

Annual Update **2020-21**



Scottish Salmon **A Better Future For Us All**



Our sector ambition is to become world-leading in the provision of healthy, tasty, nutritious food, produced in the most responsible and sustainable way.



**The Scottish
Salmon Company**



Scottish Salmon

A Better Future For Us All

When we published our ground-breaking Sustainability Charter A Better Future For Us All, a year ago, we made it clear we were not printing a document just to sit on a shelf and gather dust.

We wanted to make sure the charter would live and exist alongside us, guiding our actions and transforming our sector for the better for years to come.

This first annual update is evidence of our determination to drive forward that change.

This progress report covers each one of the 41 individual commitments we made, as a sector. It explains which ones have been completed, which ones are underway and which ones will be launched soon.



It shows the enormous amount of work that has been done by the Salmon Scotland team and by our member companies in making our charter a reality.

I am delighted with the progress and proud of the hard work that has been done by so many. It demonstrates how passionate everyone in this sector is about sustainability and creating a green future for salmon farming in Scotland.

But we have to keep up this pace. Our sector is already a world leader in terms of sustainability but we have to work harder to keep ahead of our competitors and, crucially, to meet the increasingly rigorous demands from our customers.

So this annual update – regardless of the progress it champions – is just the start. There will be more, much more, to report on next year.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tavish Scott".

Tavish Scott

Chief Executive | Salmon Scotland

November 2021

Progress on Pledges

PLEDGE 1 **Animal Welfare**

PLEDGE 2 **Environment**

PLEDGE 3 **Traceability**

PLEDGE 4 **Our People**

PLEDGE 5 **Our Communities**

PLEDGE 1 Animal Welfare

We continue to work with government and key stakeholders to ensure that fish experience the best health and welfare throughout their life cycle. The Farmed Fish Health Framework (FFHF) relaunched in 2020. We have established standardised reporting of the causes of mortality, supporting FFHF in focusing its activities to deliver the greatest improvements. FFHF is also considering the continued use and availability of medicines to support improved fish health and welfare. There are also projects underway to understand and mitigate the effects of harmful plankton blooms.

We reformed the Code of Good Practice for Scottish Finfish Aquaculture (CoGP) management group to refresh the standards, ensuring that the CoGP remains relevant and reflects good farming practices.

The Improved Containment Working Group has recently completed the initial stages of a revision to the Scottish Technical Standard for Finfish Aquaculture.

PLEDGE 2 Environment

Treasuring our environment has never been more important. Across our sector, we are beginning to identify opportunities to upgrade and replace farming equipment to increase the amount of infrastructure operating from renewable energy sources. There has been continued investment in freshwater Recirculating Aquaculture Systems (RAS) facilities to help us adapt to the impacts of climate change. The first trial of a hybrid-powered barge took place and trials are also underway to investigate how organic matter from farms can be captured and utilised in the circular economy.

The first part of our environmental baseline assessment has been completed. This initial work focussed on the sector's packaging so that we can develop a pathway to improve our use of reusable, recyclable or biodegradable materials. An initiative was launched to ensure all marine debris from farms is retrieved regardless of origin.



PLEDGE 3 Traceability

Traceability is a core element of our supply chains and many of the quality standards and certifications that we adhere to. Initial scoping work to demonstrate our sector's traceability has been completed.

We recently completed an updated nutritional analysis for Scottish salmon. Our findings show, once again, the multiple nutritional benefits of eating Scottish salmon.

As part of our commitment to increase provision and consumption of Scottish salmon in care homes, schools, hospital and prisons and in staff restaurants, we are working on a trial project with Stirling's secondary schools (due for launch in Spring 2022) to test the increased availability and consumption of Scottish salmon in public sector facilities. We are working with the Association of British Dietitians to promote the health benefits of eating foods such as Scottish salmon, which is a good source of omega-3 fats.

Progress on Pledges

PLEDGE 4 Our People

We aspire to be the sector of choice for people seeking to make a positive difference. To do that, we need to ensure diversity and inclusiveness, enable innovation and provide places to live where our people work.

We established our sector code on diversity, inclusiveness, equality, ethics and personal development and companies are progressing their own staff mentoring initiatives.

Rural housing remains a significant challenge in many of the communities where we farm our salmon. Scottish salmon farmers are actively pursuing schemes and partnerships to increase provision of high quality, affordable homes in the remote areas where we operate.

