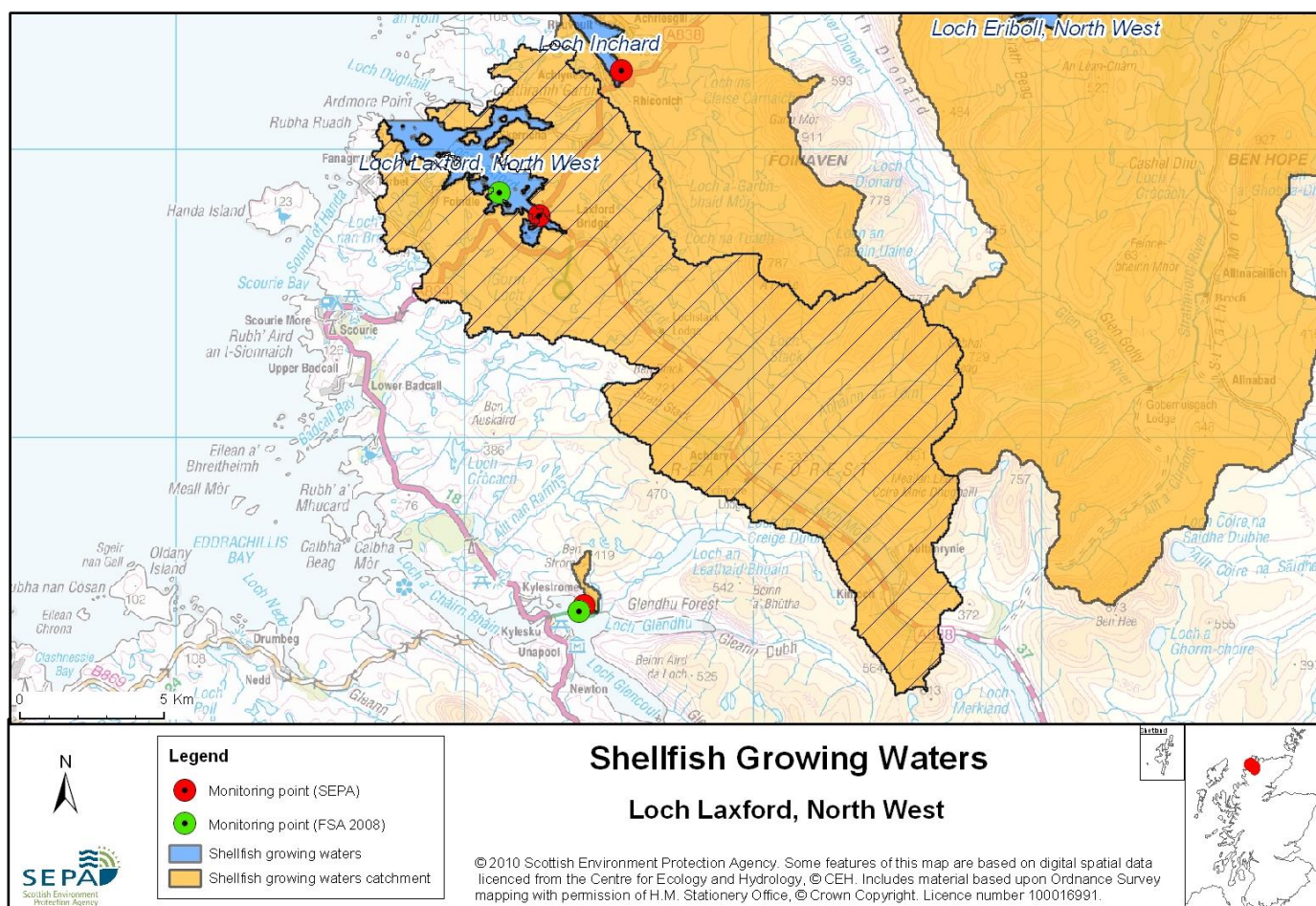


## 27 Loch Laxford, North West



<b>Name</b>	<b>Loch Laxford, North West</b>
<b>Report Reference Number</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>WFD Code</b>	<b>UKS7992327</b>
<b>Local Information</b>	An area inshore of a line drawn between the points NC1723851000 and NC1876051000, and extending to MHWS.
<b>Designated Area (km<sup>2</sup>)</b>	8.46
<b>Year of Designation</b>	2000
<b>Sampling Points</b>	Loch Laxford Mussel Site - NC 22600 47700
<b>Commencement of Monitoring</b>	2000

## 27.1 Commercial Shellfish Interests

Loch Laxford is designated as a Shellfish Harvesting Area by the Food Standards Agency (FSA). There are currently five sites (Loch A Chad-Fi - Ardmore, Baghna Airde Bige, Eilean Ard, Sgeir Fhadha and Weavers Bay) currently producing common mussels (*Mytilus edulis*) all of which are class A as below.

