

**From:** [Mark Nikolai](#)  
**To:** [FinFish](#)  
**Subject:** Inquiry into Finfish Farming in Tasmania  
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# TARFish

Tasmanian Association for Recreational Fishing Inc.

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Mr Stuart Wright,  
Inquiry Secretary,  
Parliament House,  
HOBART TAS 7000

29<sup>th</sup> November 2019

## RE INQUIRY INTO FINFISH FARMING IN TASMANIA

Salmon marine farming has significantly developed in Tasmanian coastal waters over the last 30 years and provides economic, social and community benefits at a regional coastal level. TARFish has been directly involved in providing input into marine farming plan reviews, lease amendments, certification assessments, research projects and providing feedback to marine farmers on the potential impacts of their activities as they relate to the recreational fishing sector. Industry growth has seen a corresponding loss of access for recreational fishers and others to many popular areas around the state due to marine farms.

The primary role of TARFish is to look after the interests of recreational fishers in all matters and that is why we have, and will continue to be proactively involved in the marine farming industry expansion.

Recent aquaculture industry expansion has resulted in heightened community awareness of the aquaculture industry and its operations. While providing benefits to the community, the operation of the aquaculture industry can also result in significant harms if it is not managed properly and in the interests of the wider community, including recreational fishers.

The Tasmanian aquaculture industry has the potential to:

- Exclude recreational fishers from important fishing areas
- Result in noise and visual pollution that damages the experience of recreational fishing,
- Introduce debris into the sea that can damage boats and put human lives at risk and
- Pollute the marine environment with nutrients as well as antibiotics, antifoulants and other chemicals

Key recreational fishing issues associated with salmonid marine farming relate to loss of access to marine waters which leads to a loss of public amenity, the negative impact of salmonid marine farming on the marine environment and on water safety of salmonid marine farming infrastructure and marine debris.

TARFish expects:

- The salmonid marine farming industry to be ecologically sustainable. “Australia's National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development (1992) defines ecologically sustainable development as: 'using, conserving and enhancing the community's resources so that ecological processes, on which life depends, are maintained, and the total quality of life, now and in the future, can be increased'.
- Government regulation that effectively manages the salmonid marine farming industry so that its marine environmental impacts are minimised and contained within scientifically determined levels.
- The industry to fund independent research that underpins the continued operations of the industry and the potential impacts on the marine environment, endemic species and the ecosystem.
- The industry to compensate any displaced recreational fishing community through loss of access associated with zones, leases and farms. Compensation will be ongoing for as long as the loss of access is in place. Compensation will take the form of a community “offset” program which will be put in place to provide alternative community benefits to those that have been lost through area exclusion caused by salmonid marine farms.
- The industry to proactively engage with TARFish and work with it in understanding the concerns the recreational fishing sector has with salmonid marine farming and work together in addressing those concerns.
- Management of salmonid marine farming to be predicated on practical management plans based on decisions that are risk-based, transparent, informed, timely and with sufficient resources for implementation and future management and control.
- The industry to proactively self-report timely operational data transparently in the public domain. Given the significant developments in recent times in individual site sensor technology there is an expectation that reporting of key performance indicators for each lease will be put into the public domain in real time, or as close as can be reasonable expected.
- The Government to effectively manage any expansion of the industry by clearly articulating future salmonid marine farming areas and areas where salmonid marine farming will not be allowed. A marine planning working group including recreational fishers should be established to develop a statewide marine plan. The Government should establish a network of “wildcatch” fishing areas around the state which preclude salmonid marine farming.
- Salmonid marine farms will not be considered/approved in “marginally” acceptable areas, given the significant effects of climate change that are happening in Tasmanian marine waters.

- Should major environmental damage occur in any marine farming area all current expansion plans or modifications will be put on hold until the extent, causes and implications of the major environmental damage are clearly understood and any remedial actions put in place.
- Marine farm infrastructure will not be placed/approved in close proximity to recreational boat ramps and jetties such that it creates an unacceptable risk to boaters and fishers or impedes recreational fishing activities unduly.
- Future salmonid marine farms will not be approved in estuarine waters

Serious problems have already been linked to aquaculture development. Loss of amenity and the pollution problems in Macquarie Harbour are two examples. The underlying cause of these problems, is the current planning process, which fails to take into account the interests of recreational fishers and others in the community. At the heart of this problem is the Marine Farming Planning Review Panel. This panel and the associated planning legislation does not adequately consider the interests of recreational fishers or the wider community. There needs to be a genuine, transparent and accountable planning process for the Tasmanian aquaculture industry. The Marine Farming Planning Review Panel has failed to provide the planning process Tasmanian recreational fishers deserve. A fair and effective planning process should be able to consider the full range of community concerns, be transparent and be open to appeal. The Tasmanian Planning Commission already has those characteristics, and TARFish proposes that the Marine Farming Planning Review Panel is dissolved and its role taken over by the Tasmanian Planning Commission. TARFish suggests that it is time for Aquaculture to be brought into Tasmania's mainstream planning process, and that the Tasmanian Government works with TARFish and other community groups to ensure that their interests are protected during aquaculture developments.

TARFish understands the importance of the salmonid marine farming industry across a broad range of stakeholders and wants the industry to manage its future in a socially acceptable way and be known as a "good corporate citizen". A fair, transparent and accountable planning process that is able to deal with the full range of community interests is a fundamental requirement for this future. Tasmania's recreational fishers deserve a planning process that properly takes into account their interests.

Yours sincerely,

Brian Hinson  
Association Secretary.

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