



Media Release

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Huon to explore the limits of offshore farming with new research project

Huon today announced that it will continue to push the limits of offshore salmon farming by undertaking a research project 6 kilometres off the south of Cape Connella on south Bruny Island following the release of the State Government's draft Sustainable Industry Growth Plan yesterday.

Huon has been leading the move into offshore farming and over the last three years has pioneered the new farming practice at its leases in Storm Bay.

"Pioneering offshore farming has been very challenging and as a Company, we are still learning how best to farm fish in offshore waters," said David Morehead, Huon Aquaculture's General Manager of Marine Operations.

"We welcome the draft Plan and in particular the commitment to growth in our industry coming from the development of off-shore rather than estuarine farming which aligns with the long-term vision we have for Huon.

"We believe the future of our company is in offshore farming and to explore the potential even further offshore, in even rougher waters, we need reliable environmental monitoring, scientific research and technological innovation," he said.

Huon's 3-year research project will be in three phases: phase 1 includes deployment of remote monitoring systems for assessment of the physical, chemical and biological conditions; phase 2 includes deployment of prototype equipment for testing such as communications equipment and reinforced fortress pens and potentially other offshore systems; and phase 3 will see one or more sites developed to pilot-scale farming using the new technology.

"Over the next three years our intention is to monitor and research three sites up to 6km's offshore to establish if there is potential for far offshore farming in the region and what it will take in terms of technology and equipment to farm out there successfully.

"We believe this research project will help us turn our big ideas into reality," he said.

An important part of the project will be ongoing consulting with other waterway users in the area including commercial fisherman and recreational boaters and Bruny Island community.

"We believe that offshore farming strikes the right balance between all waterway users and communities. We want to work in harmony with commercial fishers, recreational boaters and waterside communities and this research project will help us boldly step toward that,' he concluded.

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(background information on following page)

For further information contact:

Jane Gallichan
Huon Aquaculture Corporate Affairs Manager
0400 159 664 or jgallichan@huonaqua.com.au

Background information:

- Huon has received a permit under the *Living Marine Resources Act 1995* to undertake environmental monitoring at 3 sites in the region covered by the permit.
- For simplicity and convenience, Huon describes lease locations as inshore, offshore or intermediate between the two. For example, leases in the Huon Estuary might be considered to be inshore, leases in Storm Bay offshore and leases in the middle of the D’Entrecasteaux Channel intermediate.
- These terms are not driven by proximity to shore, however. Huon Aquaculture’s Storm Bay leases are only about as far from land as our mid-Channel leases are. The driver is exposure to wind and sea conditions, and the consequential pen and anchoring designs that are needed and the size of vessels needed to service them.
- Offshore sites tend to be deeper, with high wave-energy and stronger currents. They require substantial pen and anchoring systems and service vessels suited to these conditions. Due to the more exposed conditions, they are usually further from land and residential settlements and often remote. The environmental benefits of offshore leases are also considerable including greater oxygen availability and quicker flushing reducing any impacts on the sediment and water column.

Indicative map showing monitoring points

