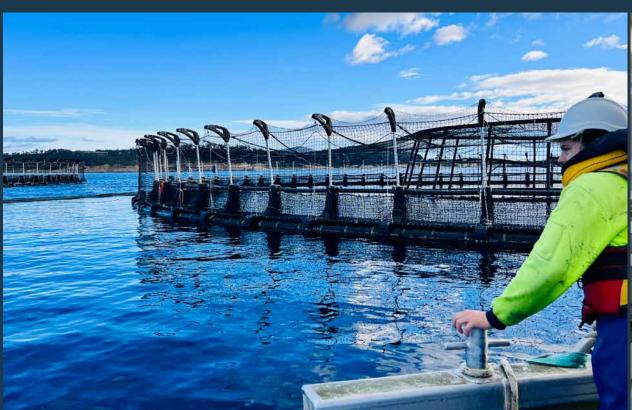
Tasmanian Salmon Industry Plan 2023











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Contents

Ministerial foreword	4
Introduction	6
The Plan	8
Priority outcome 1: Sustainable industry	10
Priority outcome 2: Healthy ecosystems	12
Priority outcome 3: Prosperous communities	14
Priority outcome 4: Contemporary governance	16
Implementation program	18
Glossary	20
References	

Ministerial foreword

I am pleased to share the Tasmanian Government's Salmon Industry Plan 2023 (the Plan) which highlights the Government's commitment to a thriving salmon industry — one that is economically successful, environmentally responsible, socially beneficial and well-managed.

Tasmania is surrounded by temperate oceans, with highly valued wild fisheries and exceptional opportunities for diverse forms of aquaculture. We are well placed to build on our natural advantages, to provide more sustainably sourced seafood while protecting our unique marine ecosystems.

Salmon is Tasmania's largest primary industry and has become Australia's most valuable aquaculture sector. Over the past 40 years the Tasmanian salmon industry has emerged as a leader in innovation and producing premium seafood. Supported by world class research and development, and new forms of partnerships such as our participation in the Blue Economy Cooperative Research Centre, we will see a future where ocean food production has the capacity to feed us here at home, across Australia and indeed around the world. It will also continue to support businesses large and small that are such an important part of our regional economy.

In developing this Plan, we undertook an extensive consultative process with the Tasmanian community and industry; and I thank the many Tasmanians who made a submission, attended a community session, or reached out to the development team. Your inputs have informed the Plan and provide a strong foundation for future management and strategic planning of aquaculture more broadly in Tasmania. As part of this process, we heard that as a Government we must ensure we continually improve the management of the salmon industry and adapt as we learn and innovate. Through this Plan, Government is committed to improving public understanding of the science that informs industry regulation, to ensuring greater transparency on industry performance and to providing opportunities for ongoing public engagement.

The Plan establishes an enduring policy framework that will enable continued sustainable salmon production and deliver positive outcomes for our community well into the future. It sets the strategic direction and priorities that will guide our journey ahead and provides a comprehensive implementation framework to address new issues as they arise - ensuring we are agile, incorporate new knowledge and meet emerging needs.

Hon. Jo Palmer

Minister for Primary Industries and Water



Under this Plan, the Government will deliver the following priorities:

Improved regulatory frameworks through implementation of a suite of aquaculture standards to enhance and simplify regulation and management of the industry across its marine and freshwater operations.

These standards will support ongoing biosecurity management, environmental regulation, management of wildlife interactions and statewide management of marine farming activities.

Continued improvement of legislation

through reviewing the Living Marine Resources Management Act 1995 and Marine Farming Planning Act 1995.

Improved environmental management outcome

through implementation of new environmental standards and supporting technical standards for marine and freshwater finfish farming.

This will be supported with a framework to transition flow through hatchery systems over a certain size to recirculating aquaculture systems.

Improved management of marine debris through implementation of an updated Marine Farming Debris Zero Tolerance Compliance Policy.

Investment certainty for industry through:

- scoping of a government-led planning process for future finfish farming opportunities in southeast state waters, further off-shore extending from Storm Bay south into the Tasman Sea;
- working with the Blue Economy Cooperative Research Centre and Australian Government to identify new areas of Commonwealth waters for aquaculture research: and
- scoping legislation for commercial aquaculture in Commonwealth waters, regulated by the State.

