

SUBMISSION

Review of the Living Marine Resources Management Act 1995

Bob Brown Foundation welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Review of the Living Marine Resources Act. With the decline in the health of Tasmania's marine environment, an update of this legislation is absolutely necessary.

Our oceans not only support a mind-boggling diversity of marine life, but also stabilise our climate and provides 50% of the oxygen that we breathe. Tasmania itself is an incredible island state. Located at the meeting point of three ocean currents, extremely high levels of endemism and diversity of marine life are found here, as well as globally significant populations.

However, we do know that Tasmania's marine environment is under enormous pressure and in decline. The Australian State of the Environment Report (2016) classifies most of Tasmania's marine bioregions' ecological conditions as slightly to moderately disturbed, including areas identified as having high ecological value. The habitat of the critically endangered Red Handfish is still not protected and the endangered Maugean Skate's future hangs in the balance after the ecological disaster caused by salmon farms in Macquarie Harbour.

The current Tasmanian legislative framework has utterly failed in its objective to protect and to enable the sustainable development of Tasmania's marine resources. In the face of climate change and warming waters, we have declining fish stocks, too few Marine Protected Areas, poor community consultation and increasingly devastating impacts from salmon farming operations.

The current management framework is also lacking a cohesive method by which the above issues can be tackled due to 'piecemeal' nature of the various legislation pertaining to fisheries, aquaculture and marine wildlife management. A framework similar to Victoria's Marine and Coastal Act 2018 would be a better model, providing a legal and policy framework for integrated ecosystem-based management, which would identify current and future uses of Tasmania's coastal waters for all users and values.

The Precautionary Principle must be implemented to anticipate and prevent any negative impacts on the marine environment. Marine spatial planning must be implementing as a comprehensive tool integrating all sectors, users and ecosystems, rather than as a sector-specific exercise as is being carried out right now to support the expansion of the salmon industry.

All voices need to be heard in the management of Living resources and the marine environment. First Nations voices need to be thoroughly integrated and their cultural and economic uses for marine resources a primary concern. The wider community need an avenue for true community



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consultation with regards to marine management. Too often the voice of the Tasmanian public is dismissed as they do not have a scientific or fisheries background. True community consultation needs to occur where this diversity of opinions are not only heard but integrated into any final decisions.

Ministerial discretion with regard to Living Marine Resources decision-making is problematic. We recommend this discretion be removed. There also needs to be a statutory time-frame set for a further review of the Living Marine Resources Act.

Tasmania's State of the Environment Report is overdue and must be restarted. This essential glimpse into the state of our marine ecosystems and natural resources is critical for further protection and management.

The 30X30 Ocean Alliance is calling for 30% of the world's oceans to be protected in marine protected areas by 2030. With only 1.1% of Tasmania's waters protected we are lagging far behind. In this time of Climate and Biodiversity crises, the time is now to take action for the world's oceans. We implore the Tasmanian government to come up to speed with global expectations of what is needed to mitigate climate change and safeguard all life on earth. The opportunity is now to commit to a radical transformation of our Living Marine Resources Act into an Integrated Marine Management Framework with true sustainability for marine life at its core.

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