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Tasmanian Government

25 NOV 2026

Dr Rosalie Woodruff
Member for Franklin
Email: haprocedure@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Dr Woodruff Rosalie,

Thank you for the below constituent question you asked in Parliament on 17 November 2026.

My question is from Sam in Geeveston, who loves to fish and go swimming with his family. Sam says last summer he worried about the health risk from florfenicol in the fish he caught and didn't want to take his kids swimming when salmon companies were treating fish. He was angry it was so hard to find when and where antibiotics were being used. Now, he has heard the Government is allowing salmon companies to poison waters with florfenicol across the Huon and Channel, and up to the east coast this whole summer. He's got friends who are crayfishers and says they're outraged their business is being shut down and the Government is letting salmon companies totally control public waters. He's also got friends who work on fish farms and says they're really unhappy at the blowback they're getting because you are not doing your job to make a fair playing field. He asks: when will you stand up for Tasmanians instead of for the salmon industry?

The Tasmanian Government's priority is to protect animal welfare, environmental values, public health, and the reputation and market access of Tasmania's premium seafood industries. This is a complex issue that requires balancing animal health, environmental outcomes, market access and business certainty.

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) is currently considering an emergency use permit application for florfenicol. As the independent national regulator responsible for assessing veterinary medicines, including potential trade and market access implications, it would not be appropriate for the Tasmanian Government to seek to influence or pre-empt that process.

The Government's position is that any future use of florfenicol must be supported by strong science, appropriate safeguards and effective measures to manage trade and market access risks for Tasmania's commercial fisheries.

Maintaining market access for Tasmania's commercial wild-catch sector is critical. For this reason, the Government worked closely with commercial wild fisheries and other stakeholders to develop the *Aquaculture Therapeutant - Wild Fisheries Market Access Management Plan*, which sets out how potential therapeutant-related trade risks will be managed.
Temporary fishery area closures are an established part of Tasmania's fisheries management framework and may be used, where necessary, to support market assurance and access, manage

trade risks and protect the long-term sustainability of fisheries.

The Government strongly supports both Tasmania's wild-catch fisheries and aquaculture industries, recognising their importance to regional communities and the Tasmanian economy. We acknowledge the concerns raised by wild-catch sectors regarding residue detections and market access, while also recognising the importance of protecting fish welfare during disease outbreaks.

Our responsibility is to balance these interests fairly and transparently, guided by evidence and expert advice. The Market Access Management Plan has been specifically designed to protect wild-catch market access should antibiotic treatment be required, while also setting a clear expectation that the salmon industry work constructively with the wild-catch sector, including in relation to compensation where fishery closures may occur.

The Government remains focused on protecting jobs, regional communities, public health and the environment, while supporting sustainable industries and healthy waterways for the benefit of all Tasmanians.

Yours sincerely

Hon Gavin Pearce MP
Minister for Primary Industries and Water