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To all members of Fisheries Management Scotland
By e-mail

25 March 2025

Dear Fisheries Management Scotland members,

Suggested conservation policy for salmon and sea trout

This will be my last message to you as Fisheries Management Scotland Chairman. Having completed two terms on the FMS Board, it is time to hand over the reins, and I am delighted to announce that the Board have chosen David Johnstone from the River Annan, as the new Chairman. I wish David all the best in this role. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time with FMS, and I have the utmost confidence that I leave FMS in an excellent position to continue its vital work. I wish David, the FMS Board and all FMS members all the best for the future.

The main purpose of this letter is for David and I to jointly confirm the conservation policy recommendation agreed at the Fisheries Management Scotland AGM in November 2024. The FMS Board has carefully considered the feedback received at the AGM, including concerns about the unintended consequences of adopting a voluntary policy of no *deliberate* killing of wild salmon or sea trout. We emphasise that the clear purpose of this recommendation is to support efforts to achieve thriving populations of wild salmon and sea trout, while ensuring that social and economic benefits of freshwater fisheries continue to support employment in local economies. Our position statement is appended to this letter.

In making this recommendation, we recognise that managers, proprietors and anglers have been extremely proactive, and conscientious, in delivering conservation policies that go well beyond statutory measures. We have an extremely positive story to tell regarding proactive conservation measures. However, the reclassification of Atlantic salmon by the IUCN to 'endangered' is a significant development. Fisheries managers and proprietors should be conscious that the taking of a species with this status is likely to face increased scrutiny from decision makers and the general public.

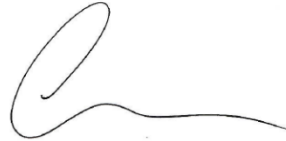
Finally, we would like to emphasise that we do not view this recommendation as a precursor to further legal measures. It remains our position that a voluntary approach to conservation is likely to be more effective than further legal measures.

We wish you all the best for the 2025 season.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sankey', with a large, stylized initial 'S'.

Richard Sankey
Fisheries Management Scotland

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Johnstone', with a large, stylized initial 'J'.

David Johnstone
Fisheries Management Scotland