

## **Minute of Meeting**

### **North and West District Salmon Fishery Board – Loch Duart Sea Lice**

**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> of December 2025**

**14:00 via Zoom**

#### **Attendees**

Alan Balfour

Anastasia Young (Clerk)

Beth Osborne (Loch Duart)

David Davies (Vice-convenor)

Keith Dunbar

Dougal Lindsay

Lana Richardson

Naomi Dempsie (Loch Duart)

Robin Vestey (Convenor)

Shona Marshall (WSFT)

#### **Discussion**

Beth Osborne provided a presentation on Loch Duart's sea lice numbers and treatment.

Robin Vestey thanked Beth for her presentation. He suggested Loch Duart need better well boat capacity.

It was noted that they provide regular reports on sea lice and other companies should be urged to do the same.

RV asked BO two questions:

1. What will Loch Duart do if 2026 temperatures are higher?
2. What are the plans for the Laxford?

BO expects temperatures next year will not be favorable for fish farming. They hope to ensure fish go into higher temperatures at the best possible condition to improve the chances of coming out healthier. BO feels Loch Duart are not where they should be and they must work hard in Q1 to ensure a better year.

BO confirmed the Laxford was stocked last week. As soon as lice are seen, treatment will begin. AGD treatment will be used and BO hopes to start cleaner fish earlier. They intend to monitor and treat before the situation becomes an issue.

RV asked whether BO liaises with the Laxford project team and encouraged doing so. BO has not had much involvement since Chris Conroy left but will follow this up.

KD noted the presentations say they have maintained sea lice numbers at two, however this is twice the Code of Good Practice. KD asked how they would achieve numbers below the Code of Good Practice level.

BO has considered closed containment for the Laxford site. While they can't give guarantees, they hoped we appreciate they are doing all they can. LD will remain open and transparent. BO apologized for being in this position.

KD noted that if numbers reach this level at the Laxford, it will be detrimental to wildfish. He suggested the Board might have to take further action if this becomes a serious threat.

BO agreed to give further updates and meetings on the Laxford.

KD asked how they would feel if the Laxford wasn't stocked. BO would have to discuss this with production. Naomi Dempsey mentioned the Laxford is already subject to the longest fallow periods.

RV confirmed the Board will continue to monitor closely and will ask for another meeting if there are any further issues. Loch Duart were asked to come to the May meeting and for numbers to be brought below two, which would give the Board some comfort. RV confirmed the Board would like to see Loch Duart properly resourced and continuing to improve. The Board appreciates Loch Duart's honesty and hopes this can continue.