Loch Laxford (Common mussels)  
2011 = A - April to December  
2012 = A - January to March

Category A sites are of the highest standard and means that shellfish can go directly for human consumption however category B requires that shellfish must be depurated, heat-treated or re-laid prior to human consumption.

FSA have not carried out a sanitary survey for Loch Laxford

For more information on Food Standards Agency Classification please visit:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/scotland/safety/hygienscot/shellmonitorscot/shellclassesscot/>

## 27.2 Bathymetric Information

Loch Laxford is a complex water body exposed to prevailing westerly winds and with a complex profile of craggy inlets and islands. It has a total length of 7 km with a sill located near the entrance of the loch at Ardmore Point. Maximum water depth is 71 m. The average flushing time is 4 days. Its catchment area is approximately 181 km<sup>2</sup>. Fresh/tidal flow ratio is 0.6, indicative of a moderately high freshwater input to the loch. There are no morphological pressures in the area.

## 27.3 Conservation Designations

The majority of this designated Shellfish Water is also designated as a Shellfish harvesting Area by FSA.

North of this designation is Loch Inchard, which is designated as a Shellfish Water ([UKS7992377](#)), much of which is also designated as a FSA Shellfish Harvesting area.

### **Special Protected Area (SPA) – [Foinaven](#)**

Designated 28/10/2010 for aggregations of internationally important breeding bird species - Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)

### **Special Protected Area (SPA) – [Handa](#)**

Designated 25/09/2009 for internationally important aggregations of breeding birds - Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*), Great skua (*Stercorarius skua*), Guillemot (*Uria aalge*), Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*), Razorbill (*Alca torda*),

This is also a **Water Dependent SPA**

### **Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – [Foinaven](#)**

Designated 17/03/2005 for internationally important habitats (Acid peat-stained lakes and ponds, Acidic scree, Alpine and subalpine heaths, upland blanket bog, Depressions on peat substrates, Dwarf shrub heath (Upland), Montane acid grasslands) and internationally important species (Freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*), Otter (*Lutra lutra*))

This is also a **Water Dependent SAC** and a **Groundwater Dependent SAC**

### **Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – [Loch Laxford](#)**

Designated 17/03/2005 for Inshore sublittoral marine rock (reefs) and littoral marine sediment (Shallow inlets and bays)

This is also a **Water Dependent SAC**

### **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – [Foinaven](#)**

Designated 08/12/1986 for habitats (upland blanket bogs, Dystrophic and oligotrophic loch types present, Upland birch woodland, Tall herb ledge), Structural and metamorphic geology (moine), assemblages of breeding birds

### **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – [Loch Stack and River Laxford](#)**

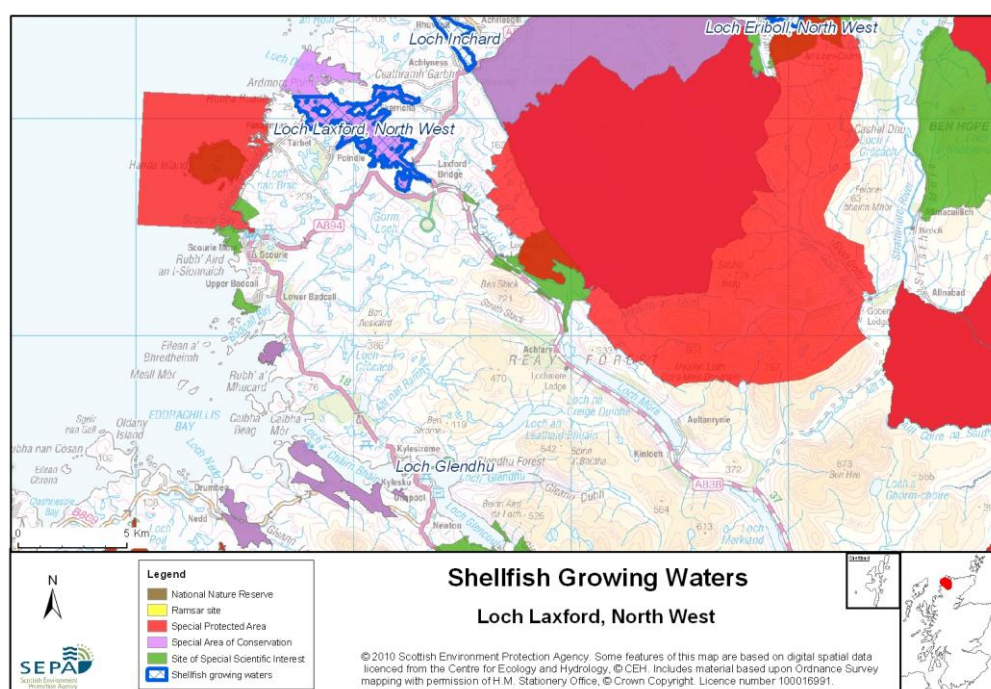
Designated 29/02/1984 for breeding birds (including Black-throated diver (*Gavia arctica*)), Freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*), Oligotrophic loch and river/stream, Upland birch woodland

