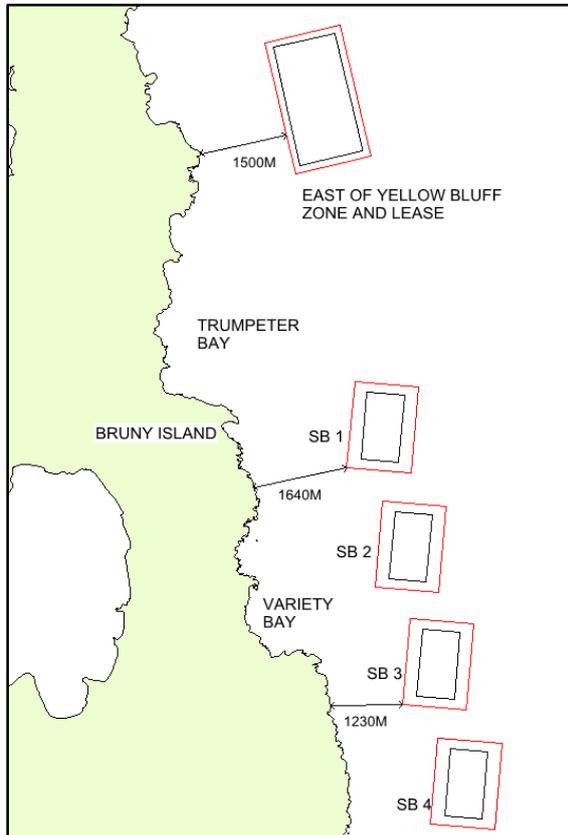


ABOUT THE ZONE

Where is the East of Yellow Bluff zone?

The East of Yellow Bluff zone is located approximately 1.5km east of Yellow Bluff, North Bruny.



SB1-4 are existing leases.

When will infrastructure and fish go into the lease?

We are formally applying for a lease within the new zone and, if successful, we plan to begin installing moorings and other infrastructure from February 2019 and have fish in the water from late June 2019.

What mitigation measures have been undertaken in regards to lighting?

Wherever possible we have taken measures to reduce the impact of lighting from our operations on our neighbours and other waterway users. This includes angling external lighting on barges down at foot traffic areas and having block-out blinds on windows. The control room (highest deck on the barge) will not be staffed during the hours of darkness, so there will be no light spill at this level.

Vessels that operate at night, including the *Ronja Huon*, have taken similar steps to reduce the impact of lighting.

We welcome feedback on our operations and try to adjust our operations accordingly.

What is underwater lighting used for?



Light is required for the control of precocious sexual maturation of salmon. Continuous subsurface lighting may be used in the first year of fish at sea from winter through to spring.

Below surface lighting produces a diffuse underwater glow that can be visible from above, but less visible from a lateral viewpoint, such as from land.

Will noise from the lease be audible?

The lease area will be over 1.5km from land and the centre of the lease, where operations will be focused, is approximately 3km from the nearest house. The possibility of noise impacts on land is low and will meet DPIPWE's *Requirements for the Control of Noise Emissions from Marine Farms (2001)*.

Noise from vessels travelling to and from the lease is unlikely to exceed acoustic indicator levels for environmental noise established by Tasmania's Environment Protection Policy (Noise) but there is a potential for localised, short term impacts as vessels leave or approach shore bases. Soft starts and finishes and maintaining a good distance from shore in the vicinity of the shore bases (adopted as SOP's) will mitigate this risk.

What are you doing differently at this new zone to prevent another fish escape?

The fish escape at Storm Bay in early 2018 was a result of a once-in-fifty-year storm that caused pen infrastructure to damage a fish net.

The infrastructure that caused the damage has been removed from all fish pens in Storm Bay and other improvements have been made to the pens and nets to reduce the risk of fish loss in the event of another storm event of similar magnitude.

How do you define 'offshore'?

For Huon Aquaculture, offshore or exposed fish farming follows the broad definition provided by Drumm (2010), and employed in FAO Fisheries and Technical Paper 549, entitled; 'A global assessment of offshore mariculture potential from a spatial perspective.'

"In general Offshore Aquaculture may be defined as taking place in the open sea with significant exposure to wind and wave action, and where there is a requirement for equipment and servicing vessels to survive and operate in severe sea conditions from time to time. The issue of distance from the coast or from a safe harbour or shore base is often but not always a factor".

