



T: 0300 244 4000
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Finlay Carson MSP
Convener
Rural Affairs and Islands Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

By email: rural.committee@Parliament.Scot

10 July 2025

Dear Finlay,

Publication of the fish farm consenting pre-application pilots evaluation report

I am writing to notify you of that the independent evaluation report on the fish farm consenting pre-application pilots is expected to be published the week of 21 July 2025. I have included an embargoed copy of the report with this letter for your awareness.

The independent evaluation considered the joint and coordinated pre-application process introduced to Shetland and Highland local authority areas in January 2024. While many stakeholders highlighted areas for improvement, there were also clear indications that the pilot process had led to positive changes.

The report sets out ten recommendations to be taken forward to deliver further improvements.

I welcome the report and will carefully consider its recommendations with the Consenting Task Group. I am determined to move on at pace, and look forward to setting out further detail in the written update to Committee on the range of aquaculture activity in September.

Yours sincerely

MAIRI GOUGEON

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
www.gov.scot