### **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – [Handa Island](#)**

Designated 26/06/1986 for breeding birds (including Arctic skua (*Stercorarius parasiticus*), Guillemot (*Uria aalge*), Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*), Razorbill (*Alca torda*),) and supralittoral coastal rock (maritime cliffs)

### **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – [Scourie Coast](#)**

Designated 22/06/1989 for Structural and metamorphic geology (Lewisian) and Mineralogy of Scotland



## 27.4 Topography and Land Use – Potential Diffuse Pollution Sources

The loch is predominantly bordered by heather moorland and rough, rocky ground. There are no significant human settlements. Draining an area of 118 km<sup>2</sup> of open moorland and mountain, the River Laxford provides the main freshwater input to the eastern end of the loch, and is classified by SEPA as being of at least good quality.

SEPA does not have diffuse source pollution pressures recorded as causing downgrades recorded for this shellfish water.

## 27.5 Point Source Discharge

Category	Name	Consent No.	NGR	Biomass (t)	Additional Information
Fish Farm	Fanagmore	CAR/L/1001841	NC18304970	120	-
	Eilean Ard	CAR/L/1003894	NC18895014	480	-
	Eilean a Mhadaidh	CAR/L/1003893	NC19864961	480	-
	Site 2, Loch a Chadh-Fi	WPC/N/54690(03)*	NC20555048	140	-
	Site 1, Loch a Chadh-Fi	WPC/N/54690(03)*	NC21005115	140	-
	Foindle East	CAR/L/1003892	NC19904920	480	-

\* There is no CAR consent number for this site at present.

There are no significant sewage discharges to the designated area. Point source discharges are limited to <50 single house private septic tanks.

There are six (two sites under WPC/N/54690) marine cage salmon fish farms located within the designated water. This loch has a total consented biomass of 1840 tonnes. Loch a Chadh-Fi is permanently fallow and has a mussel farm on site.

SEPA does not have point source pollution pressures recorded as causing downgrades recorded for this shellfish water.

## 27.6 Compliance Monitoring Regime

The following monitoring regime of the designated shellfish waters was implemented in July 2005

Year	Monitoring Regime
2005	Quarterly for Sal, DO, pH, temperature, visible oil • Every three years for metals and organohalogens in mussels, next collection scheduled for 2011 • Quarterly for faecal coliforms in mussels

## 27.7 Compliance History

UKS7992327 - Loch Laxford, North West				
	Compliance history for Waters and Biota, excluding faecal coliforms data			Compliance history for faecal coliforms
Year	Overall Result	Imperative	Guideline	Guideline
2000	Pass	Pass	Fail	Pass
2001	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
2002	Fail	Fail <sup>1</sup>	Fail <sup>2</sup>	Pass
2003	Pass	Pass	Pass	Fail
2004	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
2005	Pass	Pass	Pass	Fail
2006	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
2007	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
2008	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
2009	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
2010	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass

<sup>1,2</sup> In 2002, one dissolved oxygen percent saturation value of 58.4% was measured at Fanagmore, this resulted in a failure to meet the I standard. However, the average value over the year was >70% saturation, indicating this low value was unusual. No harmful consequences for the development of shellfish colonies was observed.

The waters have mainly complied with the Guideline standard for faecal coliforms over the years but there were fails in 2003 and 2005.

## 27.8 Future Monitoring

Monitoring will continue as described above (77.6 Compliance Monitoring Regime). However if any chemistry parameter fails to meet any environmental quality standards (EQS) the site will be revisited and resampled for the failing parameter.

## 27.9 Improvement Actions

There is currently no improvement actions planned for this area.

## WFD Objectives

Under the Water Framework Directive, the target objectives expect this shellfish water to Pass by 2015 (first River Basin Management Plan Cycle) for Imperative and Guideline Shellfish Growing Standards with high confidence.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>First Cycle 2015</b>	<b>Confidence</b>	<b>Second Cycle 2021</b>	<b>Confidence</b>	<b>Third Cycle 2027</b>	<b>Confidence</b>
Imperative Shellfish Growing Waters Standard	Pass by 2015	High	Pass by 2021	High	Pass by 2027	High
Guideline Shellfish Growing Waters Standard	Pass by 2015	High	Pass by 2021	High	Pass by 2027	High

### 27.10 Summary of Actions

<b>Action</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
No improvement action currently planned	N/A