

Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee**Environmental impacts of salmon farming****Written submission from****Russell Cheshire, Ocean Breeze Marine Services llp, Isle of Arran**

My wife and I have operated our small business under the name of “Ocean Breeze RIB Tours” for ten years; we specialise in wildlife-watching tours around the Isle of Arran and the Firth of Clyde. We also provide services to various media businesses, schools, colleges and universities and are responsible for the transport of Northern Lighthouse Board staff to remote sites in the Firth of Clyde area. I am also vice-chair, Community of Arran Seaboard Trust; but I am making this submission in a personal capacity.

Some years ago we were approached by a member of the salmon industry to do some boat work for them in the Firth of Clyde; I attach a copy of our reply to them which I trust you will find to be self-explanatory.

I have seen at first-hand various effects of the salmon industry locally, such as escaped fish, dead and dying fish and pollution both chemical and material; I have also investigated the situation regarding open-cage aquaculture of salmon as it affects the global marine environment and find it in my opinion to be harmful at all levels from sourcing feed to final retail and providing lasting benefit only to a few large multinational corporations. Having read the recently-produced Tett Review has done nothing to convince me otherwise; much of the content is vague and seems to point to a lack of data from the industry. To permit the expansion of this industry anywhere in Scotland's seas and especially in the recently designated and enacted Marine Protected Areas would be to do a grave disservice to the people of Scotland and provide a very poor example to the rest of the world.

I would ask the committee to recommend the imposition of an embargo on the further expansion or creation of open-cage salmon “farms”; and instead suggest that the industry (as it has shown itself prepared to do elsewhere in the world) concentrate its efforts on Recirculating Aquaculture Systems (RAS). These systems are by no means the perfect solution to the ills of the salmon industry, but do at least have the benefit of continuing to provide work and getting the main source of the problem – the fish themselves – out of direct contact with the sea.

I would also ask the committee to consider the possibility of rescinding all licences for open-cage salmon sites within Marine Protected Areas as soon as possible; with the aim of doing the same for all remaining sites within ten years.

Yours Sincerely,

Russ Cheshire.



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[REDACTED]

For the Attention of the Manager

16th August 2014

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your enquiry regarding our availability for a 2 hour charter on 27th August 2014.

We should advise you that we consider aquaculture as currently practised by your organisation to be environmentally, ethically and morally unacceptable on every level and therefore our vessels will not be available for charter by the [REDACTED] now or at any other time.

Yours Faithfully,

Russ Cheshire

