

## **PE1519/A**

Petitioner Letter of 11 June 2014

In Scotland, instead of insisting that salmon farmers install and maintain high-strength tensioned predator exclusion nets to humanely keep seals away from their salmon, the Government gives the salmon farmers licenses to shoot seals.

If the Scottish Government did more to protect seals more jobs would be created in our rural communities.

The seal shooting licenses give a limit to the number of seals the holder can shoot but no-one checks to see how many are actually killed. The shooters simply write down the number of seals they have shot in the returns they make to the Government. Perhaps the box they put the number in should be called "The Honesty Box"?

In 2010 the Chinese Government stopped buying salmon from Norway after the Norwegians awarded the Nobel Peace Prize to a Chinese dissident. China started buying from Scotland instead - obviously the Chinese do not realise that two-thirds of the fish farms in Scotland are Norwegian owned!

The Scottish First Minister and several of his Environment Ministers have been very busy promoting Scottish salmon in China and as a result output from floating factory fish farms in Scottish waters will treble or quadruple in the next few years. While Norwegian companies get around the Chinese ban by selling Scottish grown salmon to China, Scottish consumers are finding shops stocking more and more salmon imported from Norway as much of the Scottish grown fish is destined for export!

In the spring of 2014 Tesco had to order its stores to re-organise a major sales promotion for Scottish produce after it was discovered that most of the salmon being sold under huge "100% Scottish" banners and saltire flags had actually been farmed and killed in Norway.

It is bad enough that the Scottish Government does not insist that fish farms humanely exclude seals from getting close to their stock. It is ludicrous that it is mainly Norwegian owned companies who profit from this cost-cutting measure.

John F Robins  
Save Our Seals Fund