

Follow-up inquiry into salmon farming in Scotland

Supplementary evidence from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)

During the meeting of the RAI Committee on 19th June, the Committee heard evidence from SEPA to support its follow-up inquiry into salmon farming. SEPA was asked to provide further information on 3 points, which are set out below.

In response to a question from Ariane Burgess, Mike Montague, SEPA Aquaculture Specialist, agreed to provide details of how many salmon farms are using emamectin benzoate in the same quantities as in 2018 (10:45).

Farms authorised to discharge emamectin benzoate		
	No. of authorised farm locations permitted to discharge emamectin benzoate	No. of farms that have used emamectin benzoate at least once between 2017 and June 2024*
Regulated against previous environmental standard (763 ng/kg of wet weight sediment).	332	196
Regulated against updated environmental standard (272 ng/kg of dry weight sediment) recommended by UKTAG.	22	4

*Please note this is updated from the numbers provided in the [Written question and answer: S6W-27905 | Scottish Parliament Website](#)

In its [consultation analysis](#) published in June 2024, the Scottish Government confirmed its intent to direct SEPA to apply the new environmental standard for emamectin benzoate in 48 months' time. SEPA has begun work to plan the variations of fish farm licences accordingly.

In response to a question from Finlay Carson, Lin Bunten, SEPA Chief Officer, undertook to clarify where SEPA's roles and responsibilities was with respect to protection of wild salmon populations and interactions between wild and farmed salmon (11:19)

The [Wild salmon strategy: implementation plan 2023 to 2028 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#) lists the various actions for which SEPA is responsible for delivering to protect and improve wild salmon populations.

With respect to the interactions between farmed and wild salmon, SEPA has the lead regulatory responsibility for managing interactions between sea lice from fish farms and wild salmon. SEPA took on this responsibility in February 2024 when it implemented a new [sea lice regulatory framework](#).

SEPA does not have regulatory responsibility for interactions between farmed salmon and wild salmon resulting from farmed fish escapes. Marine Directorate's Fish Health Inspectorate regulates containment of farmed fish on behalf of Scottish Ministers.

In response to a question from Rhoda Grant, Lin Bunten, SEPA Chief Officer, said she would follow up with Salmon Scotland to confirm if it would be possible to share a copy of their stage 1 complaint against SEPA (11:51)

James Park from Salmon Scotland wrote to the Committee on 27th July 2024 to provide additional information relating to the sector's 2019 formal complaint. SEPA assume that the Committee requires no further information on this point.

