

## Salmonid Marine Farming Policy

Salmon marine farming has significantly developed in Tasmanian waters over the last 30 years and has become a key economic driver for the Tasmanian economy with particular social and community benefits at a regional coastal level. TARFish has, for nearly a decade, been directly involved in providing input into marine farming plan reviews, permits, 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. Coupled with the industry growth recreational fishers have seen the corresponding loss of access to many popular areas around the state due to salmonid marine farms.

As the industry has commenced a significant expansion phase into new waters outside their current marine farm zones the scope, breadth and potential impacts have created a heightened awareness within the recreational fishing community around the future of the industry and where it sees its operations.

It is not the role of TARFish to support or not support salmonid marine farming, but it is our role to look after the interests of recreational fishers in all matters and that is why we have and will continue to proactively support the interests of recreational fishers through continued advice to industry and the Government in relation to the marine farming industry.

The key recreational fishing issues associated with salmonid marine farming relate to:

- 1) Loss of access to marine waters which leads to a loss of public amenity
- 2) The impact of salmonid marine farming on the marine environment
- 3) On water safety of salmonid marine farming infrastructure
- 4) The need for an open, transparent and fair aquaculture planning process that considers the needs of recreational fishers

TARFish will:

- Enter into strategic alliances with other groups (commercial fishing, tourism, oil and gas, conservation etc.) where common objectives have been established.
- Enter into partnerships with stakeholders to forge greater effectiveness in management, monitoring, reporting, education and extension of common interest objectives.
- Participate in stakeholder advisory group, working groups or relevant committees to provide opportunities to engage with government and its agencies on the continuing salmonid marine farming management processes and direction of research for increasing the knowledge base.

TARFish will not:

- get involved at a political level with salmonid marine farming as the association is apolitical.
- raise, or get involved with activities that seek to address, issues that are outside the scope of impacting recreational fishing.

TARFish expects:

**1. *Loss of access to marine waters which leads to a loss of public amenity***

- 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.
- 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.

**2. *The impact of salmonid marine farming on the marine environment***

- The 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 industry so that its marine environmental impacts are minimised and contained within scientifically determined levels.
- The industry to fund independent research that underpins sustainable operations and the potential impacts on the marine environment, endemic species and the ecosystem.
- 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 indicators, such as disease, escapees, benthic condition and other environmental impact data for each lease will be put into the public domain in real time, or as close as can be reasonably expected.
- 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.
- Future salmonid marine farms will not be approved in estuarine waters
- Any future expansion into off shore waters must consider the impacts on Tasmania’s world class game fishery.

**3. *On water safety of salmonid marine farming infrastructure***

- Marine farm infrastructure will not be placed/approved near recreational boat ramps, jetties and navigation channels such that it creates an unacceptable risk to boaters and fishers or impedes recreational fishing activities unduly.

**4. *An open, transparent and fair planning process that considers the needs of the recreational fishing sector, as the current process has been shown to be inadequate.***

- The aquaculture planning process to provide the same rights and privileges associated with terrestrial planning processes, including a right of appeal over decisions made. TARFish believes a right of appeal provides accountability and maintains and enhances confidence in the planning system. Another benefit is to provide guidance for future cases and thus facilitate certainty.
- The Government to establish a marine planning working group, which includes recreational fishers, to develop a state-wide marine plan.
- The Government to effectively manage expansion of the industry by clearly articulating future salmonid marine farming areas and areas where salmonid marine farming will not be allowed.
- The Government establish a network of “wildcatch” fishing areas around the state which preclude salmonid marine farming.
- 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.
- Estuarine marine farm leases that have not been actively farmed for 5 years after approval to be automatically rescinded by the government. Should industry have a need in the future for the lease area then a new application under current regulatory approval processes must be submitted. This is to facilitate the governments stated requirement for the future of salmonid farming to be in “oceanic waters”.
- Management of the industry 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.

TARFish understands the importance of the salmonid marine farming industry and wants the industry to manage its future in a socially acceptable way and be known as a “good corporate citizen”. The aim of this policy is to set out the recreational fishing sectors expectations of the industry and the government’s role in supporting the industries future.