Certainty for the community through:

- progression of statutory planning processes for relevant Marine Farming Development Plans across the state, to remove finfish farming from zones where the area is not subject to an existing marine farming lease, commencing with the Furneaux Islands Marine Farming Development Plan; and
- a continued policy position to not support any further salmon farming in eastern Tasmanian waters between Cape Portland and Tasman Island.

Improved penalties, and compliance frameworks through a review of the frameworks that apply to finfish farming.

Greater transparency and improved communication through:

 a revised Salmon Farming Data Portal, that presents the public with more information on the industry, its regulation and performance. This will be supported by an international comparison of publicly available information in other jurisdictions.

Improved management of wildlife interaction

through implementation of new wildlife interaction standards that address potential interactions that occur with a range of marine wildlife species (including seals) with measures to minimise risk to the health and safety of animals and farmworkers. As an interim measure, an updated Seal Management Framework and Minimum Requirements will be developed.

Full cost recovery through adoption of a full cost recovery model with implementation commencing 1 July 2023.

Appropriate return to community from the salmon aquaculture industry to the Tasmanian community.



Introduction

The Tasmanian Salmon Industry Plan 2023 (the Plan) provides an enduring strategic framework to guide the Government's long term priorities for the industry — responsive to the changing needs of salmon farmers, supporting businesses and the wider community.

The sustainable management and protection of Tasmania's natural and cultural assets for the benefit of Tasmanian communities and the economy, and delivery of services that support primary industry development are priorities for Government.

The Government is mindful that the salmon industry exists as part of the broader primary industry and seafood sectors in Tasmania and nationally. Each of these operate under a diverse array of laws, regulations and strategies and involves businesses which operate from local to global scales. Tasmania's primary industries, including salmon, are managed under Tasmania's Resource Management and Planning System, which is based on the principles of sustainable development.

Government recognises that there are both significant opportunities and potential challenges for the salmon aquaculture industry in the future as the local, national and global seafood market continues to evolve and our climate changes. Through development of the Plan, the Government has looked ahead to consider what actions it needs to take to support the industry, the environment and the community, and to ensure good governance. The Plan provides certainty about the direction of Government's focus, now and into the future; and provides a framework for Government support of future industry development and strategic investment.

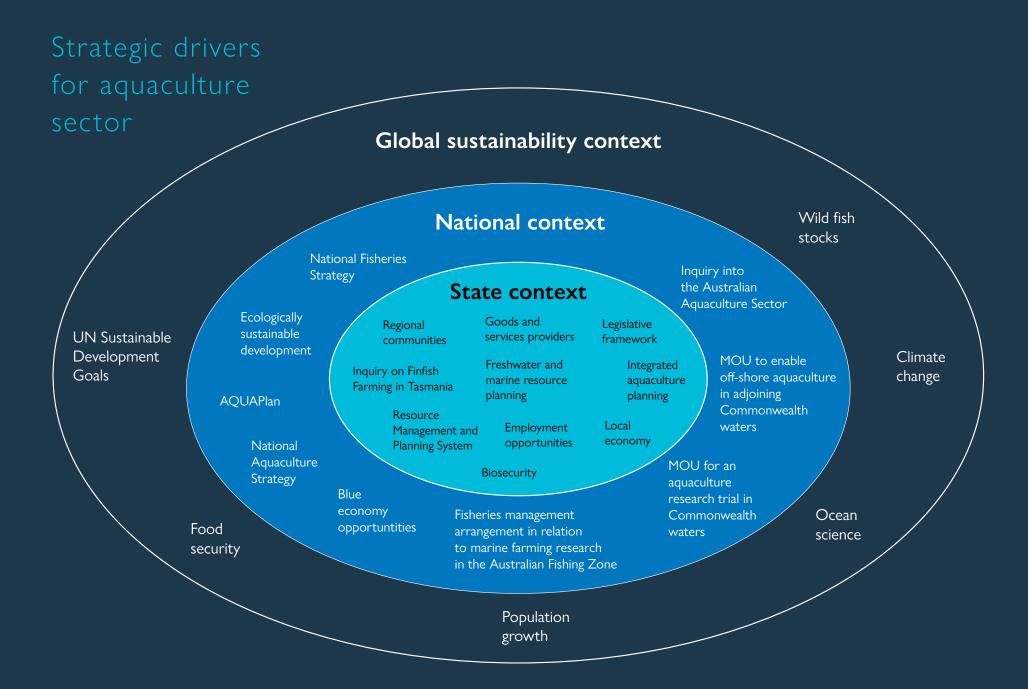
Tasmanian farmed Atlantic salmon is the largest commodity produced within the overall Australian aquaculture sector, however it is just one of the species farmed in Tasmania. Other important farmed species include oysters, abalone and seaweed. There is a growing interest in more diverse forms of aquaculture, including integrated forms of production involving for example, seaweed and finfish. Emerging also are other forms of regenerative aquaculture that support habitat restoration, carbon farming and species conservation.

