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It incorporates the Scottish Anti-Vivisection Society which was founded in 1876.

Ms
Access to Sea Fisheries Policy Manager
The Scottish Government
Marine Scotland
Area 1B South,
Victoria Quay,
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

Dear Ms

Thank you for your e-mail following the meeting you hosted on 19th July 2017 to allow conservation groups to give you their views on the proposed Razor Clam electro fishing trials. I must say that I was shocked and dismayed to learn that only one representative of the conservation movement attended the meeting to discuss the issue with the eight representatives from Marine Scotland.

I am one person representing three comparatively poorly resourced organisations. I had hoped that the many better resourced and staffed conservation organisations, especially those with a specific remit on marine issues, would have welcomed the opportunity to explain any concerns they may have over the proposed trials.

I note that 18 representatives of the fishing/aquaculture industries attended your workshop in Oban and a further 15 your workshop in Glasgow. Obviously they are taking the issue seriously.

As I said to you in my e-mail apologising for being unable to attend the meeting on July 19th our main concern is that the areas of seabed to be used in the trials be fully assessed prior to the use of electro fishing gear, closely surveyed immediately after the test fishing and then monitored on a regular basis until such time it can be shown the seabed has fully recovered to the condition it was in prior to the test fishing.

I am unsure how much is known about what fauna predates on Razor Clams but I would have thought that should be ascertained prior to the proposed trials to enable the impact on prey species to be monitored.

We would, of course, have preferred it if electro fishing had remained illegal and more effort and resources put into apprehending and prosecuting those involved and those assisting them by monitoring the movements of Fishery Protection vessels.

I believe the time and resources being spent on this project would be much better invested in preparing for the marine mayhem likely to break out in Scottish waters when domestic and foreign fishing interests go to war over fish stocks following Brexit.

Yours sincerely,

John F. Robins,
For Animal Concern