PLEDGE 5 Our Communities

We want communities around Scotland to thrive and improving engagement to bring about positive benefits for all is at the heart of our Sustainability Charter. We will refresh our Community Engagement Charter with a widened stakeholder group, providing opportunities for knowledge sharing and collaboration.

Our presence in the local environment and our interaction with wildlife is a responsibility we take seriously. Salmon farmers routinely record wildlife observations around their farms, which can help improve the management of wildlife interactions. This year, one salmon farming company piloted a wildlife recording app.

We will continue to respond to consultations and engage with stakeholders towards a plan for wild salmon. To increase understanding of salmon farming, we have created a digital visitor experience for use at events around Scotland.

Action Overview

3 Complete

26 Ongoing

12 Scheduled for 2022/2023

PLEDGE 1 Animal Welfare

1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4 1.5
1.5A 1.5B 1.5C

PLEDGE 2 Environment

2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4 2.5
2.6 2.7 2.8 2.9 2.10

PLEDGE 3 Traceability

3.1 3.2 3.3 3.4 3.5
3.6 3.7

PLEDGE 4 Our People

4.1 4.2 4.3 4.4 4.5
4.6

PLEDGE 5 Our Communities

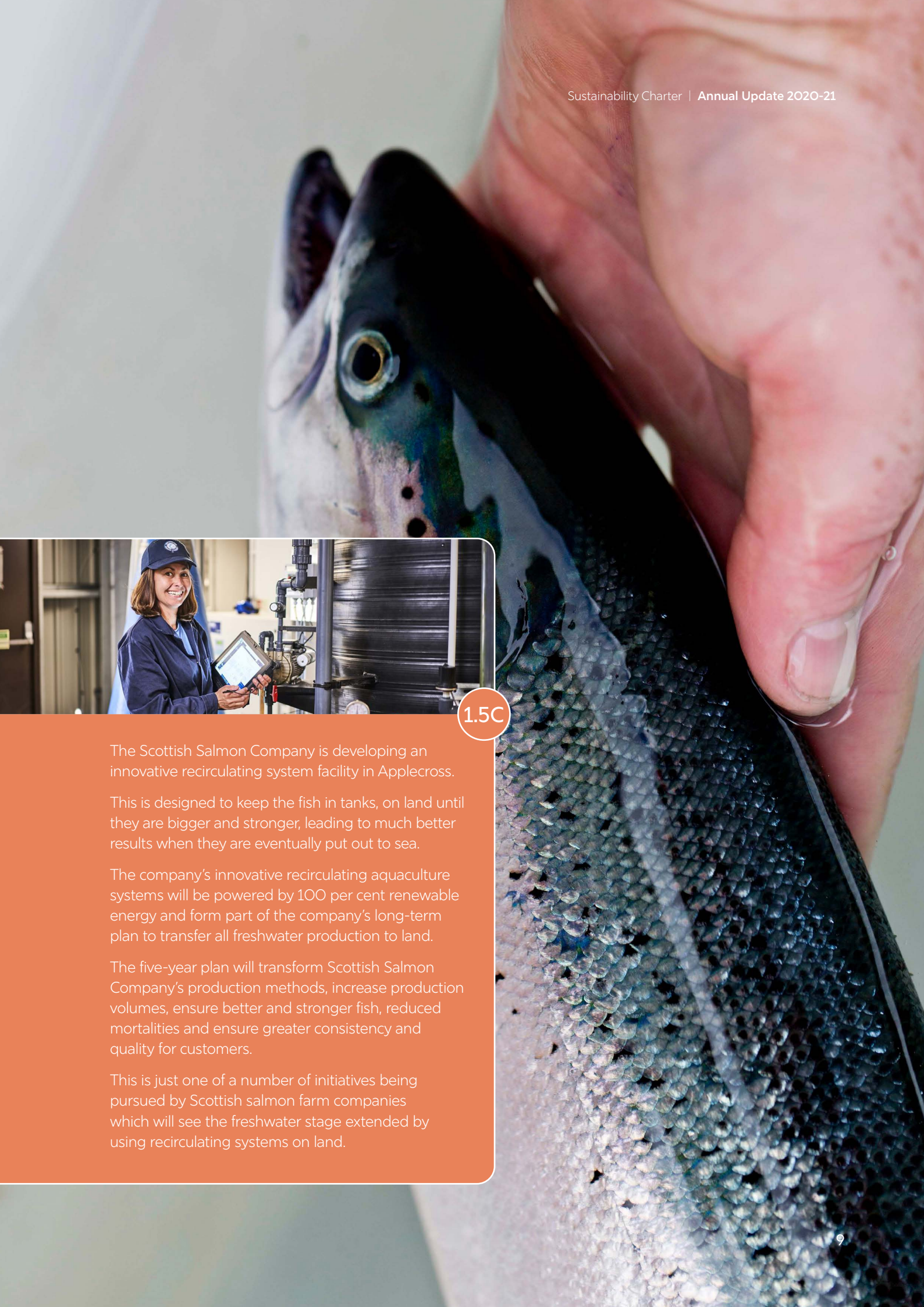
5.1 5.2 5.3 5.4 5.5
5.6 5.7 5.8 5.9 5.10

PLEDGE 1 Animal Welfare

We will apply the highest standards of **animal welfare**.

As farmers, everything revolves around good biology. This means high standards of fish health and welfare throughout a lifecycle, a principle we will continue to be guided by. We feel a similar duty of care towards other wildlife and will work with key stakeholders to take collective responsibility.

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- 11 Develop, in partnership with government, independently validated ways to monitor and measure the welfare of our farmed fish.
Ongoing – background work underway.
 - 12 Establish a ‘living a good life’ standard for the fish in our care, adding to the high welfare standards already in place at our farms and facilities.
Scheduled for 2022/2023
 - 13 Advance our work to ensure farms are capable of withstanding local marine conditions, keeping all farmed fish securely within sea pens.
Ongoing – initial review completed.
 - 14 Work with government and other users of Scotland’s waters to introduce and apply best practice guidance for managing all animal welfare issues: farmed and wild.
Scheduled for 2022/2023
 - 15 Deliver continual improvement in farmed fish welfare by working with government, stakeholders and the supply chain to:
 - 15A A) Commission research to better understand the potential impacts of climate change on salmon farming.
Ongoing – detailed discussions underway.
 - 15B B) Improve the range of, and access to, prescribed veterinary medicines for our fish.
Ongoing – through the Farmed Fish Health Framework.
 - 15C C) Continue our investment in recirculating aquaculture systems, well-boats and farm infrastructure
Ongoing – several major projects already underway.



1.5C

The Scottish Salmon Company is developing an innovative recirculating system facility in Applecross.

This is designed to keep the fish in tanks, on land until they are bigger and stronger, leading to much better results when they are eventually put out to sea.

The company's innovative recirculating aquaculture systems will be powered by 100 per cent renewable energy and form part of the company's long-term plan to transfer all freshwater production to land.

The five-year plan will transform Scottish Salmon Company's production methods, increase production volumes, ensure better and stronger fish, reduced mortalities and ensure greater consistency and quality for customers.

This is just one of a number of initiatives being pursued by Scottish salmon farm companies which will see the freshwater stage extended by using recirculating systems on land.

PLEDGE 2 Environment

We will work continuously to minimise our impact and ensure a **healthy environment.**

Raising healthy fish relies on a healthy habitat, so it's in all our interests to protect the environment: from adopting greener energies and working towards zero waste, to achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions in our own operations before 2045.

2.1 Work towards 100 per cent renewable energy use, collaborating on the research, development and delivery of ways to power our farms, facilities and modes of transport.

Ongoing – initial work underway.

2.2 Introduce electric vehicle charging points to enable more drivers – staff, suppliers and the local community – to transition to renewable energy.

Ongoing – initial work underway.

2.3 Pursue ways to divert potential waste, be it organic matter from freshwater hatcheries or obsolete farm infrastructure, into valuable by-products.

Scheduled for 2022/2023

2.4 Work with public and private sector partners to establish a circular economy for organic waste.

Scheduled for 2022/2023

2.5 Obtain 100 per cent of our feed ingredients from sustainable sources.

Ongoing – baseline analysis work underway.

2.6 Work towards using 100 per cent reusable, recyclable or biodegradable packaging.

Ongoing – baseline analysis work completed.

2.7 Future-proof our freshwater hatcheries to be able to withstand projected drought conditions brought about by climate change.

Ongoing – investment across our hatcheries continues.

2.8 Develop new water treatment technologies, backed by innovative regulation, to help in our use of veterinary medicine.

Ongoing – working with tech partners to put these solutions into practice.

2.9 Explore the potential of new technologies to capture fish waste from marine farms.

Ongoing – trial projects underway.

2.10 Take every step possible to avoid marine debris from our farms and recover any items promptly regardless of their origin.

Ongoing – working with member companies on coordinated scheme.



2.1

Scottish Sea Farms has successfully trialled a new hybrid power system at its Loch Spelve farm on Mull, reducing reliance on the traditional diesel generator which has dramatically cut fuel consumption, carbon emissions and operating costs.

Built by Aqua Power Technologies, the hybrid system intelligently monitors power demand and seamlessly switches between generator power and battery power.

In its first year, the project has saved 31,488 litres of diesel and 83,128kg of CO₂ and been recognised with a Scottish Environment Business Good Practice Award.

The Loch Spelve farm has also been trialling LED lights on its pens in place of traditional metal halide lamps, cutting power usage further.

PLEDGE 3 Traceability

We will produce **healthy, nutritious food** with full traceability every step of the way.

Scottish salmon is recognised the world over for its premium quality, taste and health benefits. We want to go a step further, offering today's more socially and environmentally-conscious consumers full traceability so that they can continue to enjoy Scottish salmon with confidence.

3.1 Establish a clear mechanism for demonstrating the traceability of our fish to fork, in collaboration with our suppliers, logistics partners and customers.
Ongoing – initial scoping work completed.

3.2 Demand and deliver full traceability of the raw materials used in our fish feed.
Ongoing – baseline analysis underway.

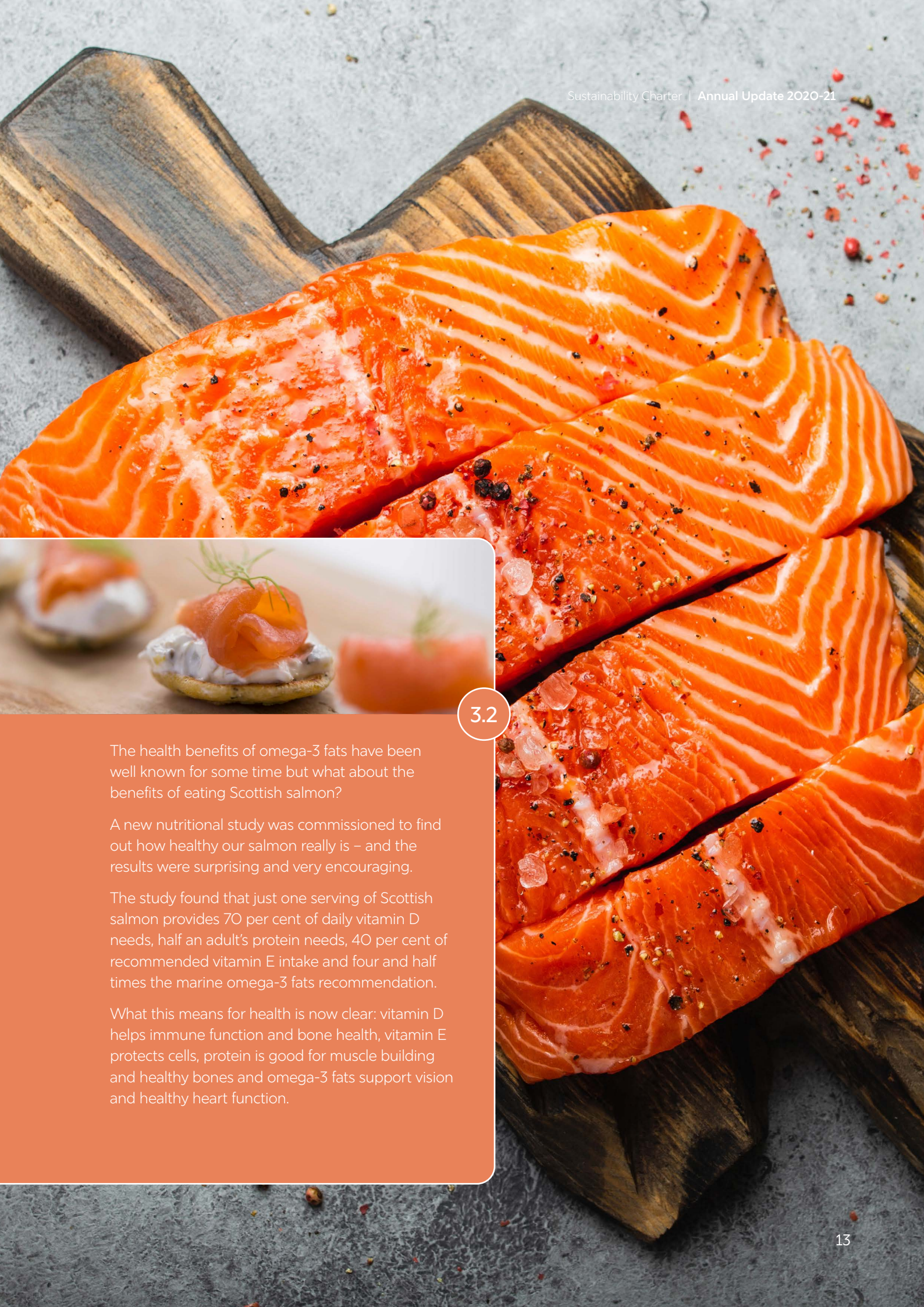
3.3 Commission up-to-date, evidence-based research into the nutritional values of Scottish farmed salmon.
Complete – nutritional baseline work commissioned and delivered.

