Sustainable industry growth plan for the salmon industry
Minister’s Foreword

In December 2017 the Hodgman Liberal Government released the Sustainable industry growth plan for the salmon industry¹. The Tasmanian salmon industry has a growth target of being a $2 billion industry by 2030.

Our vision involves achieving this growth in a sustainable, transparent and accountable way, with appropriate environmental monitoring and regulation. Growth should be underpinned by clear and robust mechanisms for expansion, as well as continuous improvement in environmental performance. This will lead to tangible benefits for the State, providing employment, particularly in regional areas, and drive innovation and productivity within industry and across related sectors. By having an industry managed in accordance with world’s best practice, Tasmanians can be proud of it and have confidence in it.

I am pleased to report there has been encouraging progress against initiatives in the Plan, notably in areas of biosecurity, transparency, environmental regulation and the reduction of marine debris. Developments towards a pilot aquaculture spatial assessment tool to support planning are also very promising.

I would like to thank industry for the tremendous collaborative effort in progressing the Salmon Plan, and the community for the feedback I have received. This has been very informative and I am grateful for the perspectives provided. I look forward to working closely with the businesses, relevant stakeholders and the community as we aim to deliver sustainable growth and best practice.

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Guy Barnett
Minister for Primary Industries and Water
## Maintaining public confidence in the salmon industry

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<td>1. Clearly identifying the areas of Tasmania’s coastal waters where salmon will continue to be farmed, areas where further growth might be possible (subject always to careful and open planning and approval processes), and areas where salmon farming will be excluded</td>
<td>• The Salmon Plan has areas identified as ‘Currently under Exploration’. This exploration has enabled assessment for farming potential to be progressed. Areas of Storm Bay (identified within the Plan as ‘Currently under Exploration’) have moved through the statutory planning process and two marine farm planning proposals have recently been approved (Tassal’s ‘West of Wedge’ and Huon Aquaculture Company’s off Trumpeter Bay).</td>
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| 2. A commitment to future expansion moving into oceanic (deeper and high-energy) waters, rather than estuarine waters | • Industry research into higher energy waters, within areas identified in the Plan as ‘Currently under Exploration’, has progressed in order to determine suitability for future farming.  
• DPIWFE, the Tasmanian Salmonid Growers Association and the Tasmanian Seafood Industry Council have progressed work on a pilot aquaculture spatial assessment tool, which will inform responsible salmon farming development based on evidence based scientific and marine values.  
• Some suitable oceanic sites could in the future be outside State waters. The State Government is engaging with the Australian Government on the necessary legislative amendments to enable farming in these waters. |        |
| 3. Analysis of existing marine farming development plan areas used for salmon farming, particularly with a view to strengthening biosecurity | • Analysis by industry and DPIWFE of the marine farming development plan areas (referred to as existing ‘Finfish Farming Areas’ in Plan), has progressed. This will inform the proposed Biosecurity Program (see Initiative 9). Should this work identify the need for amendments to relevant marine farming development plan areas, these would follow statutory planning processes under the *Marine Farm Planning Act 1995*. |        |
| 4. A competitive tender process for access to any proposed new and untried farming areas, with criteria for success to be determined by government | • Access to waters identified in the Salmon Plan as ‘Potential for Further Release’ (the blue areas in the Plan’s map) will be informed by the pilot aquaculture spatial assessment tool as well as the Biosecurity Program work being undertaken. |        |

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### Key

- **Green**: Progress performing to plan  
- **Orange**: Progress ongoing with actions in place  
- **Red**: Further actions required

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A **sustainable** industry growth plan for the salmon industry
### Maintaining public confidence in the salmon industry continued

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| 5. A formal agreement, jointly developed by all current finfish licence holders and the Government, for sustainable future farming in Macquarie Harbour | • The companies operating in Macquarie Harbour have commenced developing a Macquarie Harbour management strategy, following a joint venture approach to improve lease management instigated in 2018 by Tassal and Petuna. Supported by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), this allows longer fallowing periods for sites and for improved biosecurity.  
• EPA reviewed and reduced biomass levels in Macquarie Harbour by 21% from 12,000 tonnes to 9,500 tonnes from 1 June 2018 to facilitate recovery and provide a platform for ongoing sustainable management. |        |
| 6. Adoption of a new ‘zero-tolerance’ approach to marine debris and related boating safety issues | • Two additional compliance staff have been employed within DPIPWE. Marine and Safety Tasmania (MAST) also has two authorised officers who can issue marine debris infringement notices.  
• DPIPWE’s Marine Farming Branch has developed an equipment identification register with the three salmon companies to enable ownership of debris to be established.  
• Development of an App to enable public reporting of debris has progressed and should be completed early in 2019.  
• The three salmon companies have implemented a number of measures to support this zero tolerance approach, including gear marking and colour coding of equipment for identification purposes.  
• The three companies have increased marine debris clean-ups and have taken proactive measures to prevent debris at the source. Work has included debris-management partnerships with community, environment groups and social enterprises.  
• The three companies are assessing tracking technology for larger equipment. |        |
| 7. Development of a “Tasmanian Salmon Industry Scorecard” that benchmarks the industry against international best practice, as applicable in the Tasmanian context, and is regularly reviewed and updated | • The EPA and Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) have been working on a register of international best practice for salmon farming, and a method to measure industry’s performance against it to form the basis of a publically available Industry Scorecard. The scorecard will be available on a new salmon data portal website. The procurement process for development of this portal is well progressed. This also relates to Initiative 10. |        |
### Improving the efficiency, effectiveness and transparency of the industry’s environmental regulation, and the effectiveness of its biosecurity systems

