



marinescotland

**MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 : PART 6 -
CONSERVATION OF SEALS**

**Application for a Licence to Shoot Seals to
Prevent Serious Damage to Fisheries
in Scotland**

September 2011

Before completing this application, please read the associated Marine Scotland Guidance Notes.

Information supplied on this application may be subject to disclosure as required by the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 or the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. (Please see Section 10 of the Guidance Notes)

Marine Scotland will consult the Sea Mammal Research Unit, Scottish Natural Heritage and Marine Scotland Science about each licence application received.

Note: Marine Scotland may revoke or vary a licence at any time.

Please note that failure to fully complete any relevant section of the form or failure to provide supporting documentation could result in delays in processing or refusal of the application.

IF THE APPLICATION IS REFUSED YOU MAY NOT BE ABLE TO APPLY UNTIL THE FOLLOWING YEAR.

Please use BLOCK Capitals and consider typing if possible.

1. Name of Licence Applicant

(Seal Management Group, District Salmon Fishery Board, Netting Station, Other)

Netting Station Example

Please provide details of a contact person who can deal with any queries concerning the licence application and its contents in **ANNEX A**.

2. Name(s) of District Salmon Fishery Board / Fishery / Netting Station(s) covered by this application

Netting Station Example

3. Nature of Fishery or Fish Farm to be protected *(please tick all that apply)*

Fixed Engines

Net and Coble

Rod and line

Other *(please specify below)*

4. Fishing Seasons

4.1 Please indicate dates when fishery is active.

28 April – 28 July

4.2 If shooting is to take place out with season(s) stated above please provide dates and relevant justification for this.

n/a

5. Location of Fishery

A 1:50,000 Ordnance Survey map should accompany each application and be marked with:

- i) The boundary of the fishery
- ii) The location of any fixed nets

6. Evidence of Serious Damage

The relevant questions in tables 6.1 and 6.2 should be completed as fully as possible with realistic estimations based on clear calculations and/or historical data, wherever possible.

You are advised to read Section 6 of the Guidance Notes to ensure you provide the relevant information requested. This will assist the processing and consideration of your licence application while any failure to supply such evidence may result in delays in processing or refusal of a licence.

The evidence to assess the extent of seal predation should be provided for each seal species in tables 6.1 and 6.2 (If photographic evidence is available this should also be provided).

Information to assist seal identification is available from:

www.scotland.gov.uk/seallicensing

6.1 Grey seal details

(You should complete as many sections of this table as possible)

	GREY SEAL
Describe number of seals causing or likely to cause damage (number, date, time, location)	<p>A local population of around 50 seals hauls out at a beach within two miles of our netting station. Of these we think about 8 seals seem to be causing damage. There is some seal activity nearly every day near the nets but we do not witness damage every day.</p> <p>Seals have been seen entering nets and from the remains found we estimate they eat between 30-40 adult fish, (3-6 kg), a season. We have seen seals eating salmon in the open water outside the nets but have no means of confirming numbers.</p>
Give details of feeding activity of the seals (when, where, how often)	The seals visit the area around our nets every day at different times and at different tidal states. They do not enter the nets every day but when they do they always kill or damage the salmon in the bag.
Give actual or estimated numbers of fish previously killed, damaged or lost or likely to be killed, damaged or lost to seal predation (advising whether adult or juvenile). Please provide details of how estimates calculated.	<p>In the last season we estimate the seals ate between 30-40 adult salmon, (3-6 kg), and damaged 113. We have estimated the numbers eaten by the remains found in the net and the damaged numbers are accurate as we kept a record.</p> <p>Last year was the first year that we kept a record of the number of fish damaged. We have not noticed any significant change in the estimated number of fish eaten in the net over the last ten years, despite what appears to be a growing local seal population.</p> <p>We do not know how many salmon were killed or injured outside our nets but the numbers must be high judging by the level of activity.</p>
Give full assessment of previous actual or likely economic damage to the fishery.	<p>The cost to our company of the loss of 40 adult salmon weighing 4 kg is (40 x 4 x £18/kg), £2880</p> <p>Fish with minimal damage also loose the premium price so we estimate the loss to our small business of £3500 a year which is a considerable sum.</p>
Give assessment of consequential damage to the fishery (including environmental impact). For example damage to nets.	The seals appear to be quite expert at entering our nets without damaging them so tears are minimal. In total we probably spent one whole day over the season mending mesh that has been chewed or torn. Although this costs very little to repair it is inconvenient to lose this time.

