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## Enclosure 001 – Email correspondence

[Redacted – Out of scope]

**Fra:** [\[redacted – Regulation 11\(2\)\]@gov.scot](#) <[\[redacted – Regulation 11\(2\)\]@gov.scot](#)>

**Sendt:** 30. juni 2025 17:28

**Til:** [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [\[redacted – Regulation 11\(2\)\]@nfd.dep.no](#); [\[redacted – Regulation 11\(2\)\]@gov.scot](#)

**Kopi:** [\[redacted – Regulation 11\(2\)\]@gov.scot](#)

**Emne:** RE: Aqua Nor - help !

[Redacted – Out of scope]

We are expecting her programme to look something like:

[Redacted – out of scope]

**20<sup>th</sup> August**

9:30 – 10:00            Norwegian Mountain Salmon

[Redacted – Out of scope]



## Enclosure 003 – Email correspondence

**From:** [redacted – Regulation 11(2)][redacted – Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 15 August 2025 12:57  
**To:** [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [redacted – Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [redacted – Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [redacted – Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [redacted – Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot>; Communications Net Zero, Energy and Rural Affairs <CommunicationsNetZero&RuralAffairs@gov.scot>; [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [redacted – Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [redacted – Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: Aqua Nor Comms - photo requirements - RE: FOR POLICY VIEWS: DRAFT – Comms plan for Ms Gougeon visit to Norway for AquaNor

Thanks [redacted – Regulation 11(2)]

On the last linked in round up post, I note Norwegian Mountain Salmon was in there too, alongside Scottish Halibut Company.

I just get a bit nervous about directing attention to specific/ named companies and various EiR and FoI that can ensue on comms platform.

I've added NMS and SHC back in for now, and I will ask them on the day whether they are content for the meeting to be communicated and if so, take some photos of the teams with Cab Sec.

Kind regards

[redacted – Regulation 11(2)][redacted – Regulation 11(2)] Scottish Government, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ  
[redacted – Regulation 11(2)]  
[redacted – Regulation 11(2)]E: [\[redacted – Regulation 11\(2\)\]@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted – Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)

[Redacted - out of scope]

**From:** [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [\[redacted – Regulation 11\(2\)\]@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted – Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)>  
**Sent:** 12 August 2025 16:36  
**To:** [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [\[redacted – Regulation 11\(2\)\]@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted – Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)>; [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [\[redacted – Regulation 11\(2\)\]@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted – Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)>; [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [\[redacted – Regulation 11\(2\)\]@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted – Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)>  
**Cc:** [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [\[redacted – Regulation 11\(2\)\]@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted – Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)>; Communications Net Zero, Energy and Rural Affairs <[CommunicationsNetZero&RuralAffairs@gov.scot](mailto:CommunicationsNetZero&RuralAffairs@gov.scot)>  
**Subject:** FOR POLICY VIEWS: DRAFT – Comms plan for Ms Gougeon visit to Norway for AquaNor

Hi all,

Please see draft comms plan below for AquaNor next week, all very straightforward but let me know if anything doesn't look right. I'm proposing two tweets a day, with one LinkedIn

round up post for each day (which allows us to have much more text and photos, and saves us over posting on X).

If all content – I can get this to PO tomorrow.

Best,

[redacted – Regulation 11(2)]

**Communications Plan – Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs visit to AquaNor, Trondheim (18-19 August)**

Please find below a draft communications plan for whilst the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs attends AquaNor. The below plan sets out plans for social media only, there will be no on the ground support from the RALRI Comms team at the conference, however, PO and officials will be taking pictures on the ground for social media.

