

SEPA Position statement

Marine pen fish farm monitoring

Scope

This temporary regulatory position applies to marine pen finfish farms.

SEPA's latest template for finfish farms permits (October 2022) includes different monitoring requirements to those applying under previously issued permits. SEPA has agreed a process with operators to vary all active farms onto its latest permit template. This process is expected to be complete by 30 June 2023.

The regulatory position will apply in the interim to enable operators to monitor in accordance with certain conditions of the latest permit template in advance of permits being varied. It will remain in place until 30 June 2023.

1. Window for seabed biological standards compliance monitoring

SEPA's previous standard conditions required biological monitoring to be carried out between 35 days before, and 35 days after, fish biomass is reduced to 75 % of the production cycle peak for the last time.

The latest permit template requires biological monitoring be carried out between 10 days before, and 70 days after, fish biomass is reduced to 75 % of the production cycle peak for the last time.

Regulatory Position

SEPA will not record a non-compliance if an operator adopts the monitoring window provided for in the latest permit in advance of their permit being varied. Surveys carried out within the revised monitoring window will be assessed and a classification given.

2. Pen edge monitoring of emamectin benzoate

SEPA does not have a compliance standard for emamectin benzoate at the edge of fish farm pens. The latest permit template for farms authorised under the 763 ng/kg environmental standard will not require pen edge monitoring to demonstrate compliance.

Regulatory Position

Sites on the 763 ng/kg environmental standard will not be assessed as non-compliant if they do not submit emamectin benzoate sample results relating to the pen edge.

3. Faunal sampling in conjunction with emamectin benzoate sampling

The latest permit template does not require the collection of faunal samples as part of the emamectin benzoate survey.

Regulatory Position

Farms on the 763 ng/kg environmental standard will not be assessed as non-compliant if they do not submit faunal sampling results as part of their emamectin benzoate survey.

Nothing in this regulatory position statement affects the separate requirements on operators to monitor and report compliance with seabed biological (faunal) standards.

About this position

As part of the new regulatory framework, all new or increased discharges of emamectin benzoate are subject to increased monitoring requirements to allow a fuller understanding of the area of impact. Further information on implementation of the new emamectin benzoate EQS is available in our [Temporary Regulatory Positions Statement](#) dated July 2022.

This regulatory position remains subject to review by SEPA at any time.

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