3.4 Educate and inform consumers of the strong Scottish provenance of our farmed salmon and the benefits in terms of taste, texture and dietary goodness.
Ongoing – baseline analysis completed, initial dissemination underway.

3.5 Work with the Scottish and UK governments and organisations promoting healthy eating to raise awareness of the importance of omega-3 fats specifically.
Ongoing – working with Association of British Dietitians on health promotion.

3.6 Partner government and the wider seafood sector to increase the consumption of seafood across the UK, including supporting our most socially disadvantaged communities.
Ongoing – trial project for Stirling schools on course for Spring 2022.

3.7 Support the increased provision of farmed salmon in care homes, schools, hospitals, prisons and staff restaurants, enabling more people to enjoy a healthier diet.
Ongoing – trial project for Stirling schools on course for Spring 2022.



3.2

The health benefits of omega-3 fats have been well known for some time but what about the benefits of eating Scottish salmon?

A new nutritional study was commissioned to find out how healthy our salmon really is – and the results were surprising and very encouraging.

The study found that just one serving of Scottish salmon provides 70 per cent of daily vitamin D needs, half an adult's protein needs, 40 per cent of recommended vitamin E intake and four and half times the marine omega-3 fats recommendation.

What this means for health is now clear: vitamin D helps immune function and bone health, vitamin E protects cells, protein is good for muscle building and healthy bones and omega-3 fats support vision and healthy heart function.

PLEDGE 4 Our People

We will become the sector of choice for people looking to make a positive difference.

People make a sector and we are blessed to have all manner of talented, caring individuals working within ours. We encourage an inclusive, diverse culture, empowering employees through learning and development and investing in their physical and mental wellbeing.

- 4.1 Establish a clear sector code on diversity, equality, inclusiveness, ethics and continual personal development, with real and measurable targets.

Complete – drawn up by trade body and member companies.

- 4.2 Work with government, local authorities and other key partners to expand the range and availability of recognised sector-relevant qualifications, increasing opportunities for employment, personal growth and career progression.

Ongoing – working with partner organisations.

- 4.3 Develop and deliver a collaborative mentoring programme across the core areas of the sector.

Ongoing – work is progressing on an individual company basis.

- 4.4 Create young farmers' forums to share knowledge, support friendships and develop our future leaders.

Scheduled for 2022/2023

- 4.5 Partner the Scottish Government and Sustainable Aquaculture Innovation Centre to identify and introduce demonstration and innovation sites where novel approaches and technologies can be trialled, modelled and shared.

Scheduled for 2022/2023

- 4.6 Increase provision of high quality, affordable housing in remote communities in partnership with government, local authorities and other key partners, incorporating greener approaches wherever possible.

Ongoing – all companies now actively pursuing their own schemes.



4.6

A 12-unit affordable housing settlement is being built on the Isle of Colonsay near to a Mowi salmon farm. This represents a £2.4 million investment by the salmon company in partnership with the Scottish Government Land Fund, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Argyll and Bute Council.

Mowi has also built two new environmentally friendly houses for staff on the nearby island of Rum, with the salmon company clearing and servicing two additional plots for community use. The company had previously built four housing units on the isle of Muck to assist with employee accommodation at this island farm.

Across our farming regions, member companies are exploring different ways of dealing with the increasingly scarce provision of affordable housing in rural Scotland.

