

Nicola Sturgeon
First Minister for Scotland
The Scottish Parliament Edinburgh EH99 1SP
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April 4, 2017

Dear First Minister

For the last fifty years I have been a regular visitor to Scotland, principally to gather facts and assess the status of your wild salmon stocks. During this period the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) has registered a drop of 96% in reported wild salmon catches in Scotland.

This is of particular concern to us because the vast majority of your salmon feed in our northern waters and for the last 28 years Iceland and the Faroe Islands have robustly protected those Scottish salmon from commercial fishing.

That is the reason why I am informing you of a message I am sending to Prime Minister Theresa May. It urges her to take immediate remedial action before it is too late to help Scottish salmon stocks to recover. Over the years Scottish fishery science and management methods have not been successful in preserving and rebuilding your salmon numbers.

The three main feeding areas in northern waters for your country's salmon are all protected. Greenland adheres to a strict quota whereas we in Iceland and the Faroes have a privately-funded cooperation agreement that completely protects your wild salmon during their ocean feeding time. The money to compensate the commercial fishermen who have stopped fishing for salmon comes from voluntary donations given to my organisation by environmentalists and anglers in many parts of the world.

The tragedy is that most of the fish we have saved have been killed under English law by interceptory nets that mainly catch Scottish salmon off the north east coast of England as the fish return to their home rivers. Scottish commercial nets have decimated the survivors.

In September 2015, my group was warmly received in Holyrood by Eileen McLeod where we expressed our concern over your salmon policies. Unfortunately we have

seen little subsequent action. I am also sad that we in NASF have not yet been able to meet with you because we have some important ideas for more cooperation between Scotland, Greenland, Iceland and the Faroe Islands.

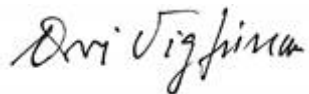
As matters stand the cultural ties between our countries are minimal as is our cooperation in protecting and utilising our natural resources. There is so much more that we could do in most arctic issues. The natural world has given us very tangible links because we have geese, salmon, commercial fish stocks and seals that migrate between Scotland and our northern countries.

The political pattern of Europe is rapidly changing and our mission will include endeavours to get the EU to upgrade its policies and efforts for wild salmon, We need to agree and accelerate real restorative action or it may soon be too late. Washington DC is already aware of our efforts.

Meanwhile, we believe your office should pursue an agenda in line with our strategies.

At any time of your choosing we would be delighted to meet you or your Scottish experts. We would be delighted to give them full details of the proposals our team of experts has drafted for an effective strategy for Salmon & Scotland.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Orri Vigfússon".

Orri Vigfússon, chairman North Atlantic Salmon Fund