**DRAFT COMMS SCHEDULE – SOCIAL MEDIA**

[Redacted – out of scope]

[Redacted – duplicate of enclosure 002]		
[Redacted – duplicate of enclosure 002]	[Redacted – duplicate of enclosure 002]	[Redacted – duplicate of enclosure 002]
		[Redacted – Out of scope]
[Redacted – duplicate of enclosure 002]	[Redacted – regulation 10(4)(d)] [Redacted – out of scope] [Redacted – duplicate of enclosure 002] [Redacted – out of scope]	[Redacted – duplicate of enclosure 002]

[Redacted – Out of scope]



<L [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] [@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted - Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)>; [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] < [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] [@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted - Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)>; [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] < [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] [@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted - Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)>; [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] < [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] [@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted - Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)>; [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] < [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] [@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted - Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)>; Malcolm Pentland <[Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot](mailto:Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot)>; [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] < [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] [@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted - Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)>; [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] < [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] [@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted - Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)>; [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] < [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] [@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted - Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)>; [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] < [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] [@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted - Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)>; [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] < [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] [@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted - Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)>; [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] < [redacted - Regulation 11(2)] [@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted - Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)>; Communications Net Zero, Energy and Rural Affairs <[CommunicationsNetZero&RuralAffairs@gov.scot](mailto:CommunicationsNetZero&RuralAffairs@gov.scot)>; Ian Muirhead <[Ian.Muirhead@gov.scot](mailto:Ian.Muirhead@gov.scot)>; Spads Admin <[Spads\\_Admin@gov.scot](mailto:Spads_Admin@gov.scot)>; Director of Marine <[directormarine@gov.scot](mailto:directormarine@gov.scot)>

**Subject:** Draft Briefing - Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands - Official Visit to Aqua Nor 19 - 20 August 2025 - Updated Copy List 12:43

**PS Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands**

Please find attached draft briefing to support Ms Gougeon's attendance at Aqua Nor 2025.

[redacted - Regulation 11(2)]

[redacted - Regulation 11(2)]

Scottish Government, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

T: [redacted - Regulation 11(2)]

M: [redacted - Regulation 11(2)]

E: [\[redacted - Regulation 11\(2\)\]@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted - Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)

**The Scottish Government**



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of Scotland**



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**Inclusivity**



**Innovation**



**Collaboration**



**Kindness**

## Enclosure 004.1 - Email attachment

### CABINET SECRETARY FOR RURAL AFFAIRS, LAND REFORM AND ISLANDS OFFICIAL VISIT TO AQUANOR, NORWAY, 19 – 20 AUGUST 2025

<b>What</b>	Aqua Nor, the world's largest aquaculture technology trade show.
<b>Where</b>	Trondheim
<b>When</b>	Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> – Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> August

<b>Briefing Pack Contents</b> [Redacted – Out of scope]		Page
<b>Annex E</b>	Meeting with Norwegian Mountain Salmon	29

[Redacted – Out of scope]

#### DAY 2 WEDNESDAY 20 AUGUST

All meetings and events will take place at the Aqua Nor conference hall venue:

[Trondheim Spektrum](#)

Klostergata 90

7030 Trondheim

TIME/ LOCATION	WHAT	COMMENTS/ NOTES
		[Redacted – Out of scope]
<b>09:30 – 10:15</b> SP Meeting Room, D337	Meeting with Norwegian Mountain Salmon	ANNEX E

[Redacted – Out of scope]

#### 1. Land based aquaculture

- I noted with interest that Norway is now accepting new applications for land based salmon and trout farms, following a pause in 2022. I understand that changes have been introduced to stop the free issue of permits for land based farms, where they might still have an impact sea based operators. I'm keen to understand what has been updated and if you can give me more detail on this.
- As background context, tomorrow, I will meet with Norwegian Mountain Salmon. We know little about this company, and so it would be useful to get any reflections from you. I am not clear whether they have existing operations in Norway.
- The company is actively exploring what is being described as a 'tunnel farm' potentially located on one of our islands. This type of technology and development is not something we've seen in Scotland before, and I wonder whether the changes introduced by Norwegian Government to land based permits were made as the result of an increasing number of enquiries about similar farms or if these matters are separate?

