

Package Meeting with the Commission, 24/1/12 - agreed lines for agenda item 11:

Atlantic salmon sites in Scotland – EU Pilot 2094/11/ENV1

Objectives:

i) Deferral of any ensuing infraction proceedings relating to failure to protect wild salmonid populations in SACs where they are a designated SAC feature, including in particular from alleged increased impacts sea lice due to marine salmon cage-rearing; and ii) outlining the contributions the UK have made to the body of knowledge/evidence on increased salmon marine mortality.

Impacts of sea lice on wild Atlantic salmon in Scotland:

- There is no scientific evidence of an impact of lice from fish farms on wild salmon in Scotland.
- The Scottish Government takes the issue of sea lice very seriously and continues to commission research on sea lice and wild fish interactions.
- Fish farmers in Scotland have a statutory obligation to maintain records of sea lice numbers at marine sites and make records available for Government inspection. Scottish Government does not itself hold sea lice data from fish farms.
- Other work is underway and measures are proposed in the Scottish Government Aquaculture and Fisheries Consultation to help improve sea lice management and provide for collection/publication of sea-lice data.
- No such farms exist in England and Wales and this is not therefore an issue in those jurisdictions.

Research on increased marine mortality of salmon and action taken:

- UK authorities have contributed to the NASCO SALSEA programme in a number of areas, focussing on both freshwater and marine factors that affect salmon marine mortality.
- Great Britain has had legislation in place since the 1970s prohibiting fishing for salmon at sea (beyond six nautical miles from baselines).
- In terms of other actions to be taken, there is little we can do to protect salmon at sea, so most actions are related to safeguarding and enhancing freshwater production. This effectively encompasses much of the day-to-day management of Atlantic salmon (e.g. see the NASCO Implementation Plans).
- Further details/summaries of research can be made available to the Commission if required.

Comment: [redacted] we not say UK?