<p>If evidence of serious damage caused by seals is based upon changes in the number of fish caught in fishery please provide statistics to support this.</p>	<p>As damage does not occur that frequently, I am sure when it does that our daily catch decreases. Over the whole season however it is the seals entering the nets and eating and damaging the fish that cause most harm.</p>
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6.2 Common / harbour seal details

(You should complete as many sections of this table as possible)

	COMMON/HARBOUR SEAL
<p>Describe number of seals causing or likely to cause damage (number, date, time, location)</p>	<p>Our main concern is with Grey seals. We do however have random visits from common seals around our nets and we have seen one inside the net on one occasion over the whole of the last season.</p>
<p>Give details of feeding activity of the seals (when, where, how often)</p>	
<p>Give actual or estimated numbers of fish previously killed, damaged or lost or likely to be killed, damaged or lost to seal predation (advising whether adult or juvenile). Please provide details of how estimates calculated.</p>	
<p>Give full assessment of previous actual or likely economic damage to the fishery.</p>	<p>Common seals have never been a particular problem in this area</p>
<p>Give assessment of consequential damage to the fishery (including environmental impact). For example damage to nets.</p>	

<p>If evidence of serious damage caused by seals is based upon changes in the number of fish caught in fishery please provide statistics to support this.</p>	
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7. Non-lethal Measures.

As an alternative to shooting, do you have any of the following currently in use?

7.1 Seal scarers / acoustic deterrents

Yes

No

If Yes,

a) What is being used - please give device name, model and manufacturer?

An unnamed device is being trialled this year by SMRU at our netting station.

b) How is it used?

There will be two attached to our gear. One will go on the leader net and one at the top of the bag. They will be battery operated.

c) How long has it been in place?

Not as yet used. It is hoped that it will be used for the whole season.

d) What were the results (please provide stats)

Still to be trialled.

e) In your opinion please rate its effectiveness on a scale on 1 – 5 where 5 is very effective and 1 is ineffective (*please circle*)

Ineffective < **1 2 3 4 5** > Very Effective

f) If ineffective or not completely effective what, in your view, is the reason for this?

n/a

If No,

g) Give reasons and provide supporting evidence (e.g. advice from SNH on other impacts)

7.2 Modified gear

Yes

No

If Yes,

a) What is being used - please give details of gear modification?

We used a braided nylon mesh to line the outside of the net bags to give added protection from damage. They are of the same mesh size so do not reduce the overall mesh size.

b) How is it used?

By providing a double skin to the net.

c) How long has it been in place?

Used last season

d) What were the results (please provide stats)

Damage to the nets was reduced but seals were not deterred from entering the net.

e) In your opinion please rate its effectiveness on a scale on 1 – 5 where 5 is very effective and 1 is ineffective (please circle)

Ineffective < 1 2 3 4 5 > Very Effective

f) If ineffective or not completely effective what, in your view, is the reason for this?

Seals can still see the salmon in the nets and are smart enough to work out how to enter them.

If No,

g) Give reasons and provide supporting evidence (*e.g. advice from SNH on other impacts*)

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7.3 Other non-lethal measures

Yes

No

If Yes,

a) Please give details of other measures used?

Being as noisy as possible to scare the seals away.

b) How is it used?

We've used boats, air horns, fired guns into the water, (not aiming to hit the seals), in order to scare them away.

c) How long has it been in place?

We have tried this over several years.

d) What were the results (please provide stats)

Younger seals would leave the area for a while but the older smarter seals were not deterred.

e) In your opinion please rate its effectiveness on a scale on 1 – 5 where 5 is very effective and 1 is ineffective (*please circle*)

Ineffective < 1 2 3 4 5 > Very Effective

f) If ineffective or not completely effective what, in your view, is the reason for this?

Seals are too clever! We don't want tourists, including children, to see us shooting seals when they are visiting the area and that is when we have used these measures.

If No,

g) Give reasons and provide supporting evidence (*e.g. advice from SNH on other impacts*)

8. Maximum Number of Seals

8.1 Indicate the maximum number of each species of seal you are applying to be permitted to shoot in the next licence year in the boxes below:

Species	Number
Grey	9
Common/Harbour	1

8.2 Explain how you arrived at these numbers.

We think approximately 8 greys are causing damage but requesting 9 allows us to react to an increased problem. Although common seals are not a problem by allowing one we can deal with a problem if it arises.

Note: In its consideration of licence applications Marine Scotland will compare the maximum numbers submitted for each seal management area against the Potential Biological Removal (PBR) figure for these areas.

Note: Even where a licence is granted shooting of seals should only be undertaken as a last resort.

It is an offence under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 to exceed the maximum number specified on your licence.

9. Reporting

Reports on all seals shot, including nil returns should be submitted to Marine Scotland on a 3-monthly basis providing:

- Location of seals shot
- Species of seal shot
- Date of seal shot
- Whether any seal carcasses have been recovered and reported to Scottish Agricultural College

A copy of the Reporting form will be provided with a seal licence if granted. It can also be downloaded from: www.scotland.gov.uk/seallicensing

10. Training Courses

Please complete Section **10.1** or **10.2** below as appropriate.

10.1 Have the nominated marksmen listed in **Annex B** completed the relevant seal management training course?

Yes

No

If not, when are they due to complete the course?

10.2 Have the nominated marksmen listed in **Annex B** achieved accreditation in the relevant seal management training?

Yes

No

If not, when are they due to complete accreditation?

