

Submission into the Legislative Enquiry into the Salmon Industry

To Whom it may concern,

I am a part-time resident of the Tasman Peninsula. Like other members of this community, and the many tourists who visit and contribute to this economy, we visit and stay here because of the areas beauty, clean air and good quality waters, which maintain a healthy and diverse ecosystem. All this is rapidly changing with the expansion of fish farming in our waters. Hence, I am writing because I have significant concerns about salmon farming on an industrial scale, effecting this rural area and adjacent environments.

I summarise these concerns as follows:

1. Light pollution from pens and boats.
2. Noise pollution from boating operations and trucks as well as dust and road degradation from large volumes of truck traffic.
3. Debris from fish farming operations entering the waterways, endangering recreational and commercial boating, and large amounts of this debris washing up on our beaches.
4. The release of extremely high bioavailable nutrient loads resulting in extensive growth of filamentous algae, with flow on effects to the temperate reef communities and sea grass beds, and hence the whole ecosystem, including the birdlife which is dependent on the sea life. (The damage to Macquarie Harbour by over stocking of fish farms has been well documented).

All the above have been reported and documented on numerous occasions to the fish farm companies, the local councils, EPA and M.A.S.T.

5. Lack of information regarding the sources of supply of fresh water for fish farm operations, in an area with already marginal supplies of fresh water.
6. Lack of information of regulation regarding the operation of one of the largest well boats in the world, for example, where will the effluent be discharged after washing fish? What are the effects of light and noise and the boat wake on the local communities, the shoreline, marine and bird life?
7. Other concerns include the use of antibiotic, fish escapes, the introduction of viruses, the attraction of seals and sharks, and the capture and mortality of native fish and fish larvae during fresh water bathing.
8. There has been a lack of genuine community consultation and hence no social licence (a community advisory panel of one company is selected by the company itself).
9. The independence of the marine farming planning review panel is open to serious question, highlighted by the resignation of two of its members.

I would like to recommend a moratorium on further expansion of fish farms in Tasmanian waters until all these concerns are addressed.

- There must be robust and independent monitoring of all aspects of the environment, including reef and sea grass communities.
- There needs to be investigation and monitoring to determine the carrying capacity with a cap set on the biomass, dissolved nitrogen and other pollutants emitted into our waterways from pens and other infrastructure.
- The Marine Farming Planning Act should require protection of social, recreation and visual amenity, and include the need for transparency of reporting and enforcement by prosecution and substantial fines of fish escapes, seal deaths, marine debris and other environmental damage.
- The EPA should have the power to impose environmental bonds to ensure companies maintain adequate funds to undertake any necessary remedial work.
- There must be a comprehensive and independent biosecurity plan and public reporting of disease outbreaks and other biosecurity incidence.
- There must be genuine community consultation that responds to concerns, not just window dressing.
- The Marine Farming Planning Review Panel should be reformed to ensure total independence of all members of the panel (that is, there should be no commercial, financial or political interest), with increased representation on the panel, including community members, recreational and professional fishers and environmental scientists.
- All environmental licence applications and significant amendments should be subject to a decision by the EPA board, allowing public input and third-party appeal rights.
- The Tasmanian Salmon Growth Plan should be replaced by an overarching Marine Planning process – informed by science and wide consultation with all stakeholders. The Marine Plan should identify appropriate location for marine farms and priority areas for recreational boating and fishing, scenic and biodiversity protection, marine tourism , etc.,

Thank you for considering my submission.

Yours Sincerely,


Anne Duffield

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