PLEDGE 5 Our Communities

We will be **good neighbours** in every way, increasing our positive social impact.

We're proud of the part we play in helping our communities thrive: from job creation and modern apprenticeships to skills development and support for good causes. But we believe we have more to give – by widening our networks, listening to local needs, and sharing our resources and insights for the greater good.

- 5.1 Review and refresh our Community Engagement Charter to provide an up-to-date commitment to local residents, businesses and interest groups.

Scheduled for 2022/2023

- 5.2 Establish, in consultation with the Scottish Government, a structured community funding model, ensuring that our local areas benefit from us being there.

Ongoing – subject to results of regulatory review, now underway.

- 5.3 Partner the Scottish Government and local authorities on the safe hosting of public electric vehicle charging points.

Scheduled for 2022/2023

- 5.4 Support the delivery of marine wildlife surveys, in partnership with VisitScotland, NatureScot, Marine Scotland and others and publish our farms' wildlife surveys for the benefit of all.

Ongoing – already underway in some areas, full roll-out planned for 2022/2023.

- 5.5 Publish our farms' wildlife observations for the benefit of all: from interest groups and researchers, to local tour operators.

Scheduled for 2022/2023

- 5.6 Champion the widening of local working groups to include wild fisheries and other stakeholders to share knowledge and identify opportunities for collaboration.

Ongoing – initial scoping work underway.

- 5.7 Deliver practical solutions to relocating existing farms, should it be scientifically evidenced as necessary for the conservation of wild salmon.

Scheduled for 2022/2023

- 5.8 Develop, with the support of the Scottish Government, a wild salmon monitoring programme to provide evidence-based conservation measures.

Scheduled for 2022/2023

- 5.9 Ensure all mandatory aquaculture reporting can be quickly and easily accessed online by all.

Ongoing – working with Marine Scotland to deliver.

- 5.10 Create an immersive visitor experience centre that tells the story of Scottish salmon farming.

Complete – immersive cinema structure installed and ready for use.



5.6

Gravel beds near the top of the Carloway river in the Outer Hebrides are going to be replenished at a cost of £9,000 and £10,000 is being invested analysing the health of river habitats in ten Highland rivers.

These projects are being financed by the Wild Salmonid Support Fund which was set up by Scotland's salmon farmers to improve conditions for Scotland's wild salmon stocks.

But, alongside these small projects, £500,000 is being spent by the fund over three years on the West Coast Tracking Project, an initiative run by the Atlantic Salmon Trust to try to find out where the wild salmon go once leaving their rivers.

In total, £1.5 million is being spent by salmon farmers over five years on these collaborative projects, showing how important it is for all those with an interest in Scotland's wild salmon stocks to work closely together.

The journey has begun – **come with us.**

The Scottish salmon sector has taken a big first step towards becoming world-leading in the production of healthy, tasty nutritious food in the most responsible and sustainable way. We urge all stakeholders to join us on this path.

Substantial progress has been made. Projects have begun in every pledge of the charter. Some have been completed, many more are ongoing and others are scheduled to begin soon.

In many ways, this first year has been about setting the framework for future achievements, for establishing the baselines so we can measure the progress we make.

The baseline work on packaging has been completed. We now know how much of the packaging we use is reusable, recyclable, or biodegradable and we also know how much further we must go to get this to 100 per cent.

The baseline work on the nutritional qualities of Scottish salmon has also been completed so we know how beneficial our salmon is to a healthy diet as we work with stakeholders to make sure these benefits are enjoyed as widely as possible, particularly by those who have not had the chance before.

Now that these foundations are in place, much of the more substantive work can now be taken forward.

Over the next two years, we expect to see significant progress on monitoring and measuring the welfare of our fish, on the impacts of climate change on salmon farming and further investments in recirculating aquaculture systems and the later deployment of fish to the marine environment.

We expect further strides made in the adoption of renewable energy in our facilities, more electric vehicle charging points, progress made on collecting waste and the completion of the pilot project to get Scottish salmon into more public sector institutions.

There will be further work on qualifications and tackling the crucial issue of housing provision in the Highlands and Islands.

All these projects – and more – will help the sector drive forward the Sustainability Charter, helping Scotland maintain its position as one of the best and most environmentally friendly places to grow world-leading businesses.

So we urge all our stakeholders: join with us and help make this ambitious vision a reality.



Share our interest in a sustainable Scotland?
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