The Plan recognises the role of the salmon industry as a significant user of Tasmania's freshwater and marine estate. It integrates with existing legislation, policy and planning frameworks, as well as having the flexibility to adjust to new strategic and regulatory initiatives as they arise. This includes the potential for additional sectoral plans to be developed over time to contribute to the Government's overall strategy for aquaculture and management of the marine estate more broadly.

The Plan provides the strategic framework for the salmon industry, with specific actions aligned to the Plan to be coordinated by the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania (NRE Tas) through an implementation program.







The Plan

Vision

The Tasmanian Government's vision is for a sustainable industry into the future all Tasmanians can be proud of — one that is economically successful, environmentally responsible, socially beneficial and well managed.

Framework

The Tasmanian Government's vision for the salmon aquaculture industry will be delivered through four inter-related priority outcomes:

Priority outcome 1: Sustainable industry
Priority outcome 2: Healthy ecosystems
Priority outcome 3: Prosperous communities
Priority outcome 4: Contemporary governance

These priority outcomes provide a framework that will:

- build on the strong foundation the industry and supporting businesses have established over the past 40 years;
- enable future growth, through robust policy settings, that meets expected and evolving standards of environmental and social responsibility;
- improve transparency, accountability and communications across government agencies, with industry and with the community; and
- improve governance and coordination of salmon (and related) aquaculture management activities in Tasmania in accordance with relevant national and international frameworks.

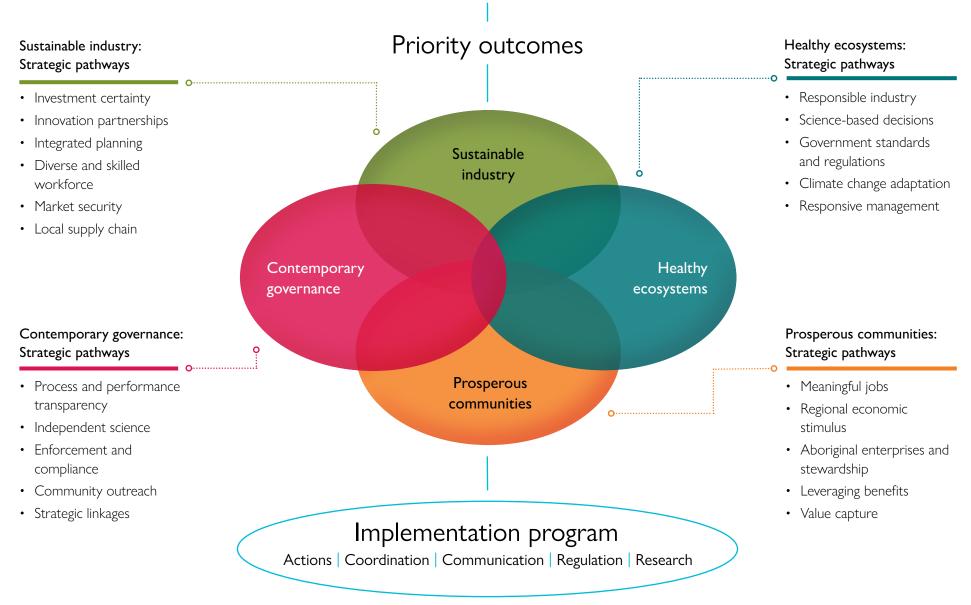
There are 21 strategic pathways, aligned to the priority outcomes, that represent activity areas for delivery of the Plan in the near, medium and longer term.

Implementation of the Plan will be coordinated by NRE Tas, and supported by coordination groups, structured communications, regulation, and research partnerships.



Vision

A sustainable industry into the future all Tasmanians can be proud of – one that is economically successful, environmentally responsible, socially beneficial and well-managed.