10.3 Please provide evidence of the above (certificate or letter from college or Marine Scotland)

Marine Scotland must not grant a seal licence unless it is satisfied that any nominated marksman has adequate skills and experience.

Supporting Evidence

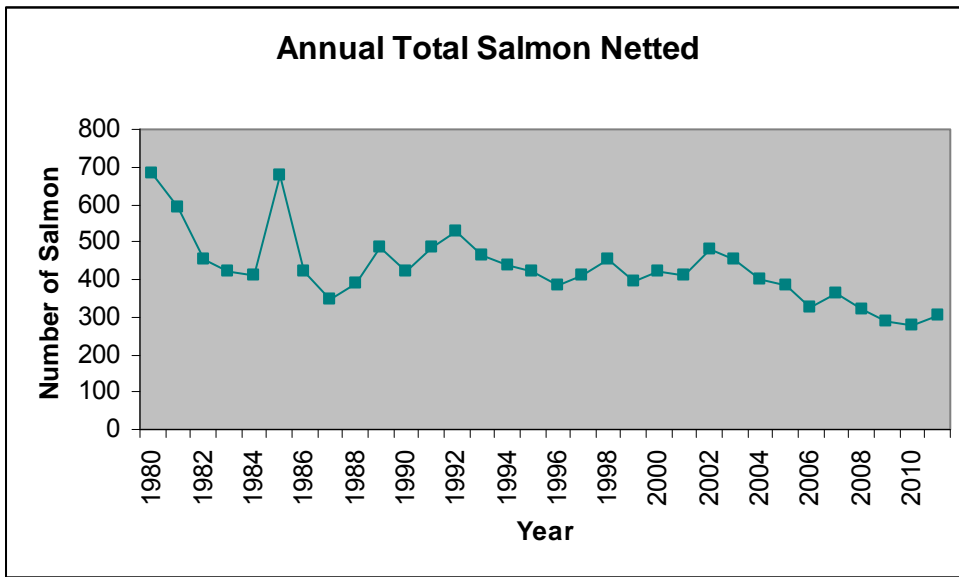


Figure 1

Graph showing the trend of reduced salmon harvests over the years 1980 – 2011. Although our family has used the salmon nets for generations, records of catches were not kept.

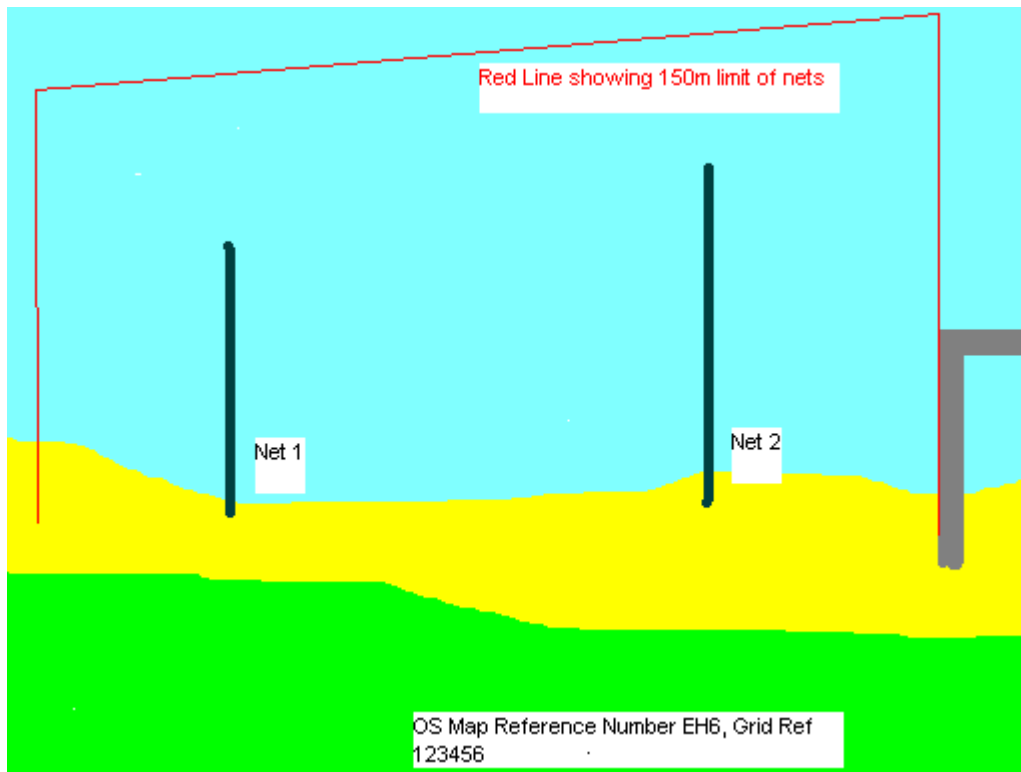


Figure 2
Section of OS Map where fishery is located, to east of Example Harbour by the town of Example in Exampleshire.