

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee**

Answers to questions on notice
Environment and Energy portfolio

Question No: 68
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Program: Environment Standards Division (ESD)
Topic: Macquarie Harbour - Meeting Details
Hansard Page: -
Question Date: 14 March 2017
Question Type: Written

Senator Whish-Wilson asked:

It was stated at the Estimates hearing on 27 February 2017 that the Department and EPA Tasmania recently met regarding Macquarie Harbour.

What was discussed at this? Was the EPA Tasmania's new method for calculating biomass limits discussed? Did the Department express a view to EPA Tasmania regarding their new method for calculating biomass limits? Has the Department formed a view on what level of biomass is sustainable for Macquarie Harbour?

Answer:

A meeting was held 14 February 2017 between the Department and the Tasmanian Environment Protection Authority. The meeting was conducted to gather information to assist the Department's inquiries into allegations of non-compliance with the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) decision.

Marine farming in Macquarie Harbour is primarily regulated by the Tasmanian government under the *Macquarie Harbour Marine Farming Development Plan October 2005* (as amended in 2012). The Tasmanian government licences operators under this plan and in accordance with State legislation.

The expansion to marine farming operations in Macquarie Harbour is the subject of a 'not a controlled action particular manner' decision, made 3 October 2012 under the EPBC Act.

The EPBC Act 'not a controlled action particular manner' decision overlays the existing Tasmanian state government licensing system.

In January 2017, the Tasmanian Government issued directions to each operator, which reduced the biomass across Macquarie Harbour to 14,000 tonnes in total.

Questions relating to Tasmania's management of the marine farming industry should be directed to the Tasmanian Government.