

Salmon farming in Scotland

Letter from Gerry Farrell, 3 June 2024

It's time to cut through all the bureaucratic language justifying the continued existence of open-cage marine salmon farms.

These farms are destroying Scotland's marine eco-systems. To keep arguing against the weight of evidence proving this beyond doubt is the equivalent of climate change denial.

This will become as big an election issue for you all as the sewage in our waterways has become.

The voices that carry most weight in the debate are not the 'squeaky wheels' like myself. They are the multinational vested interests, lobbying you behind the scenes to preserve the status quo.

Jobs will be lost if open-cage marine salmon farming is stopped. That's inescapable. But employment opportunities are a poor justification for wrecking our natural heritage.

Keep this in mind. A single farmed salmon is worth about £7 to the Scottish economy. A single wild salmon is worth about £700 (*that's the contribution salmon anglers make when they travel here and fork out for food, accommodation and fishing permits*).

There will be no turning the tide of public opinion. Open cage marine salmon farming will eventually be stopped by popular demand - job losses and multinational lobbying notwithstanding.

As MSPs, you have a core responsibility to get yourself on the right side of history.

The Scottish people will never forgive you if you put profit above pollution.