[Redacted – out of scope]

**NORWEGIAN MOUNTAIN SALMON AS**

<b>What</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with Norwegian Mountain Salmon AS</li> </ul>
<b>Where</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Scottish Pavilion meeting room, D337, Conference Centre: Trondheim Spektrum, Klostergata 7030, Norway.</li> </ul>
<b>When</b>	<b>Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> August at 9:30-10:15</b>
<b>Key Message(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Scottish Government supports the sustainable growth of the aquaculture sector.</li> <li>Scotland is open for business and we are keen to collaborate with other aquaculture nations.</li> <li>Our vision for sustainable aquaculture sets out our support for sustainable development and our support for innovation.</li> </ul>
<b>Who</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Bård N. Hjelmen</b> – CEO and Founder of Norwegian Mountain Salmon.</li> <li>[Redacted – Regulation 11(2)] - [redacted – Regulation 11(2)]</li> <li>[Redacted – Regulation 11(2)] - [redacted – Regulation 11(2)]</li> <li><b>Stuart Black</b> – Highlands and Islands Enterprise</li> <li><b>[Redacted – Regulation 11(2)]</b> - [redacted – Regulation 11(2)]</li> </ul>
<b>Why</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An opportunity to discuss the company’s potential investment plans for Scotland.</li> </ul>
<b>Supporting officials</b>	[redacted – Regulation 11(2)], SG [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] Malcolm Pentland, SG: [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [redacted – Regulation 11(2)], SG [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] Ilan Muirhead, SG: [redacted – Regulation 11(2)]
<b>Briefing contents</b>	<b>Annex E1:</b> Summary Page, Agenda and Suggested Handling <b>Annex E2:</b> Attendees <b>Annex E3:</b> Additional Background Briefing

**Summary Page**

- An opportunity to discuss potential development proposals and investments in Scotland.
- In 2024, various trade media and local Shetland and Lewis outlets reported on development scoping activity by Norwegian Mountain Salmon for new land based salmon farms in Lewis or Shetland. A flurry of media activity surrounded early community consultation events run by the company.

- The purpose of this meeting is to understand more about Norwegian Mountain Salmon, the status of their development plans and to offer support where helpful/ establish a relationship with Scottish Government and the enterprise agencies.

## Background

- Norwegian Mountain Salmon (NMS) intends to excavate large tunnels to house either a hybrid recirculation / flow-through or full flow-through farm that could produce up to 85,000 tonnes of fish a year in tanks, either at Mealista in the Uig area of Lewis or the South West mainland of Shetland. If achieved, this would increase Scotland's production capacity by 40%. The company reportedly aims to achieve consent and begin construction by early 2028.
- We know very little about the company, however we understand from regulators that early pre-application engagement is ongoing.
- The Scottish projects are based on a plan NMS has for a 25,000-tonne underground fish farm on the island of Utsira off the coast of southwest Norway. A presentation document setting out the concept for the Utsira site and the company's Lewis site was shown to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council) and has recently been made public. NMS have scoped two potential locations in Scotland – Lewis and Shetland. Lewis is currently the stronger candidate, though Shetland is not ruled out.
- In 2024, NMS applied for support from Marine Fund Scotland to conduct necessary preliminary investigations on Lewis [redacted 10(5)(e)]. Unfortunately, this application was not successful. We do not yet know if NMS has bid for funding for this financial year – applications are currently being assessed for eligibility before being allocated to policy teams.
- NWS is reportedly looking to involve local partners on the ownership side, which they see as important for long-term anchoring and success. NMS is taking a site-by-site approach to financing. Their Norwegian location at **Utsira** has so far raised **NOK 25 million in private capital** through several funding rounds.
- In Norway, they have also benefited from the **SkatteFUNN scheme**, which reimburses **around 20% of eligible R&D costs** (up to NOK 10 million). This has helped reduce early-stage risk and increased their ability to move fast and decisively.
- The company believes a **similar risk-sharing instrument in Scotland** could make a real difference. It would likely help unlock private investment for the Lewis location and accelerate early development.

