

Salmon farming fury

DEREK EVANS

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NORWAY HAS closed 100 of its fjords to salmon farming to protect its wild stock, John Mulcahy, chairman of Save the Swilly (Ireland) told a packed audience following the screening of *Farmed Salmon Exposed: The Global Reach of the Norwegian Salmon Farming Industry* in Buswells Hotel, Dublin.

The 23-minute documentary lifts the lid on the problems caused by open net cage salmon farms worldwide and reveals the pervasive nature of the issues plaguing salmon aquaculture today. As part of a Global Week of Action, premieres took place in Edinburgh, Dundonnell and Oban in Scotland; Santiago in Chile; Washington; Vancouver; and Oslo and Bergen in Norway. Further screenings in Orkney, Shetland, Arran, London, Las Vegas, Santa Cruz, Puerto Varas, Ancud and Vancouver Island are planned.

The film features ghillie Brian Fraser from Scotland; John Mulcahy; Orri Vigfusson from North Atlantic Salmon Fund in Iceland; Alexandra Morton and Dr Daniel Pauly from British Columbia; Dr Matthias Gorny from Oceana in Chile as well as Sven Helge Pedersen, King Harald and Vegard Heggem in Norway.

Dr Roderick O'Sullivan, a long-standing campaigner against salmon farming, said he stood up at a meeting in Co Kerry 20 years ago and said more or less what we saw today; nothing has changed.

“When the Norwegians came here at the invitation of the Irish government they were well aware of the problems in Norway – lice and genetic contamination – and yet they remained silent,” said Dr O'Sullivan. “It was a considerable amount of time before the real facts became obvious, and now we see it. These aren't new facts – they have been there all the time. The government scientists know about it, the fish farms know about it, but why they are allowed to continue is beyond my comprehension. In my 30 years in fighting for this cause and banging my head against a wall I have come to a personal conclusion: when you see something that cries in the face of common sense, and it seems all environmental laws are thrown out the window, there must be another reason.

“Perhaps those that hold the reins of power or who are able to tweak the reins can help. I have done all I can and there is very little we as concerned citizens can do. I just hope that something will change by those in power.”

Dr O'Sullivan thanked Don Stanford for putting on the fascinating show. “It is through people like him that we know what is going on today,” he said.

The Pure Salmon Campaign (PSC) is a global project with partners in Scotland, Ireland, Norway, United States, Canada, Australia and Chile all working to raise standards on salmon farms. For more information about PSC and the fourth annual Global Week of Action, go to puresalmon.org and farmedsalmonexposed.org

The Salmon Watch Ireland annual conference will be held in the Limerick Strand Hotel, Ennis Road, Limerick at 2.30pm this Saturday, November 28th. This year's theme is “What is the future for our spring salmon?” The speakers are Dr Philip Mc Ginnity, University College Cork; Dr Niall O'Maoileidigh, Marine Institute and Dr Paddy Gargan, Central Fisheries Board.

This is a topic of abiding interest for salmon anglers, fishery managers and conservationists generally, and is expected to encompass the distilled knowledge and wisdom of three of Ireland's most eminent salmon scientists. All are welcome and admission is free.

Irish Angler magazine is pleased to announce the Irish Open Fly Tying Championships. Tyers will be challenged to tie examples of four traditional Irish flies, plus a salmon fly on the theme of the River Blackwater and a saltwater

pattern of their choice.

The flies will be judged by Peter Dunne, Mike Shanks and Peter Kealey, and medals will be awarded in each category along with valuable prizes.

Further details available at irishangler.com.

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