

I live in a coastal community in Argyll and am writing as someone whose local economy, environment, and community are closely connected to the health of Scotland's marine ecosystems and wild salmon. I support the points below and wanted to add my voice to the Committee's consideration of this issue.

I would also note from local experience that aquaculture infrastructure debris regularly washes ashore on our coastline, including substantial lengths of plastic pipe and other equipment after storms, raising concerns about marine pollution and oversight. Parts of the east coast of Kintyre have repeatedly seen large lengths of pipe from nearby salmon farms wash ashore; while operators remove them when notified, the frequency and scale of these incidents raise concern that such losses occur in the first place and rely on local reporting to be addressed.

There have also been multiple local incidents of farmed fish escapes reported over recent years. At the same time, wild sea trout and salmon numbers in the area are widely perceived to be at historic lows, with increasing local concern about sea-lice pressures. Atlantic salmon in Great Britain are now formally classified as **Endangered (Red Listed)**, underlining the seriousness of their decline. Rivers at the head of Loch Fyne, once well known for their salmon runs and fishing, now have very few fish and are closed to angling, with associated losses to angling activity and rural employment. Yet aquaculture expansion continues along migratory routes used by these fish.

I offer these observations simply to illustrate the practical realities communities are seeing alongside the broader scientific evidence.

Jesse James