

Susan Wardle

Postal address – see below

19<sup>th</sup> November 2019

To: Ms Meg Webb

Inquiry Chair, Legislative Council

The Planning Appeal for the Fin Fish Farming Industry, Tasmania

Dear Ms Webb,

Please accept this submission regarding the Fin Fish Farming Industry.

Thank you for an opportunity to do so.

I am a property owner on North Bruny Island and our property is involved with Primary Production.

I have owned this property for nineteen years and have invested a lot of time, thought and money, not only into the Primary production business, but also on environmental initiatives which I outline below in my concerns. There is a lot of history associated with our property. Notably, it was a whaling station for Captain James Kelly and eventually a home to his daughter and their family in the 1800's.

For ease and clarity, I have broken my concerns into categories.

#### **WATER**

Water is an essential commodity to not only to Australia, but increasingly, to the rest of the world. With the world experiencing food and water shortages our food security and the way we conserve these valuable commodities in Australia is essential.

Water, of course, is one of these commodities. A great deal of Australia is currently experiencing drought, water shortages and in some states, catastrophic fires with severe water shortages, hampering fire- fighting efforts and extremely high fire risks for other states. It is, therefore, distressing that the Fin Fish Farming Industry uses thousands of megalitres of fresh water to flush out their Fin Fish pens containing the salmon, to control gill disease. Salmon is a non-essential food source. Not only is this a waste of a huge amounts of water, but ultimately a threat to the Marine environment. The effects on the Marine environment are not clear. This industry has galloped ahead before any meaningful research into the long- term effects on the marine environment can be established.

On Bruny Island our rainfall has been drastically below average. Residents will be faced with buying in water and many, already, have done so. It is galling, therefore, to think about all the water being dumped into the sea, whilst we watch from the shore.

I am concerned that as the Fin Fish Farming Industry is rolling out at such a rapid rate, that in competition for this service, transport costs and water costs will be astronomical for residents. How can this be regulated and kept in check?

Water sources on land- already a huge dam on Bruny is being fouled by seagulls which are attracted to the salmon pens. Seagulls flock up to fresh water daily to drink and wash. The north of Bruny has always primary production activities. Is there a plan in place to prevent this from occurring to other dams and water sources? As you know there is no mains water on Bruny Island so dams and tanks are the Island's residents water sources for drinking, residential use, primary production and cropping and for fire-fighting.

#### OTHER ADVERSE EFFECTS

Unfortunately, no research is required for this concern. Sharks. When there is an increase in seal activity, white pointers and other sharks congregate. On our property we have seen seals visiting our beach including three bull seals on our beach in the last twelve months and none in the previous twelve years. This is of great concern.

#### POLLUTION

Debris is regularly collected, which we dispose of at our own cost, as there is no rubbish collection on Bruny Island. An economic concern for a lot of people, but also this raises environmental and safety concerns. As reported publicly, during a strong storm, a pen washed away completely. This would have been a danger for small craft and swimmers. Storm Bay is called Storm Bay for a reason!

It is no longer acceptable to deal with pollution and debris by simply letting the tide take it away as seems the methodology here.

We have yet to see advanced research on the effects such a concentration of Fin Fish Farms will have on our marine environment. Macquarie Harbour is a situation of great despair and of significant proportion. Storm Bay and other areas of concentrated Fin Fish Farming activities are at risk.

#### HEALTH

I have never been able to get a straight answer in direct discussion with the Fish Farm representatives on the use of antibiotics. My understanding is that antibiotics are used and some are on our last line of defence as far as human health is concerned. In an aquatic situation and in open pens, this is a grave concern. From information on line and from published articles, it is my understanding that these antibiotics are banned from use overseas and this practice is closely monitored. In addition, I fail to see how the aquatic delivery method is accurate, as it should be, for the safety and prevention of antibiotic resistance. One fish may get one, two or any number of doses and another, none. Meanwhile the antibiotics leach out into the surrounding marine environment. On all counts, this is not good enough.

#### ENDANGERED BIRDS

The Swift Parrot, The Forty Spotted Pardalote, the Wedge Tailed Eagle and the Sea Eagle all nest on our property. Indeed, we have land fenced off as Private Forest Reserve and the coastal edge has been fenced, as part of a strong environmental agenda we have created and believe in. All of Bull Bay and corridors of bush have been set aside as Private Forest Reserve areas and important

environmentally sensitive areas of trees and bush have also been fenced, to protect native vegetation and grasses. In addition, on other areas of our farm, my husband and I, our family and volunteers, have planted over seven thousand native trees in a revegetation programme we have designed. We fear the change in the local bird population and species (e.g. hundreds of sea gulls) will have an adverse effect on their nesting and feeding patterns. No one really knows, but we really should.

#### NOISE AND LIGHT POLLUTION

The diesel engines (which are not particularly environmental) and equipment used are invasive in the lives of many residents, causing much distress. I know there have been many professionally measured reports on the unsafe levels of noise pollution from these sources, which would not be permitted or tolerated for any land industry. Everyone is entitled to feel safe and comfortable in their home. The industry was not in operation where these houses are, when folk chose their location for a home.

I am also concerned that the lights that are on for 24 hours a day and the effect it has on the local wildlife and birds, not to mention residents who are woken by extremely strong beams of light which causes distress and fatigue.

I hope the Inquiry will support the push to have the Fin Fish Farming Industry to pause, to re evaluate and to have more recycled water on-shore fish pens. The Fin Fish Industry constantly mentions Community discussions and consultations in their articles, and in response to letters and emails. However, this has little effect on their activities and the expansion of the industry. The baseline changes constantly and, again, we are back discussing yet another expansion of their pens. There doesn't seem to be an accessible or clear way as a community member, or for our community organisations, to appeal against any decisions for these leases, so this Inquiry is very much appreciated.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Yours Sincerely,



Susan Wardle