## Agenda:

1. Introduction to Norwegian Mountain Salmon and their long-term vision.
2. Presentation of the opportunities the company's project could bring to local economic development on Lewis.
3. Discussion around what it takes for a Norwegian aquaculture company to succeed in establishing operations in Scotland.

## Suggested Handling

Discussion around what it takes for a Norwegian aquaculture company to succeed in establishing operations in Scotland:

- I am very pleased to meet you today and to learn more about your activities in Scotland, which I have been following with interest.
- We are interested in all proposed investments and deployment of innovative technologies in Scotland which are a good fit with our Vision for Sustainable Aquaculture and I requested this meeting to ensure that you have appropriate contacts and support where necessary and helpful.
- I appreciate that it can be challenging for new comers to Scotland's market, however that is why we have enterprise agencies such as Highlands and Islands Enterprise Agency and Scottish Development International to help make connections and to assist with account management where appropriate.
- That is not to say that there are not challenges to overcome:
  - Early and transparent community engagement is vital for any developments success – I am very pleased to see reports on your early and public engagement with communities in Lewis and Shetland as part of your scoping activities.
  - Building on that community engagement – social licence is incredibly important. Aside from addressing environmental impacts, which I am pleased this technology has the potential to reduce ( sea lice escapes), ideally, there should be a wider benefit to the community beyond direct jobs itself, for example knock on indirect benefits for the community through road upgrades or contribution to community needs, and knock on benefits for supply providers in Scotland.
  - In this instance, interactions with users of the sea will of course be reduced, and therefore the focus would be on engaging with land owners and others in the local, however I would also suggest engaging with Salmon Scotland regardless to understand what advice and support they might also offer you as the trade body for Scottish salmon and its supply chain in Scotland.
  - [You may wish to invite **Stuart** or [redacted – Regulation 11(2)]to speak directly regarding the potential support or services that they offer]

**ANNEX E2**

**ATTENDEES**



**Bard N. Hjelman** – Founder and CEO, Norwegian Mountain Salmon

[redacted – Regulation 11(2)] - [redacted – Regulation 11(2)]

[redacted – Regulation 11(2)] - [redacted – Regulation 11(2)]

### ANNEX E3

#### Additional Background Briefing

Norwegian Mountain Salmon has a team of 12. It has been challenging to find information about the company online, including whether they have any existing salmon farms in Norway or if they are a new company seeking to enter the salmon farming market. Yet, their proposals to execute large salmon development projects is well reported.

Scoping of a potential project in Norway is most advanced and had been awaiting the ability to apply for land-based salmon permits in Norway again ( paused for a year and a half while regulations were updated), discussed with the Norwegian Minister yesterday.

#### Example Development: Lewis



[Redacted – Out of scope]

<b>ENGAGEMENT REPORT</b>	
<b>Minister</b>	Mairi Gougeon Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands
<b>Type of engagement</b>	Meeting with Norwegian Mountain Salmon (Norwegian Mountain Salmon) AS – salmon farm startup/ producer
<b>Date</b>	<b>Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> August at 9:30-10:15</b>
<b>Attending Official(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Malcolm Pentland, Deputy Director, Marine Economy and Communities, Marine Directorate</li><li>• [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] Ian Muirhead, Special Advisor</li><li>• [redacted – Regulation 11(2)]</li></ul>
<b>Who</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Bård N. Hjelmen</b> – CEO and Founder of Norwegian Mountain Salmon.</li><li>• [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [redacted – Regulation 11(2)]</li></ul>
<b>Key Points</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• NMS presented their concept and designs – a seawater flow through site that can grow salmon up to harvest size on land and address challenges of open pen aquaculture (energy/biosecurity/ sea lice/ escapes/ seals/ interactions).</li><li>• The company is exploring potential developments in Norway and Scotland. High level scoping activity exploring site characteristics completed in Scotland. Scotland may be an ideal location for investment due to the potential of a faster growth cycle. Bigger smolts are ideal for the facility.</li><li>• A potential facility in Scotland would require 18 million smolts. The company is interested in developing both fish for harvest and post smolts for the sectors in Scotland and Norway.</li><li>• Prior MFS application for a more detailed feasibility study was declined last year/ not eligible for funding.</li><li>• The company is still exploring help to commission further feasibility studies and later investments (the current ask is ~ 2 m NOK).</li></ul>
<b>Action points</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enterprise and Government contacts shared with Norwegian Mountain Salmon to foster further dialogue.</li></ul>

