



# What do wild salmon mean to me?

## Sandy Bremner



Sandy is an award-winning journalist who has just retired as the BBC's Managing Editor for the North East and Northern Isles. He has worked on media-freedom projects in Myanmar, Bangladesh and Turkey where he continues to campaign for the release of jailed journalists. Sandy is a life-long angler and salmon enthusiast.

It's no exaggeration to say that wild salmon inspire in me a sense of absolute wonder, alongside abject sadness. It's easy to talk about the wonder. These magnificent, mysterious creatures have been fascinating us for thousands of years. The Picts carved their forms in stone, beside their most sacred images. We still gasp as they power through thundering waterfalls. They're a national treasure, far more precious than jewels.

But it's hard to avoid a gnawing sense of sadness that we haven't done more to protect such a valuable inheritance. We all know that the species is in historic decline. Yes, anglers have joined with other conservation groups to do what they can, through dozens of projects. Scientists are working hard to answer difficult questions about their fate at sea. And Government seems finally to be waking up to the scale of the problem. But most of our legislators and statutory agencies have so far failed to show the necessary urgency. Incredibly, some even remain complacent.

Some of the factors affecting our wild salmon may be beyond human control. But our Government and environmental agencies can do far more to protect the species, and we all have a responsibility to hold them to account when they fail. We owe it to future generations to make the preservation of our wild salmon a national priority.



Discover more about the importance of wild Atlantic salmon at:  
[www.fms.scot/what-do-wild-salmon-mean-to-me/](http://www.fms.scot/what-do-wild-salmon-mean-to-me/)  
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