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

What community and stakeholder consultation has been undertaken?

Over the course of several years we have undertaken extensive community and stakeholder engagement in relation to the new farming zone.

Consultation and engagement has been undertaken in the context of the company's wider changes to farming, including the use of new technology (such as the well-boat and fortress pens) and farming methods that the company's growth is largely based on. An important feature of



consultation has been the company’s willingness to engage and also to respond to the concerns of stakeholders.

Since the preparation of this EIS, Huon has also responded to concerns from local residents in relation to visual impacts and has consequently made a further modification to the proposed lease site by moving it 200m further south.

A list of the stakeholders engaged with, but not limited to, can be found below:

Bruny Island residents	Kingborough Council	Tasmanian Seafood Industry Council (TSIC)
Shack-owners from Bruny Island	Huon Valley Council	Tasmanian Rock Lobster Association
Bruny Island Advisory Committee	TasPorts	Tasmanian Abalone Council
Wider southern Tasmanian community	Marine and Safety Tasmania (MAST)	Local Seine fishers
weetapoona Aboriginal Corporation	Friends of North Bruny	TARFish
Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania	Environment Tasmania	Bruny Island Boat Club Inc.
Aboriginal Heritage Council	Tasmanian Raptor Refuge and Wildlife Park	Yacht Clubs
Bruny Island Community Association	Bruny Island Tourism Association	Pennicott Wilderness Journeys

Huon Aquaculture considers consultation to be an ongoing activity and will continue to engage with the local Bruny Island communities and stakeholders throughout the process. Bruny Island residents and stakeholders are invited to a community meeting being held on the island in December.

What about the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race?

The Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania in conjunction with the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia run the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race. While the race typically utilises the eastern side of Storm Bay, there have been occasions when participants have used the western side.

Huon has not had any negative interactions with the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race since the Company commenced farming operations in the area. This equates to four completions of the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race without incident or any contact from organisers to express concern about Huon’s operations in the area or wishing to discuss potential need to mitigate any perceived risk.



WILD FISH STOCKS, ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES

Huon self-referred its proposal to the Department of the Environment and Energy for assessment under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act). The Act has several objectives, two of which are to provide for the protection of the environment, especially those aspects of the environment that are matters of national environmental significance, and to promote ecologically sustainable use of natural resources.

A copy of Huon's referral can be [viewed here](#). The Department determined that Huon's proposal is not a controlled action, meaning that the mitigation measures put forward are deemed as being sufficient to protect endangered and threatened species such as humpback whales.

Does POMV pose a danger to wild fish stocks?

POMV is a virus that is naturally occurring in wild pilchards in Tasmania's waters. As pilchards are small enough to swim through the nets on salmon farms, and salmon are susceptible to the virus, it can be passed from pilchards to salmon, salmon to salmon, and potentially salmon to pilchards.

POMV has only been found in pilchards and Atlantic salmon. We are not aware of any reports of POMV being detected in other species

Is it dangerous to eat a fish that has had POMV?

No, eating fish that have had, or recovered from, POMV does not pose any risk to human health.

Is there a risk to breeding and nursery grounds for bottom-dwelling species?

There are now a number of scientific studies (e.g., Dempster et al. 2011, Uglem et al. 2014, Saether 2017, Stagicic 2017) assessing the role of fish farms on wild stocks in their vicinity. Through these studies it is apparent that there are a number of ways in which the wild stocks may interact with fish farms as described in Uglem *et al.*'s review.

Dempster *et al.*, concluded that, proxy measures of fitness provided no evidence that salmon farms function as ecological traps for wild fish, and further suggested that fish farms may act as population sources for wild fish provided they are protected from fishing while resident at farms to allow their increased condition to manifest as greater reproductive output.

Stagicic *et al.* concluded that; Tuna farms had a high capacity to attract wild fish, the aggregations were multi species abundant and seasonally stable, the farm impact was more pronounced on the bottom than the water column, that the fitness status of bogue and seabream was enhanced (e.g., better gonad development), and with fishing prohibition farm areas can serve as functional MPA's.

From these studies it would appear, in general, that the balance of interactions is more positive than negative.

Does this new lease pose a risk to Handfish?

