

Co-Instigator Welcomes Government Response to Fin Fish Inquiry

The Tasmanian Independent Science Council welcomes the Tasmanian Government's response to the Legislative Council Fin Fish Inquiry, which affirms the importance of re-thinking the growing salmon farming industry.

Key points:

- The Legislative Council Fin Fish Farming Inquiry report was tabled in Parliament in May. The 68 evidence-based recommendations made in the report spanned integrated use, governance, habitat damage, wildlife interaction, human health and safety, and jellyfish.
- The Tasmanian Government has supported a third of the Recommendations and supported in principle almost all the remaining two thirds, reaffirming the Committee's findings.

"I congratulate the Finfish Inquiry Committee for a robust investigation and proper outcome, and I congratulate the Tasmanian Government for taking this Inquiry seriously.

"The brushing by two of the Inquiry's most significant recommendations — an integrated marine plan and ceasing operations in sensitive coastal habitats — is disappointing", **said Dr Lisa Gershwin, a member of the Tasmanian Independent Science Council and one of the four initiators of the Fin Fish Inquiry.**

"Adoption of all of the Inquiries' recommendations is important for areas like Macquarie Harbour, where oxygen levels have still not recovered as a result of fin fish farming, placing significant risks on the marine creatures such as the Maugearn skate.

"I am encouraged particularly to see the six new initiatives, which include expanding transparency measures, phasing out flow through hatcheries and converting to fully recirculating systems, developing new standards for hatcheries and wildlife interactions, and updating the marine debris zero tolerance policy.

"I am extremely pleased to see the attention to hatcheries. Cleaning up these hatchery outflows is urgently important for the health and safety of all Tasmanians.

"I welcome the acknowledgment of the wildlife interaction problem. The current approach is woeful in permitting the detonation of tens of thousands of seal bombs each year yet being silent on the collateral damage to other impacted species like dolphins, penguins, and fish.

"I am pleased to see attention to the safety issue of marine debris. People have already been injured crashing into marine debris; it is a race against time before it kills someone. However, if 'zero tolerance' were enforced, it wouldn't need updating.

"Two of the 'Initiatives', namely a review of the Act and a review of the penalties and compliance frameworks, should be replaced with tangible outcomes that will improve the long-term viability of the industry and the habitats in which it operates, and improve the social license in the community. Reviews won't do either."

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