



YOUR REF Review of Queensland Aquaculture Regulation
OUR REF Strategic Planning – Coastal
JA: RD

2 September 2014

Aquaculture Review

Queensland Competition Authority
GPO Box 2257
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Attention: Mr. Alex Dobes
Email: aquaculture@qca.org.au

Dear Mr Dobes,

SUBMISSION TO THE QUEENSLAND COMPETITION AUTHORITY – REVIEW OF QUEENSLAND AQUACULTURE REGULATION

We refer to the *Draft Report on Aquaculture Regulation in Queensland* released by the Queensland Competition Authority (QCA) for public consultation.

Mackay Regional Council supports the intent for increased focus on facilitating the growth of Aquaculture throughout Queensland, including provisions to streamline legislation and encourage economic development.

The following comments specifically address concerns raised by Mackay Regional Council as they relate to legislation reforms, implementation and responsibilities that may be imposed on Local Governments as a result of the review recommendations.

In particular, we note the following:

1. *Unnecessary additional legislation*

A new single Act, as recommended, for Aquaculture in Queensland will not necessarily result in an increase in Aquaculture development and economic growth. Contrary to the purpose of a proposed single Act, the time-lapse and funding for a 'task-force', administration support, training and implementation will have significant impacts on the State, with limited benefits to the Aquaculture industry.

2. *Integrate with existing legislation*

At present, the Queensland planning framework is going through a significant review and reform. As an alternative to a single Act, it is recommended that key outcomes of the Aquaculture regulation review are integrated within existing and reforming legislation. This will reduce time delays for the Aquaculture review to be implemented and effective, whilst reducing the need for additional administrative support and funding.

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3. Impacts on existing Local Government planning reforms

A significant number of Local Governments across Queensland, including Mackay Regional Council, are in the process of drafting, finalising and/or implementing new Planning Schemes in accordance with the *Sustainable Planning Act 2009* (SPA). As such, concerns are raised with regards to the recommendation of Aquaculture Development Areas (ADAs) being implemented through local planning schemes, as noted in Section 8.1 (*Key steps involved in creation of Development Areas*) of the Draft Report.

Uncertainty is raised with regards to:

- how ADAs will be integrated or implemented through local planning schemes;
- what impacts this will have on the drafting phases of and/or adopted new local planning schemes; and
- the level of regulation imposed on Local Governments to map ADAs in local planning schemes.

4. 'Aquaculture Development Areas (ADAs)'

Concerns are raised with regards to the once off impact of identifying individual lots 'suitable' for ADAs on the growth and innovation within the Aquaculture industry.

By limiting Aquaculture development to particular 'suitable' lots at the time of the review, may lead to the perception that other areas are not suitable. Impact assessable applications in rural areas may be able to demonstrate how aquaculture can be accommodated on a particular site by addressing the impacts on surrounding areas. The identification of specific areas may further reduce future opportunities for innovation of new Aquaculture development outside of such ADAs and changes in market conditions.

It is recommended that the identified sites be provided to local councils for consideration in planning scheme reviews. Planning schemes should provide for appropriate provisions to enable such development to occur.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to QCA's Review on Aquaculture Regulation in Queensland and look forward to the outcome of the review.

Yours faithfully,



Jaco Ackerman
Manager Strategic Planning