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Smart Salmon France. Illustration: Smart Salmon

Smart Salmon has submitted an application to produce 8,000 tonnes of salmon on land in France

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The 100-acre site has already been secured in the small town of Guingamp in the north-west of the country.

Smart Salmon, which has a license to produce 7,500 tonnes of salmon on land in the municipality of Bremanger , believes that the French market is the right place to bet.

- We have been working on the French project in the coal mines ever since 2017, but with a significant escalation from 2022, and then especially after the summer. So this is a milestone, says general manager Petter Bakke to iLaks.

He is clear as to why they have looked towards building a plant in Europe.

- We have always had an ESG perspective in focus when it comes to our farming projects, and the savings on shipping down to the continent is an important factor here.

- The French are also known as a people who really love salmon. Today, almost all salmon is imported into the country, so the opportunities here are enormous, and our ambition to produce salmon in France stands firm.

ESG report

He says that he expects the building, which will house a full-scale RAS facility; from roe to food fish, slaughterhouse and all the way to the filleting line, will amount to approximately NOK 1.5 billion.

- It is an approximate calculation, but we have good background figures to build on.

Bakke says they recently published the updated ESG report for the company, with a separate new report for the French venture.

In the report, there are figures showing an electricity consumption of 4.5-5 kWh per kilogram of salmon produced, and a water consumption down to one liter of water per kilogram. They also expect that they will be able to produce somewhere between 60-80 kilos of salmon per square meter annually.



Petter Bakke. Photo: Smart Salmon

Also on the French project, as on the Norwegian project, the Israeli AquaMaof will supply the technology.

- We have solid partners with whom we work closely. Both in Norway and in France, where we constantly want to improve in all areas.

9 to 12 months

The application for a license was sent to the French authorities at the beginning of the year, but they are clear that it will take time before they receive an answer.

- They say that it will take somewhere between 9-12 months just to get an answer on whether we get the license in France, says brother, co-founder and business developer in the company, Ole Bakke.

He says that the main focus for the company in the first year will be Norway, but that the projects will have partially parallel runs. They also do not hide the fact that there is some resistance, which is not unusual with large industrial projects in France.

- When everything is in place, we expect to start the work straight away.

They also say that they are already looking for other areas in the country for more facilities, where they intend to apply for more licences.

33 kilos per person

- France was the second largest market in the world when it comes to farmed salmon when we started this project. That says a lot, says Petter Bakke.

- France has a population of 67 million people, where the average eats 33 kilos of fish per year. Close to three kilos of this is salmon.

Bakke says that the calculation is therefore quite simple.

- This means that there is a market for 200,000 tonnes in a country that imports most of the salmon they consume.

The estimate from the company shows that, if everything goes according to plan, they can supply approximately 4.5 per cent of the country's need for salmon at the new facility.

- And this is just the beginning, he concludes.



- The fact that most land-based companies on the stock exchange have been out of the favorite category has not exactly helped us, says Petter Bakke (tv). PHOTO: JØRN-ARNE TOMASGARD