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To: Tasmanian Salmon Study Secretariat
Cc: Alex Matysek
Subject: Independent Study of the Tasmanian Salmon Industry 2026
Date: Monday, 29 June 2026 8:34:24 AM

Submission on the Draft Study Plan and Draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Independent Study of the Tasmanian Salmon Industry 2026

Submission by Alex Matysek

North Bruny Island Ratepayer

Executive Summary

I welcome the commencement of the Independent Study of the Tasmanian Salmon Industry and support the objectives outlined in the Draft Study Plan and Draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan to deliver an evidence-based, transparent and independent review.

As a long-term North Bruny Island ratepayer, founding member of the Friends of North Bruny Inc. and its past chairperson, I have closely followed the development of Tasmania's salmon industry and the associated public policy debates over many years.

My interest is not only in the environmental performance of the industry but also in the effectiveness of governance, public confidence in regulatory systems, and the long-term stewardship of Tasmania's shared marine environment.

In my view, the principal challenge facing this Study is not identifying issues. Most of the major environmental, governance, economic and social concerns have already been extensively documented through:

- the Legislative Council Inquiry into Fin Fish Farming in Tasmania;
- consultation on the Tasmanian Salmon Industry Plan 2023;
- submissions from local governments and community organisations;
- scientific research and academic literature; and
- numerous community submissions over many years.

The important task now is to determine which concerns remain unresolved, which recommendations have not been implemented, and what reforms are required to restore public confidence in the governance of Tasmania's salmon industry.

I respectfully recommend that the Study consider the following matters under its proposed work streams.

Governance, Regulation and Public Confidence

The Study should assess whether Tasmania's regulatory framework reflects international best practice and whether sufficient separation exists between industry development responsibilities and environmental regulation.

Particular attention should be given to identifying:

- recommendations from previous inquiries that remain outstanding;
- areas where regulatory responsibilities overlap;
- opportunities to strengthen regulatory independence and accountability; and
- governance reforms capable of restoring public confidence.

Environmental Performance and Ecosystem Health

The Study should evaluate cumulative environmental impacts at an ecosystem scale rather than primarily at individual lease scale.

Key questions include:

- What ecological thresholds define sustainable carrying capacity?
- What indicators should trigger reductions in biomass or production?
- How are cumulative nutrient loads assessed across interconnected waterways?
- How are future climate impacts incorporated into carrying-capacity modelling?

I consider cumulative impact assessment to remain one of the most significant unresolved issues in marine farming regulation.

Monitoring, Compliance and Transparency

The Study should examine whether existing monitoring and reporting arrangements provide an appropriate level of transparency and public accountability.

In particular:

- environmental monitoring data should be publicly accessible wherever practicable;
- independent auditing arrangements should be reviewed;
- compliance outcomes should be consistently reported; and
- opportunities for improved public access to environmental information should be identified.

Disease Management, Antibiotic Use and Antimicrobial Resistance

The emergence of Piscirickettsiosis (SRS) and the emergency use of florfenicol have heightened public concern

regarding disease management and antimicrobial resistance.

The Study should examine:

- current antimicrobial resistance (AMR) monitoring programs;
- baseline environmental AMR information;
- environmental exposure pathways;
- monitoring of sediments, shellfish and wild fish populations; and
- future surveillance requirements, including genomic monitoring techniques.

The Study should also review lessons learned from the recent disease outbreak and identify measures necessary to improve preparedness for future disease events.

Community Wellbeing, Social Licence and Public Trust

In my view, social licence should be recognised as a measurable component of industry performance.

The Study should establish:

- indicators of community confidence;
- measures of community wellbeing and amenity;
- processes that enable meaningful community participation; and
- mechanisms for incorporating community perspectives into future decision-making.

Community concerns extend beyond environmental impacts and include governance, transparency, accountability and public trust.

Economic Performance and Community Benefit

The Study should assess the industry's economic contribution while also considering:

- regulatory and compliance costs;
- environmental management costs;
- impacts on other industries, including tourism and recreation; and
- the broader community benefits arising from the use of Tasmania's public marine resources.

Transparent assessment of both benefits and costs is essential for sound public policy.

Aboriginal Heritage and Sea Country

The Study should ensure Aboriginal perspectives are incorporated throughout the review and should consider:

- cultural values associated with Sea Country;
- ongoing participation in marine planning;

- opportunities for collaborative management; and
- protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Climate Change and Future Industry Resilience

The Study should examine the industry's resilience under future climate scenarios, including:

- increasing sea temperatures;
- emerging disease risks;
- harmful algal blooms;
- new production technologies; and
- the long-term sustainability of salmon farming under changing environmental conditions.

Draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan

I support the intent of the Draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan but suggest several additional measures that could improve community participation, including:

- independent technical support for community participants;
- plain-language summaries of technical reports;
- publication of submissions together with supporting evidence;
- regional hearings in communities directly affected by salmon farming, including Bruny Island; and
- establishment of a publicly accessible evidence register recording issues raised, responses provided and actions taken.

Conclusion

I support a transparent, evidence-based and genuinely independent review of Tasmania's salmon industry.

This Study provides an opportunity not only to evaluate environmental outcomes but also to determine whether current governance arrangements, regulatory systems, transparency mechanisms and community engagement processes remain fit for purpose.

Ultimately, the success of the Study will depend on whether it identifies practical reforms that restore public confidence while achieving an appropriate balance between environmental protection, community wellbeing and sustainable economic development, consistent with the principles of Tasmania's Resource Management and Planning System.

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