



Mr. Erik Solheim, Minister  
Ministry of Environment  
P.B. 8013 Dep  
0030 Oslo - Norway

September 9, 2010

Dear Minister Solheim,

Sadly under your leadership, Norway's wild salmon stocks and those of your neighbours have continued to deteriorate because of your failure to act responsibly. In your letter to us on December 3rd, 2007, you outlined regulations that you claimed were in line with the international scientific advice that mixed-stock fisheries should be phased out. You also declared that spawning targets would be met and aquaculture put in check. Instead the situation gets worse with more poorly-regulated fish farms being permitted.

Furthermore, you promised that regulations would be developed with contributions from interest groups and local enterprises and that the management regime would be adjusted to ensure that all the consequences would be acceptable to interested parties (like us). However, no meaningful action, in terms of preserving and improving the salmon stocks has taken place. In reality you seem to have no leadership agenda and it is high time you realised that this has earned international disapproval.

Norway's lack of restorative action has incensed the Faroe Islanders who are now considering counter actions reflected in their recent NASCO messages. They are a poor nation. Why should they continue to protect Norway's biggest spawners only to see them slaughtered under your direct policies? Norway's salmon policy should be a key issue here and why is the Faroe Island such substandard nation? If they return to their historic high-seas fishing efforts, the consequences would be disastrous and very wide-ranging.

Perhaps our most serious concern is that Norway continues to ignore the UN Law of the Sea (art. 66) and damages wild salmon stocks that should be allowed to return to their native rivers in the Kola. Pathetically, in a letter admitting their guilt, your Foreign Office officials claim that they are trying to avoid "economic dislocation to rural fishermen in Finnmark" and request a period of grace. Well, three years have passed and it is time for this fishery to be stopped forthwith, as you will have heard recently from Moscow.

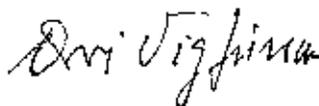
It is shame that yours is the only Atlantic salmon country that has failed to respond to what is a genuine international concern for the future of your salmon rivers and the interests of the other countries that your present policies are damaging. This is the reality of the situation and it is all the more regrettable when one recalls the apparent cooperative spirit of your letter in 2007 and your forgotten promise to work with the private sector to restore salmon stocks. Short term political and economic gains never offset long term natural resource disasters like that now befalling Norway and its neighbors culturally and internationally important Atlantic salmon populations. Perhaps, what saddens me the most, is that Norway is joining that list of nations that that can only be considered negligent when it comes to the management of the worlds natural resources.

Already the salmon stocks of great many Norwegian rivers are beyond repair. The most recent assessment of your own scientific advisory committee reports the vast majority of your rivers fail to meet minimum spawning target and no less than 70% of the rivers are subject to significant overharvest and they conclude the situation is worsening. This is the dreadful reality of the situation and it is all the more regrettable when one recalls the apparent cooperative spirit of your letter in 2007 and your forgotten promise to work with the private sector to restore salmon stocks. Disconnecting with the private sector will never work. That is why the situation in Norway continues to deteriorate and the salmon stocks continue to go down.

We believe that this is what Norway should do:-

- Immediately stop all netting, by bag nets and bend nets, in the Varanger district and any other nets that intercept Russian salmon.
- Promote a joint private and public sector plan that will provide effective and generous compensation to salmon netmen who volunteer to cease mixed-stock fisheries.
- Order the removal of all open salmon pens that are adversely affecting native salmon and sea trout populations and give the owners a very short timescale in which to comply with the order.
- Set a three-year deadline for all salmon farmers to upgrade their operations to reach levels of long term environmental sustainability. A requirement to transfer all pens out of the sea and locate them on shore in a form that excludes any possibility of escape by either fish or parasites.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Orri Vigfusson', written in a cursive style.

Orri Vigfusson

Encl. map of the North Atlantic salmon range.