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**Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform
Committee
Comataidh Atharrachadh Clìomaid is Ath-leasachaidh
Fearann**

**Conservation of Salmon (Scotland)
Amendment Regulations 2018 (SSI
2018/37)**



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Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee

To consider and report on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform.



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Conservation of Salmon (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2018 (SSI 2018/ 37)

The Committee reports to the Parliament as follows—

1. The Conservation of Salmon (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2018 (SSI 2018/37) were laid before the Parliament on 8 February 2018 and referred to the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee.
2. The Regulations are subject to the negative procedure (Rule 10.4).
3. At its meeting on 13 March, the Committee took evidence on the Conservation of Salmon (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2018 (SSI 2018/37) from—
 - Simon Dryden, Policy Team Leader, Salmon and Recreational Fisheries, Scottish Government;
 - Keith Main, Policy Manager, Salmon and Recreational Fisheries, Marine Scotland; and
 - Stuart Middlemas, Ecologist, Freshwater Fisheries, Marine Scotland Science.
4. The Official Report of this meeting is available [here](#).
5. At its meeting on 20 March, the Committee took evidence from—
 - Roseanna Cunningham MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform;
 - Dr John Armstrong, Director of Freshwater Fisheries Laboratory, Marine Scotland Science; and
 - Simon Dryden, Policy Team Leader, Salmon and Recreational Fisheries, Scottish Government.
6. Following this evidence session, Liz Smith MSP moved motion [S5M-11020](#)—

That the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee recommends that the Conservation of Salmon (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2018 (SSI 2018/37) be annulled.
7. During the debate, Members highlighted several issues which had been raised in the evidence session and also in written representations made to the Committee by Jackie Baillie MSPⁱ and the Loch Lomond Angling Improvement Associationⁱⁱ. These included:
 - the insufficiency of scientific evidence for the river gradings;
 - the need for this scientific evidence to be peer reviewed;

- the constrained consultation process and the extent of stakeholder engagement;
 - the absence of an appeals process;
 - the lack of awareness and investigation into the owners of land and heritable rights to fish for salmon; and
 - the potential impact on wildlife crime.
8. After debate, the motion was disagreed to, by division (For 5, Against 6, Abstentions 0). The motion was disagreed.
9. The evidence taken and debate held at the meeting on this instrument can be found in the [Official Report](#) (available from 22 March 2018).

10. The Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee has no recommendations to make in relation to the Conservation of Salmon (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2018 (SSI 2018/37).
11. However, the Committee recommends that in developing the next set of regulations, the Scottish Government should seek more meaningful and comprehensive engagement with stakeholders. This should include a thorough investigation via the Registers of Scotland as to the owners of land and heritable rights to fish for salmon, so as to improve data collection.
12. The Committee also recommends the Scottish Government should seek to have its application of the internationally recognised model for assessing salmon numbers for these Regulations peer reviewed. It also recommends this should be built into the process prior to laying future regulations on salmon conservation.
13. The Committee further recommends the Scottish Government should consider implementing a formal appeals process for stakeholders, confined to any inaccuracies in the data upon which gradings have been assigned.

i [Letter](#) from Jackie Baillie MSP, 1 March 2018

ii [Letter](#) from the Loch Lomond Angling Improvement Association, 8 March 2018

