

GAA/FIN 208

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29 November 2019

Mr Stuart Wright
Inquiry Secretary
Parliament House, HOBART 7000
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Submission to Legislative Council Sessional Committee Government Administration A -Sub-Committee - Fin Fish Farming in Tasmania Inquiry

Dear Mr Wright

I live on the waterfront at Lunawanna, Bruny Island. We are 6 nautical miles from one of Huon Aquaculture's biggest leases known as Zuitpool Rock.

My wife has owned the property for several decades and in 2012 we decided to renovate our shack and move to Bruny Island for the quiet life.

Little did we expect that the bucolic area was about to be turned into an industrial area, and one that is allowed to operate around the clock.

We complained to the EPA about the noise coming from the newly leased Ronja Huon and officers made the illusion of conducting an inquiry, complete with sound recording devices.

We were asked to keep a log, which we did, and after a month or so the equipment disappeared and so did the officers. To this day we have never heard anything personally about it.

The EPA did put up a report on its website that said the inquiry concluded that the noise allowed so many metres from the boat was at acceptable levels.

We still suffer a constant irritating background hum from the operations and when the hapless fish are pumped from the pens into and out of the wellboat to cleanse the snot from their gills, the sound is increased and is like a subterranean pulsing that on still nights makes sleep difficult.

This at times goes on all night and often in daylight hours. The operation of the automatic feeders also adds to the noise level.

I have many misgivings about the industry, but the noise and the hours of operation are the greatest.

I believe operations such as washing, feeding and harvesting of the fish should be limited to daylight hours, at least not starting before 7am like other industries and builders etc.

I do not believe that the effects of such huge amounts of nutrients being pumped into our rivers and waterways is being honestly assessed. The changes we have noticed over the years, from the loss of marine vegetation to algae blooms, masses of foam after stormy weather, the growth of slime-like weed and the total

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loss of shells, anemones and other creatures that once filled the little reefy pool along our beach, make me believe that there is something seriously wrong with the environmental assessments of the effects of aquaculture.

People scoff when you suggest the industry would be better onshore and built in conjunction with high production agriculture that would make good use of the waste.

But after having spent a few days on a farm at Ranelagh, where this actually occurs, I am convinced it is the way forward.

Tassal pumps water from a hatchery to local farms after it was prevented from releasing into the Huon River. It's a win for everybody; other countries have seen the sense in this solution.

Why does Tasmania always have to destroy its best assets to try to improve its bottom line?

I endorse the following recommendations by the Tasmanian Conservation Trust 1. Complete independent water quality and environmental studies, before any environmental licences are issued (not an "adaptive management" approach)., 2. Environmental licences must set a hard cap on biomass and dissolved nitrogen and other pollutants emitted into our waterways from pens, hatcheries and other infrastructure., 3. Require all licences and licence amendments (marine and land based) to be referred to the EPA board so that the community can have a say., 4. Commission an independent review of the Marine Farming Planning Review Panel, focusing on its membership, governance and ties to industry., 5. Improve transparency and enforcement by prosecuting fish escapes, fish kills, marine debris and seal and cetacean interactions., 6. Mandate public reporting for disease outbreaks and other bio-security incidents., 7. Amend the Marine Farming Planning Act to require valuation and protection of social, recreational and visual amenity; and consideration of noise impacts on surrounding residents.

Thank you for reviewing my submission

Yours Sincerely

Kim Murray