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Broad coalition slams Hodgman's salmon growth plan

A broad coalition of representatives from all sides of politics and Tasmania's wild fishing, recreational fishing, tourism and conservation sectors will gather on parliament lawns today to condemn the Hodgman Government's failure to consult on its salmon industry growth plan.

The coalition will be demanding both major parties agree to moratorium on lease allocation until governance problems in the industry are addressed. Without consultation, the conflict that has plagued the industry in Macquarie Harbour and Okehampton Bay will only escalate.

Peter Coad | Former Huon Valley Mayor

"The Hodgman Liberal Government announcement of a draft Sustainable Industry growth plan for the salmon industry is nothing more than a statement to continue with the provision of coastal waters to suit the needs of existing salmon farmers. It fails to recognise the importance of the entire aquaculture industry to Tasmania and the diversity of the products that can be produced in an environmental and sustainable way."

Craig Garland | small mesh fisher, North West Tasmania

"Despite our ongoing problems with big salmon companies relocating seals onto their fishing grounds, we haven't been consulted at all about industry expansion plans. They have just announced new grow zones in the North West and Rockliff told our community that they had consulted widely - well they certainly didn't consult with the local fishing community"

Don Paton | Rec Fish Tas

"We weren't consulted at all and no one is buying their map, it's all just an attempt to shut the community up before an election. It isn't in legislation, the Minister can change it at any time, with no requirement that he talk to the community and no right of appeal for the community."

Ken Orr | Vice-Chair, Shooters, Fishers & Farmers Party

"This week is the start of Wild Brown Trout Season, attracting Fly Fishers worldwide. Trout fishing contributes between \$50 and \$100 million to Tasmania's social and economic well being. The single biggest threat to this is disease. Poorly regulated industrial salmon farming is a biosecurity risk. We need strong independent oversight and full transparency to ensure the sustainability and longevity of the salmon industry, and full and ongoing protection for our wild trout fishery."

Cassy O'Connor | Tasmanian Greens Leader

“Tasmania's marine environment is one of the community's most valuable and treasured shared assets. We all have to look after it. Rampant growth in industrial fish farming is a threat not just to the marine environment, it's a biosecurity risk and has real potential to damage Tasmania's clean, green, globally significant brand.

The Liberals' salmon industry growth plan is a rush job that has no foundation in science or community engagement. They need to implement a moratorium on expansion to allow an independent scientific assessment and full community consultation.”

Andrew Wilkie | Independent MP for Denison

“The community demands that the Tasmanian salmon industry be genuinely sustainable and meet the strictest social, environmental and economic criteria. The State Government must stop any expansion of the salmon farming industry and put in place the most transparent and effective regulatory framework. That is the only thing that will give the community confidence in the industry.”

“The Government is really letting the community down on this. It needs to get its head out of the sand, start listening to the community and stop kowtowing to Tassal in particular.”

Duncan Giblin | Wineglass Bay Cruises

“We remain worried about the impact of industrial salmon farming expansion, particularly Tassal's Okehampton Bay expansion, on our east coast tourism brand.”

Laura Kelly | Environment Tasmania

“The obvious question remains – why does Tassal need to build a dam, undersea pipeline and 200 metre jetty big enough to service 3-4 farms, when they say Okehampton Bay will be the only one. Tassal clearly knows something we don't.”

“If the government wants to be trusted on their claim that they will keep the east coast fish farm free, they need to stop Tassal putting their industrial foothold into Okehampton Bay.”

Friends of North Bruny

FONB is deeply concerned about the social and environmental sustainability of industrial finfish farming as recreational fisheries are impacted by nutrients and residents are having to put up with a dramatic escalation in marine traffic, noise and visual pollution and shoreline pollution.

We join with all community groups surrounding Storm Bay and the Channel in demanding a moratorium.

A moratorium allows all voices and aspects to be heard and, through an Inquiry process, offer recommendations for an industry based on a sustainable, considered and agreed future.

Susan & John Wardle, North Bruny

We are concerned for the viability of wide ranging public engagement programs on their property. Well known landmark ,One Tree Point, is part of the property and has become a major vantage point for others to survey the East Coast of Bruny Island.This will soon have a fish farm in close proximity .Amongst other professional and artist visits , The Utzon Symposium brought architects, academics and artists from all around the world to stay on our property. The opportunities for Bruny Island to continue to develop a tourist industry and improve local employment will be compromised by the proliferation of Fish farms along the Bruny island perimeter. The noise, unsightly pens and pollution are of deep concern to us and our and others with burgeoning enterprises.

Des Whayman | Scallop, Mussel & Oyster Farmer

Tasmania's world class mussel, scallop and oyster fisheries relies on Tasmania's cool, clear waters. The shellfish industry has supported families across the generations. We have to protect this asset and I ask that the Hodgman Liberal Govt and the Labor Party commit to an immediate moratorium on all new fish fish leases, so that all of us can have confidence that our elected members are standing up for the interests of all Tasmanians and not just the interests of the big salmon companies.