if not hundreds of seals on your hands.



An [exclusive analysis](#) by GAAIA of all the data made available by the Scottish Government (i.e. for the [first two quarters of 2015](#), [2014](#), [2013](#), [2012](#) and [2011](#)) reveals that nearly 700 seals have been killed by salmon farmers since 2011 when [official Scottish Government statistics](#) were first collected. Scottish Seafarms (who exclusively supply Marks & Spencer) are Scotland's worst serial killers with 150 dead seals followed by Grieg Seafood Hjaltdland (136 seals killed), the Scottish Salmon Company (128 seals killed) and Marine Harvest (76 seals killed).

For a full list of the 51 seals killed during the first seven months of 2015 please read [online here](#). The worst companies were Marine Harvest with 15 seals killed, Scottish Seafarms with 12 seals killed and the Scottish Salmon Company with 11 seals killed.

The two worst sites during 2015 - both slaughtering five seals - were Gometra, Isle of Mull (The Scottish Salmon Company) and Sconser, Isle of Skye (Marine Harvest). Other salmon farms killing more than two seals were Toyness, Orkney (Scottish Seafarms) with four seals killed and Invasion Bay, Loch Sunart (Marine Harvest) and Shuna Sound (Marine Harvest) where three seals were killed.

Please read more via "[RSPCA Assured Seal Killers!](#)" and "[Supermarkets: Stop Killing Seals at Salmon Farms!](#)". For more background on this shameful issue please read GAAIA's other letters to the RSPCA ([letter of 23 November 2015](#); [letter of 30 August 2015](#) and [letter of July 2012](#)).



Given RSPCA Assured's '[shoot-to-kill](#)' [policy on salmon farms](#), the RSPCA should be renamed the Royal Seal Culling Association!



Do you know how many of the nearly 700 seals killed at Scottish salmon farms since 2011 were sanctioned via the RSPCA's certification scheme?

Sadly, the RSPCA [refuse to disclose the figures](#). Freedom Food (since re-branded as RSPCA Assured) [told GAAIA in January 2015](#):

"Approximately 70 per cent of farmed Scottish Salmon is produced under Freedom Food. You will appreciate that due to data protection, we are unable to provide you with a list of Freedom Food approved salmon members. The number of seals shot on our farms, as a last resort, has significantly reduced over the last seven years and continues to do so year on year. We are unable to disclose the figures as they are submitted to us by our members, in confidence, for the benefit of developing the scheme."

Perhaps the RSPCA will give Your Majesty the damning data and you can pass it onto the general public via your Christmas message this year?

Please note that the number of seals being killed is increasing whilst the use of predator control methods is still woefully low. The Herald [reported](#) in October 2015 that the number of seals killed on Scottish salmon farms has [leapt by 20 per cent](#).

According to the Scottish Government, 80% of salmon farms in Scotland still do not use anti-predator nets and 67% do not use seal blinds despite claims that seals are only shot as a 'last resort'. Read more in The Sunday Times via: "[Seal killing slips through the net](#)".

"I am pleased to support those campaigning for an end to seal deaths," said [Alison Johnstone, Member of the Scottish Parliament](#), who joined a [protest outside M&S](#) in Edinburgh in October 2015. "People buying farmed salmon in Scotland will be appalled to learn that there is no requirement on salmon producers to have nets to deter seals. If those making vast profits from salmon sales aren't prepared to invest in this preventative measure, they cannot claim that shooting a seal is a last resort. It is a lazy, greedy response that contradicts the image the producers and our supermarkets seek to promote and it has to stop."



[Protestors including [Alison Johnstone MSP](#) handing out leaflets outside M&S in Edinburgh: photo by [Colin McPherson](#) - download high res image [online here](#)]

Please also note that later this week GAAIA is organising protests outside supermarkets in London (9 December) and outside the RSPCA's head office in Horsham (10 December) - details [online here](#).



The message from both seals and protestors is simple: [Stop shooting seals for salmon meals!](#)



Will Your Majesty give seals as early Christmas present by pledging to introduce a cease-fire on RSPCA-certified salmon farms? Or will you continue to sanction the slaughter and allow yourself to be drenched in the blood of Scottish seals?



Your Majesty may not be personally pulling the trigger or loading the bullets but your royal patronage of the RSPCA is endorsing the bloody slaughter of seals at salmon farms across Scotland.



For more information on this controversial issue please visit GAAIA's web-page: "[The Killing Farms](#)"

If you would like to meet to discuss this issue please note that GAAIA will be hand-delivering this letter to Buckingham Palace on Wednesday (9 December). I would be only too happy to brief you in person. If you have time to meet please do not hesitate to contact me.

Finally, I implore you to do everything in your power to end the RSPCA's lethal policy. I have copied into this letter the RSPCA's [Honorary vice-presidents](#); [Vice-presidents](#) and [RSPCA Council](#) in the hope that animal protection rather than commercial profit can be the RSPCA's guiding philosophy once again. The RSPCA's [founding fathers](#) including William Wilberforce and Rev. Arthur Broome as well as Queen Victoria (who [granted royal patronage in 1840](#)) are surely turning in their grave at the RSPCA's shameful policy of killing seals.

With greatest respect,

Don Staniford

Director of the [Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture](#)

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Cc:

[Honorary vice-presidents](#)

Baroness Fookes of Plymouth DBE

Prof. Peter Singer

Rt. Rev. Dominic Walker

[Vice-presidents of the RSPCA:](#)

Brian Blessed

Caroline Dinenage MP

Richard Howitt MEP

Bill Jordan

Satish Kumar

Dr Caroline Lucas MP

Brian May

Bill Oddie

Chris Packham

Baroness Parminter

Julian Richer

Cllr Imogen Walker

[RSPCA Council:](#)

Mrs Margaret Baker

Mr Paul Baxter

Mr Robert Baylis

Mr Tim Bray FCA

Ms Karen Harley
Mr Ray Ings
Mr Christopher Laurence
Dr Dan Lyons
Mr David Mawson
Mr Jo Piccioni
Miss Jean Reid
Ms Linda Rimington
Dr Richard Ryder
Mrs Christina Tomlinson
Mr Michael Tomlinson
Ms Jane Tredgett
Mrs Peta Watson-Smith

[RSPCA supporter and Coronation Street Actress Helen Worth](#)