



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

15th October 2023

Dear Constituent,

RE: FARMED FISH: WELFARE

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of the welfare of farmed fish. I have read your comments with interest.

The *Animal Welfare Act 2006* makes it an offence to cause unnecessary suffering to any protected animal, or to fail to provide for the welfare needs of an animal, including fish. Regulations also require that farmed fish are spared avoidable pain, distress, or suffering, during their killing and related operations.

I am aware that *Regulation 1099/2009* on the protection of animals at the time of killing requires that farmed fish are spared avoidable pain, distress, or suffering, during their killing and related operations, but does not include any further requirements. The *Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (England) Regulations 2015* makes it an offence for any person engaged in the restraint, stunning, or killing of an invertebrate to cause avoidable pain, distress, or suffering.

As part of the Government's 'Action Plan for Animal Welfare', Ministers have been considering improvements that could be made to the welfare of farmed fish at the time of killing and asked the Animal Welfare Committee for advice on the killing of farmed fish. The committee has updated its advice from 2014 and I am assured that the Government will study their recommendations carefully to determine possible next steps, including those around the stunning of farming fish.

Finally, I am aware that any allegations of welfare or health issues will be investigated by the Animal and Plant Health Agency and the Centre of Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas). Appropriate action is taken against anyone who breaks the law when examples of non-compliance are disclosed.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With best wishes,

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE