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We would like to make a submission to the Inquiry into the Fin Fish Farming in Tasmania.

We were the two members of the Marine Farming Review Panel who resigned in August 2018. We would like to comment on the planning and regulation of finfish farming in Tasmania, in particular application of Marine Farming Act 1995.

We are both supportive of a sustainable salmon industry in Tasmania. However, we have concerns about the current planning and regulation of salmon industry, which is at significant risk unless changes are made to the legislation and operation of the Marine Farming Review Panel. In particular we would like to note:

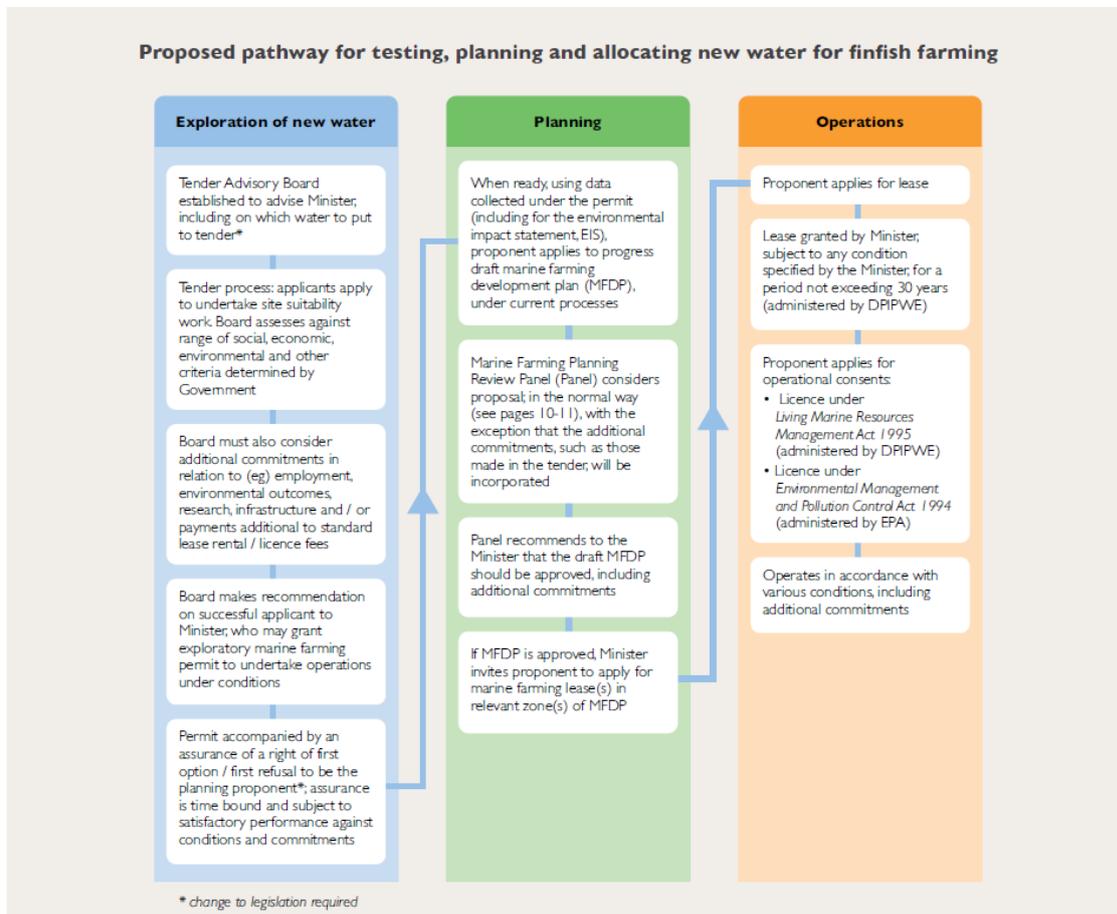
Legislative restrictions and flaws do not allow timely response to changes in the marine environment. For example, sections that provide sole power to the Minister to approve or reject marine farming development plans and (Section 16) and amendments to such (Section 42), and to approve and revoke Emergency Plans (Section 46).

Indeed, once the Minister approves a draft plan for an exhibition, the plan may be varied but will eventually be approved for that location regardless of the appropriateness or any changes in the conditions. This is reflected by the Marine Farming Act 1995:

**“30. Modification of draft plan**

- (1) If the Panel rejects a draft plan, the planning authority, within any period the Panel allows, must submit to the Panel a modification to the draft plan.”

This is also shown on page 17 of Sustainable Industry Growth Plan for Salmon Industry (DPIPWE 2017), where in the Planning section “Panel recommends to the Minister that the draft MFDP should be approved” with no other option available (please see below).



The flaws in the legislation have directly resulted in environmental harm in Macquarie Harbour, which is unlikely to fully recover.

Poor functioning of the Marine Farming Planning Review Panel includes the inability to apply sound science, an unwillingness to discuss and learn from changes (e.g. Macquarie Harbour, emergence of POMV), and the propensity to only provide advice operationally convenient to salmon industry. Indeed, the salmon industry had ready access to the Panel to advise on the operational impact of potential management conditions and were consulted on frequent basis and at a minute notice to the Panel.

We were not allowed to consider the previous salmon industry issues in Macquarie Harbour as they were considered irrelevant by other members of the Panel. While Macquarie Harbour is a very different system to Storm Bay (hydrodynamically and biogeochemically), the factors that are the same are: same operators, same operation, same regulation, and based on flawed or inadequate science. We were not allowed to apply biosecurity recommendations from Global Salmon Conference 2017 (Carter et al. 2019) to assess MFDP. This inability to take into account the latest information and policy recommendations jeopardises the sustainability of Tasmanian salmon industry.

We would be happy to provide further information. We would be prepared to make a private presentation.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Barbara Nowak in cursive script.

Barbara Nowak

Handwritten signature of Louise Cherrie in cursive script.

Louise Cherrie