[Redacted – Out of scope]

#### **OFFICIAL PROGRAMME/ AGENDA**

[Redacted – Out of scope]

[Redacted – duplicate of enclosure 004.1]

[Redacted – Duplicate of enclosure 004.1]	[Redacted – Duplicate of enclosure 004.1]
[Redacted – Out of scope]	

**[Redacted – Duplicate of enclosure  
004.1]**

**[Redacted – Duplicate of enclosure 004.1]**



All e-mails and attachments sent by a Ministerial Private Office to any other official on behalf of a Minister relating to a decision, request or comment made by a Minister, or a note of a Ministerial meeting, must be filed appropriately by the recipient. Private Offices do not keep official records of such e-mails or attachments.

Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

**From:** [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [[\[redacted – Regulation 11\(2\)\]@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted – Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)] **On Behalf Of**  
First Minister

**Sent:** 23 July 2025 11:46

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform & Islands 2024

<[CabSecforRALRI@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforRALRI@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and

Culture 2024 <[CabSecCEAC@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecCEAC@gov.scot)>; Minister for Parliamentary Business 2024

<[MinisterPB@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterPB@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic

<[DFMCSEG@gov.scot](mailto:DFMCSEG@gov.scot)>; Permanent Secretary <[PermanentSecretary@gov.scot](mailto:PermanentSecretary@gov.scot)>; DG Strategy

and External Affairs <[DGSEA@gov.scot](mailto:DGSEA@gov.scot)>; [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [[\[redacted – Regulation 11\(2\)\]@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted – Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)];

Cabinet Secretariat Inbox <[CabinetSecretariat@gov.scot](mailto:CabinetSecretariat@gov.scot)>;

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[redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [[\[redacted – Regulation 11\(2\)\]@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted – Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)]; [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [[\[redacted – Regulation 11\(2\)\]@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted – Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)];

[redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [[\[redacted – Regulation 11\(2\)\]@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted – Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)]; [redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [[\[redacted – Regulation 11\(2\)\]@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted – Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)];

[redacted – Regulation 11(2)] [[\[redacted – Regulation 11\(2\)\]@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted – Regulation 11(2)]@gov.scot)]; Spads Admin <[Spads\\_Admin@gov.scot](mailto:Spads_Admin@gov.scot)>; Ian Muirhead

<[Ian.Muirhead@gov.scot](mailto:Ian.Muirhead@gov.scot)>; MPO Admin <[MPOAdmin@gov.scot](mailto:MPOAdmin@gov.scot)>; Security Transformation &

Special Projects Team <[STSP@gov.scot](mailto:STSP@gov.scot)>

**Subject:** RE: Travel Approval Request: Cab Sec RALRI - AquaNor - August 2025

Good morning,

The First Minister is content to approve.

Thanks,

[redacted – Regulation 11(2)]

**Action Summary**

[Redacted – Out of scope] [Redacted – duplicate of enclosure 004.1]

[Redacted – out of scope]

**[Redacted – duplicate of enclosure 004.1]**

**[Redacted – Regulation 10(4)(d)]**

**Enclosure 006 – Word document**

**[Redacted – Regulation 10(4)(d)]**