

PUBLIC MEETING - FIN FARM FISHING CONFIRMED MINUTES

DATE: Monday 29 August 2022
VENUE: Rose Garden Room, FAEC, Whitemark
COMMENCING: 5.30pm

PRESENT

Mayor D Williams
A/Deputy Mayor Rachel Summers
Cr Sharon Blyth
Cr Aaron Burke
Cr Vanessa Grace
Cr Peter Rhodes

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Warren Groves	General Manager
Sammi Gowthorp	Council Services Coordinator (Community, IT, Communications)
Andrew Killengray	Audio Visual Technical Supervisor
Vicki Warden	Executive Officer (Minute Taker)
Chris Wilson	Manager Infrastructure

PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

Approximately 110 people in attendance.

AGENDA ITEMS

Welcome and introduction – David Williams

Here to discuss the State Government's new 10-year Salmon Farming discussion paper which is open for community consultation, submissions being due by 31 August. Council has no part in the decision-making process on this issue – the State Government will make all decisions. Council will make a submission on behalf of the community, based on the discussions at this meeting. Council encourages individual submissions also as the more representations, the stronger the case.

Paradise Lost video

Overview of the environmental and social impacts of current salmon farming around the SE coast of Tasmania.

Louise Cherrie – independent environmentalist

PowerPoint presentation - Tasmanian salmon: Rhetoric vs reality.

Louise is pro industry and job creation but believes the salmon industry is not the right industry, nor is it in the right place. The Furneaux Islands Marine Farming Development Plan 1999 – identifies areas in our waters suitable for fin fish farming. Anyone can apply for approval of a lease.

Dept. of Natural Resources and Environment presentation – John Adams and Lynn Albert

PowerPoint presentation. Although there are 20 potential fin fish farming zones in our waters, there are currently no fin fish farm leases in the Furneaux group, and no known interest in leasing.

Q & A Session - Rachel Summers

Questions to NRE officers

Q: You are unaware of any planned industry development in this area – will you be one of the first or the last people to be notified?

A: Yes, we will be the first to know.

Q: Why is the industry water-based? Why can't it be land based?

A: There is a lot of land-based salmon farming in Tasmania. Salmon are grown in fresh water on land, then finished in the sea. The technology for land-based farming is being developed in other parts of the world. In Tassie, economics and the amount of land needed for the industry are the current challenges.

Q: It seems the government doesn't care about the impacts of fin fish farming. What's going to change?

A: The government is developing this plan and consulting with community. We encourage you to express your concerns in submissions.

Q: Environmental impact studies have been done on current industries. Do you take into consideration impacts on the environment before approving industries in a new area?

A: Planning requirements are different for each area therefore the type of information required is different. Modelling was done for both Macquarie Harbour and Storm Bay, and they recognised there were issues. Precautionary approach was taken for Storm Bay by setting limits on development.

Q: Was there community consultation at Storm Bay before the development was approved?

A: Community consultation was undertaken.

Q: When Storm Bay is destroyed, will they next move onto King or Flinders Islands?

A: EPA is responsible for investigating environmental impact. There is a process around what would happen next and where the industry would move to.

A: (Louise Cherrie) The two systems (Macquarie Harbour and Storm Bay) are very different. Same operation, same operators, same regulator – provides an opportunity to learn from this and do better. But the regulator had no interest in this. Modelling at Macquarie was flawed. Expansion of salmon industry into Storm Bay was modelled but without consideration of co-funded studies done on environmental impact. Why would you double the industry when you don't know what the impact will be?

Q: Industrialisation of fin fish farming has many more challenges in the main – here we have our resources taken from us and we don't have the benefit of those resources. If we have fish farming, how can we not have industrialisation of fishing in our area?

A: Unable to answer question.

Statement: I've been a public servant and I know that you are here to speak on the discussion paper. Thank you for coming along and being brave enough to be here. Shells that aboriginal women have collected for thousands of years have disappeared from the beaches in fish farmed areas. Kelp is also being destroyed and we use kelp as water carriers. Our cultural heritage will be lost if this continues.

Q: Does NRE consider the video shown tonight to be a fair and accurate presentation of what's happened?

A: Unable to comment.

Q: What's the quality assurance process and risk management around fish farming. You've had lessons learnt from Storm Bay and Macquarie Harbour, have these learnings been updated into existing plans e.g. Furneaux Islands Marine Farming Development Plan 1999. One model won't fit all areas. Would like to see a risk assessment included with each proposal.

A: When a proposal is submitted, guidelines are used to assess each one.

Q: Why were we not told about this discussion paper sooner and how are we going to be notified going forward?

A: We will ensure we notify council when the future public consultation is sought.

Labour representative Janie Finlay - thanked John and Lyn for being at the meeting and commented that a lot in the (Paradise Lost) video shown tonight was emotive and not as balanced as it could have been. Before attending the meeting, she was told that the waters in the Furneaux group were probably not the right conditions for salmon fishing.

truwana video

A video featuring Fiona Maher presenting Cape Barren Island (CBI) community's view on fin fish farming was shown. For aboriginal people there's no separation between land, water, and sky country. Our responsibility is to hand our culture and country on to our next generation. They rely on the fish, shells, plant species, sea birds etc. to live and for cultural practices. They don't want fish farming around CBI due to the potential environmental and cultural impact.

Community Submission notes - Warren Groves

Moved: John Cooper Secoded: Kevin Haines

That the Furneaux group of islands does not support fin fish farming in our island waters, ever.

CARRIED

Meeting Closed: 7.15pm