Priority outcome 1: Sustainable industry

Why is this important?

Salmon farming is an economically important primary industry for food production, manufacturing, service providers, community development and employment in Tasmania.

Ongoing operations and new investments by salmon producers and supporting businesses make a distinctive contribution to the prosperity, economic diversity and social fabric of many local communities across Tasmania.

What is the Government's policy?

The Government intends to work with all participants in the salmon industry and with communities to promote a productive and viable industry.

Existing farms – Existing statutory processes, plans and rights will be honoured. However, the Government recognises there is significant public interest in inshore farming areas and there is an ongoing need to consider changing social and environmental suitability in land and marine use planning.

The Government will continue to use statutory processes and policy incentives to promote effective use of marine resources. It will support marine farming lease re-configurations that have a

positive social and economic effect and maintain or improve environmental and biosecurity performance.

Before the re-configuration of existing marine farming zones, planning proposals must be considered through a statutory planning process, which includes consideration of community views and an environmental impact assessment.

New farms and further offshore farming — Before the establishment of any new marine farming zones, planning proposals must be considered through a statutory planning process, which includes consideration of community views and an environmental impact assessment.

The Government will support planning proposals in areas that are further away from land, in higher energy, more exposed and deeper water. This includes proposals further offshore outside existing marine farming areas that:

- minimise and mitigate overlap with incompatible cultural, environmental, social or commercial uses; and
- are located away from reefs (including rocky shorelines) so as to reduce potential impacts on reef-community ecosystems; and
- are further away from land, especially residential areas, to reduce potential environmental nuisance and related amenity impacts on communities.

In the short term, sites further offshore may not be available and/or viable for industry, however in the long term, offshore sites may provide opportunities and certainty for increased production. Government will look at policy settings to incentivise the relocation of existing inshore operational and dormant finfish leases to areas further offshore, particularly leases that may be constrained for social, economic or environmental reasons.

The Government will support farming operations that:

- use industry best practice technology in landbased production for early farming stages;
- promote farming practices that reduce the likelihood of introducing and spreading disease pathogens and encourage improved animal welfare outcomes in farming operations and processing of fish and facilitate national and international trade; and
- address sustainability and waste management, circular economy, decarbonisation/emissions reduction and resilience.

Sustainable industry

Tasmanian salmon aquaculture is Australia's most valuable seafood production sector with a production value of over \$1 billion annually.¹



How will this Plan make a difference?

Six strategic pathways capture existing and future areas of activity that will positively contribute to this priority outcome.

Strategic pathways	What does this include?
Investment certainty	Clear, consistent and orderly processes to support industry planning and operations, including scoping a Government-led planning process to support future farming in the south-east, further offshore extending from Storm Bay south into the Tasman Sea.
Innovation partnerships	Public and private investments in innovation are encouraged to advance production and farming technology, develop new vaccines, reduce environmental effects, decarbonise operations, reduce emissions, realise the circular economy and promote climate adaptation.
Integrated planning	Industry's spatial land, freshwater and marine use needs are considered and integrated in Tasmania's land use planning, freshwater and marine estate management frameworks.
Diverse and skilled workforce	Training providers and institutions are supported and aligned to meet industry and sectoral workforce recruitment and development needs now and into the future.
Market security	Domestic and export markets are accessible to the industry and account for biosecurity and animal welfare requirements.
Local supply chain	Network of goods and services providers are supported to meet industry needs, with a particular focus on capability, innovation and the circular economy.

What does success look like?

Salmon aquaculture continues to be a leading Tasmanian primary industry.

Priority outcome 2: Healthy ecosystems

Why is this important?

Tasmania's land, freshwater and marine environments are intrinsically valuable and are a key part of Tasmania's brand identity.

Providing important ecosystem functions and services, Tasmania's distinctive land, freshwater and marine environments underpin the quality of life enjoyed by Tasmanians. These natural environments are highly valued by Tasmanian Aboriginal communities who have a deep and long-standing cultural connection with Land and Sea Country. They are also valued by the broader Tasmanian community, as well as domestic and international visitors.

Maintaining healthy land, freshwater and marine ecosystems is central to a sustainable aquaculture sector in Tasmania. Healthy and resilient ecosystems are essential to salmon farming.

What is the Government's policy?