There is no evidence that fish farms are harmful to Handfish and, according to the [Natural Values Atlas](#), there have been no recordings of Spotted Handfish within four kilometres of the lease site.



The offshore location has been found to contain no permanent habitat for species reliant on particular conditions of the seafloor, such as Handfish.

What measures are in place to protect whales?

In over 30 years of operating in the waters of Tasmania, Huon have had no interactions with whales. Notably, since commencing operations in Storm Bay in 2014, we have had no recorded whale sightings in proximity to our leases, and no whale interactions of any type at current lease sites Storm Bay.

We have a Standard Operating Procedure in place that sets out what measures should be undertaken if a whale is spotted in proximity of the lease. For example, vessels will cut motor and cease all operations until the whale has left the area. Additionally, by keeping our underwater moorings taught, we are minimising the risk of entanglement. Additionally, we commissioned an underwater noise assessment to be conducted by an independent expert. This assessment was included in our EPBC referral.

How will you deter seals from your pens?

Over the last several years, we have replaced all of our marine farm pens with Fortress Pens, at a cost of approximately \$90 million. This is possibly the first time in the history of the industry world-wide that one company has made such a commitment to anti-predator system design and roll-out.

Huon uses legally permissible seal deterrents such as crackers and has recently taken the step to proactively cease using beanbags and seal scare darts.

IMPACTS OF SALMON FARMING

What are the main farm emissions?

The principle emissions from the fish pens are dissolved nutrients and in particular ammonia, and organic matter derived from fish faeces and the occasional waste feed pellet.

Do fish farms contribute to harmful algal blooms?

There is presently no evidence to suggest that fish farm nutrients increase harmful algal blooms, and the authors of the Environment Research Group of the Scottish Executive report entitled, 'The interaction between Fish Farming and Algal communities of the Scottish waters - A review. (2003/04) 'concluded that: 'In our opinion, it is very unlikely that fish farming should have a large scale impact on the occurrence of harmful algal blooms, particularly on toxic algae, which are related to shellfish poisoning.'

Traditionally the worst affected area in Tasmania has been the east coast, where up until recently there have been no fish farms.

Do the nutrients from the farm end up in the River Derwent?

The hydrodynamic modelling undertaken through the EIS process strongly suggests that the prevailing flushing effect of the currents and tides (that is for the surface waters), will move



nutrients eastwards initially and then to the south and out of Storm Bay and not towards the D'Entrecasteaux Channel. Further mixing of the nutrients loads from the farms means that there would be no detectable increase in nutrients at any significant distance from the farm, let alone areas as distant as the River Derwent.

What impact does salmon farming have on the seafloor?

Fish farms impact the seafloor mainly through the deposition of organic matter as fish faeces and the odd feed pellet. Farms can in offshore areas also encourage the proliferation of marine fauna, in particular fish. Any impact on the seafloor is directly related to the prevailing flow and energy in the water column with high energy sites such as Storm Bay causing waste to disperse/break down faster preventing negative impacts on the seabed and surrounding waterway. Yes, we as salmon farmers (like all farming or human activity), have an impact, however that these impacts are well managed, localised, temporary and well-understood through thorough scientific research.

Our farms have compliance points at only 35m from their boundary that are monitored by the government. We are permitted to have a defined, restricted effect (a build-up of organic matter) beneath our pens during the time that fish are in the lease, but it must not extend as far as the 35m compliance point.

Where can I find footage from beneath your pens?

We have made footage from beneath each of our zones publically available via our online Sustainability Dashboard. You can view footage from beneath our existing lease in Storm Bay here: <https://dashboard.huonaqua.com.au/leases/43>.

What mitigation measures are being undertaken to prevent marine debris?

Huon Aquaculture has strategies in place to limit the amount of marine debris that is generated from their operations. Most notably, since replacing all traditional production pens with "fortress pens" and the reductions to towing operations (resulting from the use of the well-boat) as well as the use of *in situ* net cleaning technology, has resulted in a sharp decline in the potential for marine debris to be generated from farming operations. This is evidenced by a 50% reduction in the Company's use of rope over recent years.

Marine debris clean-up activities are currently conducted at regular intervals and also on an as-needs basis when members of the public and other stakeholders notify the company of areas requiring particular attention. Rubbish collected has historically consisted of aquaculture, commercial fishing and household/domestic derived debris. Marine debris can be reported 1300 706 973.