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<td><strong>8. Establishment of an industry funded Finfish Farming (Compliance and Monitoring) Unit in the Environment Protection Authority (EPA)</strong></td>
<td>• The State Government has increased levies and fees to the salmon companies and in 2018-19 will collect approximately $2.8 million, an increase of nearly $1 million from the previous year. These levies provide funding for essential marine farming related work, including for additional six staff within the EPA. These Compliance and Monitoring staff work with the salmon industry to oversee such things as development and implementation of procedures for EPA regulation; compliance and environmental performance; and setting conditions and monitoring requirements for environmental licences.</td>
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| **9. Develop an industry-wide Biosecurity Program that can be given effect through the proposed new Biosecurity Act** | • The three salmon companies, with the Tasmanian Salmonid Growers Association and DPIPWE, have been developing contemporary industry biosecurity processes and procedures to form a new salmon Biosecurity Program. This work has also been informed by international experts.  
• Biosecurity is currently regulated through marine farming licence conditions. New Biosecurity legislation has been drafted. The comprehensive Biosecurity Bill will be presented to Parliament in early 2019. Once passed, the new Act will build on current systems and provide a streamlined and more effective framework to better protect the State’s primary industries, including the salmon industry.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |        |
| **10. Collection of a wider range of environmental information, including real time data, and increased public access to relevant environmental information through an independent portal hosted by the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS)** | • The new salmon industry data portal website will make publically available an increased range of information on relevant topics. This is expected by mid-2019.  
• Environmental Licences that have been issued to companies are now publically available on the EPA website, along with more environmental information from across the industry.  
• The three salmon companies have updated their own websites to feature an increased range of publicly available information.  
• The EPA has commenced development of revised Environmental Standards to allow collection of a wider range of environmental information. Relevant information will be available on the new data portal website.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |        |
| **11. Continuing strong support for the State’s advanced fish health and biosecurity facilities** | • Biosecurity Tasmania continues to work closely with industry, including overseeing product integrity to ensure products are safe to eat and to allow ongoing market access.  
• The Tasmanian Salmonid Health Surveillance Program has continued. This partnership between the State Government and the three salmon producers facilitates early warning of diseases and general fish health monitoring.  
• The State Government’s Centre for Aquatic Health and Vaccines at Mount Pleasant has continued research and development of new salmon vaccines. A first-generation salmon vaccine, Certovac, was developed in March 2018 and progress to commercial production is well advanced. Work on a second-generation vaccine is also underway.                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |        |
| **12. Encouraging relevant research and development, and the subsequent adoption of new technologies that reduce environmental impacts** | • With Fisheries Research and Development Corporation funding, DPIPWE and the EPA have commissioned CSIRO to model the chemical, physical, geological, and biological processes and reactions in Storm Bay. This will inform ongoing environmental management of the industry in the south-east of the State.  
• Industry has also continued funding research and development into technologies to reduce environmental impacts, such as the development of waste capture systems, and technology to better regulate dispensing of fish-feed in salmon pens.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |        |

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## Supporting industry growth

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<td><strong>13.</strong> Strong support for the industry’s sustainable growth, to maximise the industry’s contribution to the State by 2030</td>
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| Progress | • The State Government established a vision, articulated through the Salmon Plan, to support sustainable industry growth. The Tasmanian salmon industry has a growth target of being a $2 billion industry by 2030.  
• The State Government is forming relationships internationally that can provide beneficial learnings for all parties. This includes ongoing engagement with countries including Canada, Scotland and Norway. |
| Status |

| **14.** Continued support for cooperative research, development and innovation through the supply chain |
| Progress | • The State Government has provided support for the University of Tasmania’s Blue Economy CRC bid, with in-principle funding of $200 000 per annum for 10 years. If successful in the bid, the CRC aims to combine industry partners with Australia’s best researchers, to deliver economically viable, environmentally adapted and socially acceptable innovations in seafood production, marine renewable energy and offshore engineering. |
| Status |

| **15.** Marketing and export development support linked to Tasmanian brand development |
| Progress | • The Draft Tasmanian Trade Strategy 2019-2025 was released for public comment in December 2018, with the consultation period concluding in January 2019. The final Strategy is expected to be released in early 2019. The trade strategy aims to support growth of our international export capacity and sales across Tasmanian products.  
• The salmon companies continue to undertake marketing to promote their products to the marketplace, which helps underpin Tasmania’s excellent brand reputation. |
| Status |

| **16.** Further investment in developing the skills and career paths industry needs |
| Progress | • The industry has pathways in place with skills and training centres, and with the University of Tasmania, to showcase the range of careers available in the aquaculture sector.  
• The State Government’s Tasmanian Seafood Pledge has continued to fund essential safety and skills training for the seafood industry to ensure seafood workers have the right skills to work safely and productively. The Pledge involves cooperation between government, the Tasmanian Salmonid Growers Association, the Tasmanian Seafood Industry Council and Seafood Training Tasmania.  
• The salmon companies have also developed programs with education providers such as UTAS and local high schools in regional areas to give more students chance to understand employment opportunities within industry. |
| Status |

| **17.** Establishment of a broad-based industry body to oversee the Plan’s implementation and meeting relevant milestones |
| Progress | • Since the development of the Salmon Plan, there have been some significant changes within the industry that have caused Government to reassess this deliverable. Industry has come together to resolve differences and there is positive momentum to be built upon. Tasmanian Salmonid Growers Association Board membership has changed and new members now represent industry. This enables the development of collaborative solutions to industry wide challenges, and provides for a more effective relationship with Government. |
| Status |

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Further Information

Further information in relation to the regulation and management of the salmon industry in Tasmania can be found online at the Environment Protection Authority and the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment.

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