The existing regulatory framework seeks to ensure any impacts of aquaculture operations on land, or in freshwater and marine environments, are minimised and managed appropriately. This framework will be expanded to provide an outcomes-based approach to regulation. This approach will also encourage continued industry innovation and improvement to maintain healthy ecosystems.

The expanded regulatory framework will continue to be developed as needed, but currently includes:

- Marine Finfish Farming Environmental Standards and supporting Technical Standards that set the performance requirements for marine finfish farms:
- a Salmonid Biosecurity Program to improve the overall biosecurity of all salmonid production in Tasmania by preventing, eliminating, or minimising the risks posed by infectious diseases of salmonids and associated aquatic pests that can have an adverse effect on fish health, welfare and productivity, and to help protect the wider environment from those biosecurity risks;

- a suite of standardised Marine Farming
 Management Controls that will ensure
 consistency in operational management of the
 aquaculture industry across all marine farming
 development plans;
- Wildlife Interaction Standards that address
 potential interactions that occur with a range
 of marine wildlife species (including seals) with
 measures to minimise risk to the health and
 safety of animals and farmworkers; and
- Freshwater Finfish Farm Environmental Standards and supporting Technical Standards, that set the performance requirements for freshwater finfish farms.



Healthy ecosystems

Through the Sustainable
Marine Research Collaboration
Agreement, the Government
jointly funds with the Institute
for Marine and Antarctic
Studies independent worldclass science to help advise
marine resource management.



How will this Plan make a difference?

Five strategic pathways capture existing and future areas of activity that will positively contribute to this priority outcome.

Strategic pathways	What does this include?
Responsible industry	Policy and regulations promote and incentivise environmentally responsible practices by industry, including fostering circular economy principles, decarbonisation, waste and emission reduction, and marine farming debris management.
Science-based decisions	Independent, contemporary science informs planning, management, and regulatory approaches and appropriate science capacity is maintained and strengthened.
Government standards and regulations	Clear and well understood frameworks to manage salmon industry effects on the environment, including wildlife interactions, farming operations and biosecurity.
Climate change adaptation	Taking account of changing ecosystems and adaptation requirements with a forward-looking approach to inform planning, operations and regulations.
Responsive management	Effective, timely and evidence-based responses to the evolving issues that arise from the dynamic social and natural environments in which the industry operates.

What does success look like?

The health of Tasmania's natural ecosystems is maintained and supports the production of seafood consistent with Tasmania's brand identity.

Priority outcome 3: Prosperous communities

Why is this important?

Over the past 40 years, aquaculture has become a key presence in, and partner with, Tasmanian regional communities.

Salmon production in Tasmania comprises an integrated network of hatcheries, grow-out and distribution capabilities supported by a diverse research, manufacturing, transportation, marketing, technological and training capacity.

In many areas of Tasmania, the presence of the salmon industry generates meaningful and local employment and economic opportunities, from school leavers to trades people through to management career pathways.

Salmon aquaculture companies are significant capital investors in land-based and marine infrastructure and provide work for other businesses and tradespeople. The industry supports a thriving network of goods and services providers and businesses.

Salmon farming contributes to national food security by providing domestic markets an accessible, sustainable, affordable and healthy seafood protein.

Economic prosperity and opportunity in regional communities influences the Government's ability to prioritise re-investment of revenue into community services. These investments assist to support the industry more broadly by providing desirable locations for workers and families to live, work and play. Economic opportunity and community services are important elements of community liveability, building and retaining a 'local' workforce.

What is the Government's policy?

The Government is committed to both maximising opportunities available to regional communities throughout Tasmania and to ensuring the flow of benefits to the broader Tasmanian population is enhanced in the long term. This will be achieved by working closely with the salmon industry and related businesses on planning and management of infrastructure and provision of services, including training.

Tasmanian Aboriginal people view Sea Country as a critical part of their identity, spirituality and source of resources for those who engage with cultural practices. This Plan recognises the need to consider the views of, and opportunities for, Tasmanian Aboriginal people in relation to the salmon industry and related uses of Sea Country.

An important aspect of this Plan is to move from partial to full cost recovery of regulatory and management services of Government from the industry. This ensures public funds are not diverted to regulation of the industry and are available for public services. The Government is also committed to ensuring an appropriate return to the Tasmanian community from use of our land and marine waters.



