

Andrew Barker submission of 23 August 2022

PE1951/O: Reinstate inshore coastal limit on the use of dredge and trawl fishing gears

I have read with interest the petition from the SCFF and also the supporting submission from Fish Legal, and would add my total support to both documents.

I was for many years the Chairman of the Argyll Fisheries Trust and am currently the Chairman of the River Ruel Improvement Association. In those capacities, I have seen much evidence of the rapidly declining stocks of migratory salmonoid fish and in particular of sea trout in the waters of Argyll.

There are of course a number of reasons for this decline, aquaculture and associated sea lice problems being a major one, but there is also no doubt that the feeding grounds for sea trout (which basically remain whilst at sea within a few miles of the rivers in which they were spawned) have been very greatly damaged by bottom dredging. I would therefore strongly urge that the SCFF petition is acted upon in the interests of our iconic Scottish sea trout, which rely largely on food resources which are being ploughed up by the relentless level of bottom trawling currently taking place, the effects of which are not only being evidenced at sea but also in the health of our West Coast rivers.