

Theresa May, Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
Westminster
London SW1A 2AB



North Atlantic
Salmon Fund

April 4, 2017

Dear Prime Minister,

By invoking art. 66 of the United Nations Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), Scotland could multiply the numbers of salmon spawning in their rivers and thus save this valuable resource from possible extinction. The letter and spirit of this UN article is the only international agreement that covers the management of salmon migrating in coastal waters.

For decades England has been exploiting the Scottish resource by intercepting large numbers of its fish as they return to their native rivers. It is done by a substantial commercial fishery that operates in the coastal waters of North East England and flies in the face of the warnings of international scientists against operations that target mixed stocks of salmon. The netsmen cannot tell if they are killing salmon from dangerously depleted rivers.

Scotland has the "primary interest in and responsibility for such stocks" but so far the EU has prevented Scotland from seeking a remedy. This is one of the reasons why Scottish interests will seek an independent status to the UNCLOS convention.

There are a number of actions that England can do to put things right. An immediate suspension of operating licences because of the need to address the low levels of the salmon stocks is the most obvious first step. We are certain that DEFRA already has a draft plan to do this following the John Gummer-Ian Lang Salmon Net Fisheries Report of October, 1991.

We urge you, Prime Minister, to take the necessary steps now. It would certainly be very well received by Scottish conservationists and the salmon interests that have suffered the effects of this mixed-stock fishing for far too long.

Yours sincerely

Orri Vigfusson, chairman

North Atlantic Salmon Fund