

SUBMISSION NO. 44
Inquiry into the Role of Science for
Fisheries and Aquaculture



Tasmanian Salmonid Growers Association Ltd.

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Strategic Overview

- It is important that the Industry is not just considered in the context of DPIPW and its regulation framework ... equally important is the role that DED can play in facilitating the growth of the Industry (we believe that the Industry is a \$1 billion Industry for Tasmania ... and will underpin the success or otherwise of the "Food Bowl" concept).
- Overall, there needs to be a balanced approach demonstrated by Government and its underlying departments of DPIPW & DED ... Regulation (DPIPW) and Growth (DED) are both achievable (i.e. they are not mutually exclusive).
- Government actions and support of the Industry are extremely important ... these will greatly affect the perception of the Industry and therefore its prosperity and ability to raise capital from the market and financiers.
- Sustainability is critical for all stakeholders.

The Industry requires:

- A Tasmanian and Federal Government which is committed to the Salmon & Trout Industry ... and sets policies and strategies that are supporting sustainable Industry growth.
- Balanced DPIPW & DED support, focus and operational resources to ensure that Industry is able to achieve both sustainability and global cost competitiveness in Salmon & Trout production.
- Commitment to directed research funding / directed research focus to support solutions for key health, environmental and regulatory issues.
- Clear understanding of the constraints of biomass production as relates to nitrogen loading in estuary environments and site development – smart regulation.
- Additional Marine Leases ... which are "workable" – i.e. the right areas, with the right licences and controls and with the right science underpinning the support of the additional leases. Take responsibility for managing aggressive problem seals posing significant OH&S risk to salmon farm employees.
- Stakeholder Engagement Plan ... it is time to cultivate support from all stakeholders, NGO's, retailers and the Tasmanian and Federal Governments.
- Government support in marketing our Industry message to a local audience.
- Access to a world class, local research capacity that drives innovation and sustainability.

Key priority areas for the salmon industry

- **Priority 1: Control of Amoebic Gill Disease (AGD)-**
 - (i) costs industry around \$50M per year
 - (ii) AGD is our biggest barrier to global competitiveness
 - (iii) The Northern Hemisphere is now dealing with AGD – this must create opportunities for us. We have the on-ground expertise and they have the research capacity some of it developed through Sea lice work including SNP technology and DNA vaccine approaches
 - (iv) There is a need to investigate ‘alternative treatments’ and scope their effectiveness in Tasmania
- Developing a cohesive Industry plan for growth and reciprocal plan from Government to support.
- Maintaining strict quarantine and biosecurity measures to prevent the incursion of pests and diseases.
- Access to water is seen by industry as the main challenge for growing and processing. There is insufficient productive lease area for the Industry production post FY2015 ... so further leases are now required (given the Salmon & Trout Lifecycle) to ensure that the Industry can proceed with confidence with its growth aspirations.
- Sustainable industry development - balancing industry expansion with environmental sustainability and community acceptance. Sustainable practices will underpin and support the Industry’s business growth and increase in profitability. Our focus will be to clearly articulate and demonstrate to all stakeholders that we have been able to integrate operational and financial business objectives with our corporate, social and environmental responsibilities.
- The Tasmanian Government supports sustainable industry growth, and the statutory planning provisions of the *Marine Farming Planning Act 1995* provide a framework for the orderly development of the industry through the growth phase. Effective funding of key areas of government is essential if industry is going to grow sustainably. For example,
 - (i) DPIPWE- Marine Farming Branch,
 - (ii) DPIPWE- Animal Health Laboratories- Fish Health Unit,
 - (iii) DPIPWE- Chief Veterinary Officer
 - (iv) DPIPWE- Wildlife Management Branch
 - (v) DEDTA- Food and Agribusiness.

Without adequate funding these agencies cannot respond adequately to key issue questions from Industry and/or stakeholders or provide technical support.

- Support the development of a dedicated Vaccine production facility
- A factor behind the salmonid farming sector’s strong growth is the role of research and development. The Tasmanian Government and Industry must continue to contribute financially to salmonid research undertaken by the Commonwealth Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC).

- Managing the increasing number of competing interests for marine resources, i.e. tourism, residential view-scape, conservation, recreational fishing.
- Increasing the size of existing markets or finding new markets should production increase as expected.
- Review of airline transport regulations; critical to export markets and implementation of environmentally friendly packaging.