Prosperous communities

The salmon sector directly employs approximately 2,000 staff and supports more than 3,000 associated jobs.²



How will this Plan make a difference?

Five strategic pathways capture existing and future areas of activity that will positively contribute to this priority outcome.

Strategic pathways	What does this include?
Meaningful jobs	Education pathways and training services are aligned to meet current and emerging industry needs.
Regional economic stimulus	Industry and related government investments support community liveability (services and infrastructure) and wellbeing and meet industry workforce needs.
Aboriginal enterprises and stewardship	Sea Country stewardship needs and Aboriginal business opportunities are considered through all phases of industry development, planning and management through a proactive engagement process.
Leveraging benefits	Goods and services providers are recognised and supported to both contribute to existing supply chain processes and to diversify to meet emerging market opportunities.
Value capture	Deliver broader benefits to the Tasmanian community and economy, including through manufacturing and other value-adding activities, full cost recovery of Government services and an appropriate return to the Tasmanian community.

What does success look like?

Tasmanian communities continue to benefit from salmon industry investment and activities that support local jobs and regional economies.

The industry contributes \$650 million annually to the Tasmanian economy.²

Priority outcome 4: Contemporary governance

Why is this important?

Contemporary governance is a critical aspect of ensuring confidence in the Government's planning, operational and compliance decisions.

Independent science underpins contemporary governance, providing government with outputs that inform and support the regulation of the industry.

The regulatory framework that applies to the industry operates within the broader Tasmanian Resource Management and Planning System and provides certainty and direction to how the salmon industry will be managed.

Strengthening transparency and improving public understanding of the industry with regards to regulation, governance and decision-making, management of planning, amenity, environmental and biosecurity concerns will increase public confidence that the industry's use of public resources is properly regulated.

What is the Government's policy?

The Government is focused on updating and enhancing the transparency and effectiveness of its regulatory framework, decision-making and accessibility of data.

While a range of regulatory and government information is already published and available, the Government recognises there are opportunities to improve how information is communicated and to increase public understanding of the information provided.

This includes:

- further strengthening transparency including expanding the information presently disclosed on the Salmon Portal and generally making information about aquaculture in Tasmania more accessible;
- making the results of independent research undertaken by independent research institutions such as the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS), Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Blue Economy Cooperative Research Centre (Blue Economy CRC) and Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) more accessible and comprehensible to the broader community, through both online and in-person knowledge sharing programs; and

 making more regulatory information available by the independent environmental regulator, the Environment Protection Authority.

The Government is focused on ensuring there is continual improvement in the compliance and enforcement framework that considers key aspects of finfish farming of concern to the community and provides industry certainty in its operational environment. This includes ensuring there are contemporary penalties under relevant legislation.



Contemporary governance

Active finfish marine farming leases occupy approximately 32 square kilometres (or 0.14%) of Tasmania's marine estate.³



How will this Plan make a difference?

Five strategic pathways capture existing and future areas of activity that will positively contribute to this priority outcome.

Strategic pathways	What does this include?
Process and performance transparency	Accessible, understandable and transparent governance processes, data and research results.
Independent science	Capable and independent institutions including secure funding, for the provision and communication of salmon-related scientific information.
Enforcement and compliance	Contemporary and appropriately resourced implementation of regulations and standards.
Community outreach	Proactive engagement and communication by scientific, regulatory and industry bodies improves public understanding of salmon aquaculture operations, management and interactions with the natural system.
Strategic linkages	Greater internal and external government engagement to harness linkages and synergies with relevant global, national and local institutions and communities of practice.

What does success look like?

Tasmanian regulatory systems and processes meet community and industry expectations and are underpinned by the best available scientific information.

Implementation Program

The implementation of the Plan will be coordinated by NRE Tas in collaboration with associated state government agencies, research organisations, and the independent Environment Protection Authority.

Implementation consists of:

- 1. Actions
- 2. Coordination
- 3. Communication
- 4. Regulation
- 5. Research

Actions

This Program outlines the actions that will be taken to deliver the outcomes of the Plan over the near, medium and longer term. The Government's near and medium term priority actions respond to commitments made in its response to the Legislative Council Inquiry on Finfish Farming in Tasmania.

