

Issue number 10  
16 April 2025

## Selected Recent Newsletters 28 Feb



10 March



## Salmon Watch Ireland Newsletter

### Transparency Blocked: DAFM Refuses Access to Salmon Farm Data

On 4th March 2025, Salmon Watch Ireland submitted a Freedom of Information (FOI) request to the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine (DAFM) seeking essential data on mortalities, stocking, and harvest figures from several open-net salmon farm licence applications. These licences—T10/054, T10/058, T10-067, and T12-276—are currently under public consultation, yet crucial operational data has been redacted. We argued that this information is vital to enable the public to make informed submissions and fully engage in the environmental oversight of salmon aquaculture.

### Request Refused

On 1st April 2025, DAFM issued a formal refusal of our FOI request (Ref: FOI/25/072). The refusal was grounded in the following legal provisions under the FOI Act 2014:

- Section 37(1): Claiming the data includes *personal information*.
- Section 36(1): Asserting the data is *commercially sensitive* and could cause material financial loss or impact competitive positions if disclosed.

DAFM maintains that these justifications outweigh the public interest in transparency.

### Internal Review Submitted

In response, Salmon Watch Ireland submitted an internal review request on 5th April 2025. We emphasized that:

- The request explicitly excluded personal information.
- The data sought relates solely to operational performance and environmental outcomes—not proprietary trade secrets.
- The public has a legitimate right to scrutinize aquaculture practices that impact our shared marine environment.

We are pursuing the review process and have arranged the statutory fee of €30 to initiate formal reconsideration by a senior official.

## Next Update

### The Curious Stocking of Salmon in County Kerry

Department to investigate an allegation that the terms and conditions of a licence have been breached


## Straffan Weir

Newsletter 02 April


## The Full Story

**Straffan Weir**  
02 April 2025

**Salmon Watch Ireland**  
Policy on Barriers




**Legislation Fisheries Act**  
Barriers  
Fish Passes  
Hydro Power



**Update 02 April 2025**  
**Salmon Watch Ireland**

The Liffey Salmon Project recently informed Salmon Watch Ireland that a long disused hydro-electric facility located at Straffan Weir in County Kildare has had major works carried out including the installation of a new turbine and other associated works to facilitate the commissioning of the plant to provide power to the adjacent K Club.

We were informed that no planning application or application to be exempt from planning was lodged by the K Club with Kildare County Council.



Inland Fisheries Ireland, Liffey Salmon Project and Salmon Watch Ireland have since made a complaint to Kildare County Council citing that this development was unauthorised and that Kildare County Council should issue a cease-and-desist order to prevent further works.

This case underscores a broader issue: the lack of transparency in aquaculture regulation. When data that directly impacts environmental health and public trust is withheld, it undermines public consultation and accountability. We believe that harvest volumes, fish mortalities, and stocking levels are not sensitive trade secrets, but key indicators of farm performance and ecological risk.

We await the outcome of this appeal and will appeal to the information commissioner if required.

- Await outcome of internal review.
- Continue to advocate for open access to environmental data.
- Encourage public support for transparent aquaculture licensing.

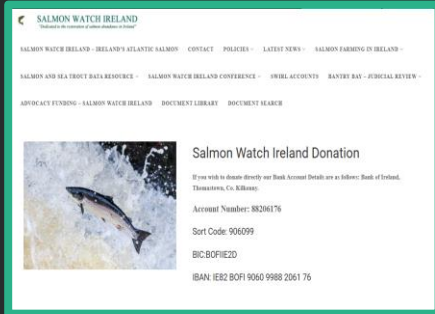
**If you are concerned about how salmon farming is regulated in Ireland and believe in public access to environmental information, we invite you to stay engaged and share this update.**

## Update on Straffan Weir and KClub



There have been significant developments in the past week with Kildare County Council issuing a warning letter to the KClub concerning the works carried out at the hydro and tailrace.

## Please Donate to Salmon Watch Ireland



**A new social media campaign will be launched by Salmon Watch Ireland in late April**

**Keep updated and support our campaigns.**

Further investigations are ongoing and Inland Fisheries Ireland has instructed the KClub not to operate the hydro until further notice.

We would like to put on record our appreciation to the Liffey Salmon Project and Inland Fisheries Ireland for their speedy actions in this matter.

We await the outcome of the investigation by Kildare County Council.

As always, we are available to help in any matter which affects salmonids, and we remain steadfast in our efforts to protect water quality and habitat. You can contact us by email or phone with details available at [salmonwatchireland.ie](http://salmonwatchireland.ie)

