



Submission to Senate Standing Committees on Environment and
Communications in regards to the Inquiry into the regulation of the fin-fish
aquaculture industry in Tasmania

On behalf of

The D'Entrecasteaux and Huon Collaboration

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to update the senate standing committee on the progress of the D'Entrecasteaux & Huon Collaboration.

Introduction and background

The D'Entrecasteaux & Huon Collaboration ('the Collaboration') was formed in 2013 with representatives from councils, industry, natural resource management organisations and the Derwent Estuary Program. The purpose of the collaboration is to share information and progress sustainable waterway management and builds upon previous projects coordinated by Kingborough Council.

The D'Entrecasteaux Channel area encompasses the waterway between mainland Tasmania and Bruny Island, including the Huon Estuary and North West Bay, and is collectively referred to as the 'the Waterway'. The Waterway is vitally important to multiple users and supports recreational, industrial and environmental values.

The guiding principles of the collaboration are:

- we value and rely on having a healthy waterway
- we understand the waterway is a sensitive environment
- we are committed to responding to the sensitivities of the waterway and
- we want to work with other waterway stakeholders to maintain a healthy waterway.

Through the Collaboration it is desirable to create an open and engaging culture that will bring together the diversity of stakeholders who care about the waterway, and coordinate efforts to look after the waterway.

The Collaboration has built a website which helps people;

- share information
- build an understanding of how our waterway is changing
- take action where environmental features we care about need transitional support
- be proactive where change is creating new opportunities.

Structure, stakeholders and management

The Collaboration is managed by a Steering Committee of funding partners who recognise the need for sustainable waterway management. The partners all derive value from the waterway and have some influence in its management whether through stormwater management, sewage treatment, aquaculture and/or management of recreational areas.

The current funding partners are:

- Kingborough Council

- Huon Valley Council
- TasWater
- Tassal
- Huon Aquaculture
- Derwent Estuary Program
- NRM South

In addition to the Steering Committee, a Scientific and Technical Working Group has been established to support the work of the Collaboration and enable scientific and technical discussion.

In addition to the funding partners, the working group includes representatives from:

- Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS), University of Tasmania
- CSIRO
- Department of Primary Industry, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE), Tasmanian Government.

By working with industry, government and the scientific community in monitoring the health of the D'Entrecasteaux Channel and Huon Estuary the Collaboration is a vehicle for communicating complex data and research to the community.

This includes information relating to:

- Monitoring and sampling locations in the waterway
- Sediment quality
- Natural and heritage values and their status
- Water quality
- The foreshore environment.

Information available regarding the state of the waterway.

A good understanding of the state of the waterway is critical to inform decision-making and in 1999, a State of the D'Entrecasteaux Channel report was prepared as part of the D'Entrecasteaux Channel and Catchment Integrated Land and Marine Planning Project.

In order to update understanding of issues around the channel an updated report was prepared in 2012 by Ecomarine consulting at the formation of the Collaboration. These documents are publicly available as detailed in the footnote below and are currently housed on the Kingborough Council website.

1. *An Inventory of Scientific Information 2012*¹, report providing an inventory of available data sets for the D'Entrecasteaux Channel and lower Huon Estuary compiled since 1999.
2. *State of the D'Entrecasteaux Channel and the lower Huon Estuary 2012*² A State of the D'Entrecasteaux Channel and lower Huon Estuary report based on data compiled in the region since 1999.

¹ Parsons, K. E. (2012). *D'Entrecasteaux Channel and the lower Huon Estuary. Inventory of Scientific Information*. Report for the D'Entrecasteaux Channel Project, prepared by Ecomarine Consulting.

The future of the collaboration

The Steering Committee has recently completed a strategic review of the success of actions to date and is determining the future direction and scope of the collaboration.

The key strategic themes for the future of the Collaboration will build upon the good work done to date and include:

- To look at the condition of the waterway
- To examine the management of the waterway
- To develop strategic projects to address the issues that are discovered
- To communicate with communities and stakeholders about the work of the Collaboration.

Closing statement

The Collaboration has made a significant contribution in bringing together important users and stakeholders within the D'Entrecasteaux Channel and Huon Estuary, sharing and disseminating information and working with the community to improve waterway management.

² Dr K Parsons, *State of the D'Entrecasteaux Channel and lower Huon Estuary*, Report for the D'Entrecasteaux Channel Project 2012,
http://www.kingborough.tas.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/State%20of%20Channel%20%20lower%20Huon_electronic%20version_web.pdf