Coordination

Implementation of the Plan will be supported through three arrangements. One with industry (Salmon Industry Working Group), the second internal to government (Salmon Coordination Committee), and the third with a focus on community engagement (Community Engagement Forums). All three will function in parallel and are designed to achieve better knowledge sharing and integration of the Plan's implementation. NRE Tas will provide secretariat services for these.

Salmon Industry Working Group

This group will bring together Tasmanian Government agencies and industry representatives to:

- communicate with government on strategic and operational matters;
- raise related industry led or proposed collaborative action that may be addressed under the Plan;
- share feedback on the Government's implementation of actions; and
- identify key information gaps and needs.

Salmon Coordination Committee

This committee will work across Tasmanian Government agencies to share information, identify science needs, coordinate responsibilities and monitor progress of the Plan's implementation. Key business units/agencies involved include:

- Marine Resources (NRE Tas);
- Biosecurity Tasmania (NRE Tas);
- Environment, Heritage and Land (NRE Tas);
- Department of State Growth; and
- Environment Protection Authority.



Community Engagement Forums

Community engagement forums will be held around Tasmania to enable community members and organisations to engage regularly and consistently in the Plan's implementation, and broader aquaculture and marine resources management. These forums will be tailored to address the information needs and interests of those communities and will provide opportunities for information sharing by research, industry, government and community organisations.

Communication

Delivery of the Plan will require consistent and well-coordinated communication of a diverse range of activities across multiple public agencies, a multi-faceted industry sector, diverse and actively engaged communities and a range of independent knowledge providers.

Regulation

Salmon farming is managed under the Resource Management and Planning System. This is an integrated system with the aim to achieve sustainable outcome from the use and development of the State's natural and physical resources. A range of resource management legislation applies to salmon farming, across a spectrum of activities that take place in Tasmania.

Research

From the earliest stages of industry development, the Tasmanian Government has been a co-investor in industry research and has developed a comprehensive planning, management and regulatory system that has both anticipated the future needs of the industry and adjusted as more experience was gained with industry operations.

Three leading research collaborations provide a range of training, research and information services to government, to industry and to the community at large.

- 1. Sustainable Marine Research Collaboration Agreement is a longstanding partnership between the University of Tasmania's IMAS, undertaking globally significant research into salmon (and related aquaculture) and more locally significant monitoring of salmon impacts and operations.
- 2. Fisheries Research and Development
 Corporation acts as a key research and
 knowledge partner to both industry and
 Government and enables diverse collaborations
 from local to national scales. FRDC has recently
 expanded its engagement in research extension
 activities in Tasmania and nationally.
- 3. Blue Economy Cooperative Research Centre which brings together more than 40 industry, government and research partners from 10 countries with expertise in aquaculture, marine renewable energy, maritime engineering, environmental assessments and policy and regulation.





Glossary

Carbon farming - Managing land or agriculture to maximise the amount of carbon stored, and/or to minimise greenhouse gases emitted (mainly carbon dioxide and methane).

Circular economy - Circular economy aims to maximise the value and the use of materials and resources at every stage of the life of a product or material.

Decarbonisation - The process of stopping or reducing carbon gases, especially carbon dioxide, being released into the atmosphere as the result of a process.

Emissions reduction - Measurable reduction of release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere from a specified activity or over a specified area, and a specified period measured in standardised unit of metric ton carbon dioxide equivalent.

Further offshore - This may include areas of state waters identified through marine spatial planning approaches or, potentially in the future, in Commonwealth waters managed under a joint agreement. An arbitrary distance 'further offshore' has not been set as it is dependent on the environmental context. Beyond three nautical miles in Commonwealth waters is, for example, considered offshore. In some areas, such as Storm Bay, sites closer to shore are also deeper more exposed sites subject to higher wave

energy. Existing Tasmanian salmonid farms are predominantly located in sheltered coastal waters; however there are a number of leases in locations further from the coastline.

Regenerative aquaculture - Occurs when commercial or subsistence aquaculture provides direct ecological benefits to the environment, with the potential to generate net-positive environmental outcomes.

Salmonid - Of or pertaining to fish of the salmon family (Salmonidae), including salmon and trout. Salmonid are elongated bony fish species that have the last three vertebrate upturned.

Salmon farming - Referring to all salmonid farming operations in Tasmania.

Supply chain - Businesses that support the process between producing and distributing the product, dealing with the suppliers and logistics of getting the product to market.





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