

**Minister for Energy and Renewables
Minister for Parks and Environment**

Level 10, 15 Murray Street, HOBART TAS 7000 Australia
GPO Box 123 HOBART TAS 7001 Australia
Phone: +61 3 6165 7739
Email: minister.duigan@dpac.tas.gov.au



23 October 2024

Dr Rosalie Woodruff MP
Member for Franklin
email: laura.ross@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Ms Woodruff

Thank you for your constituent question asked in Parliament on Wednesday 18 September 2024 on behalf of your constituent, Brian from Cunningham in relation to the environmental effect is of salmon marine farming operations in the D'Entrecasteaux Channel. Your question has been referred to me as the Minister for Parks and Environment.

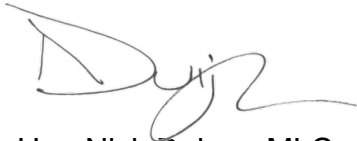
As you are aware, recent legislative amendments were made by our Government to improve the accountability and transparency of environmental management in Tasmania, strengthening the independent role of the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) and enabling public access to environmental monitoring information. The amendments also allow for the creation of Environmental Standards and supporting Technical Standards. Environment Standards for Tasmanian Marine Finfish Farming include consistent and transparent rules to be applied across the industry; protection for reef and seagrass habitats; increased regulation of noise and light emissions; implementation of waste management plans for operators and rigorous environmental monitoring requirements.

The presence of algae in marine waters varies due to numerous factors, both natural (e.g. weather, southern ocean inputs) and caused by humans (e.g. nutrients from fish farms, wastewater treatment plants, septic tanks, storm water runoff). Levels of nutrients and algae are monitored monthly by salmon companies at various sites in the D'Entrecasteaux Channel, as required under the Broadscale Environmental Monitoring Program (BEMP) specified in environmental licences. The purpose of this program is to detect ecosystem change caused by marine finfish aquaculture. Annual BEMP reports are publicly available for the D'Entrecasteaux Channel, Huon River and Port Esperance. These reports include discussion of changes compared to previous years and compared to trigger values. The EPA sets trigger values to inform further investigations if concentrations exceed the range of values commonly measured in the past.

I understand the EPA also undertakes its own independent monitoring of algae, nutrients and other water quality parameters. The EPA utilises the expertise of independent scientific researchers at the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) and CSIRO to inform regulation and management of the finfish industry. This includes research into algal growth in coastal waters of south eastern Tasmania. Information and reports are accessible on the IMAS website.

Decisions to maintain or reduce the scale of farming at operational lease sites will continue to be made independently by the EPA and I encourage your constituent to contact the EPA directly in relation to the specific matters raised. The EPA's Salmon Environmental Regulation Branch can be reached via phone on 03 6165 4604 or via email Enquiries@epa.tas.gov.au The EPA also operates an Incidents and Complaints hotline (phone 1800 005 171) for members of the public to report concerns.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Duigan', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Hon Nick Duigan MLC
Minister Parks and Environment

Minister for Innovation, Science, and the Digital Economy
Minister for Corrections and Rehabilitation
Minister for the Environment
Minister for the Arts and Heritage

Level 5, 4 Salamanca Place HOBART TAS 7000 Australia
GPO Box 123 HOBART TAS 7001 Australia
Phone +61 3 6165 7686
Email minister.oqilvie@dpac.tas.gov.au



Dr Rosalie Woodruff MP
Leader of the Tasmanian Greens
Member for Franklin
Email: Rosalie.woodruff@parliament.tas.gov.au

5 DEC 2024

Dear Dr Woodruff

Thank you for your constituent question of 18 September 2024 in Parliament, regarding the environmental effect is of salmon marine farming operations in the D'Entrecasteaux Channel.

As you are aware recent legislative amendments were made by our Government to improve the accountability and transparency of environmental management in Tasmania, strengthening the independent role of the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) and enabling public access to environmental monitoring information. The amendments also allow for the creation of Environmental Standards and supporting Technical Standards.

Environment Standards for Tasmanian Marine Finfish Farming include consistent and transparent rules to be applied across the industry; protection for reef and seagrass habitats; increased regulation of noise and light emissions; implementation of waste management plans for operators and rigorous environmental monitoring requirements.

The presence of algae in marine waters varies due to numerous factors including weather, Southern Ocean inputs, nutrients from fish farms, wastewater treatment plants, septic tanks, storm water runoff) to name a few.

Levels of nutrients and algae are monitored monthly by salmon companies at various sites in the D'Entrecasteaux Channel, as required under the Broadscale Environmental Monitoring Program (BEMP) specified in environmental licences. The purpose of this program is to detect ecosystem change caused by marine finfish aquaculture. Annual BEMP reports are publicly available at D'Entrecasteaux Channel, Huon River and Port Esperance. These reports include discussion of changes compared to previous years and compared to trigger values. The EPA sets trigger values to inform further investigations if concentrations exceed the range of values commonly measured in the past.

The EPA also undertakes its own independent monitoring of algae, nutrients and other water quality parameters. The EPA utilises the expertise of independent scientific researchers at the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) and CSIRO to inform regulation and management of the finfish industry. This includes research into algal growth in coastal waters of south eastern Tasmania. Information and reports are accessible on the IMAS website.

The Government's new Environmental Standards for Tasmanian Marine Finfish Farming provide the EPA Director with enhanced powers to assist in addressing noise associated with vessels travelling to and from marine finfish farms.

The EPA operates an Incidents and Complaints hotline (phone 1800 005 171) which your constituent can call at any time if they feel vessel noise is unreasonably impacting upon their enjoyment of the environment.

Under the regulatory framework that applies to finfish marine farming activities, provisions are in place for the independent EPA to regulate and manage the environmental performance of operational finfish lease areas, to ensure effects are managed to an acceptable level and the health of the environment is maintained.

Decisions to maintain or reduce the scale of farming at operational lease sites will continue to be made independently by the EPA and I encourage your constituent to contact the EPA directly in relation to the specific matters raised. The EPA's Salmon Environmental Regulation Branch can be reached by phone on 03) 6165 4604 or email at Enquiries@epa.tas.gov.au.

Thank you for raising these matters in Parliament, I trust this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'M. Ogilvie', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Hon Madeleine Ogilvie MP
Minister for the Environment