Hello Alex,

I refer to your draft report and offer the following comments on behalf of the Burdekin Shire Council:

Burdekin Shire Council (*the Shire*) agrees that Queensland's aquaculture sector has significant commercial potential. The Burdekin Shire has an approved major aquaculture facility currently operating in the Shire. Pacific Reef Fisheries (PRF) base their operations at Trent Road, Alva Beach and have 60 hectares of ponds under production with a further 30 hectares approved in a recent expansion proposal. The species farmed comprise of mainly 'tiger prawn' with 'cobia' being trialled as an alternate product. The farm can employ up to approximately 80-100 persons when in full production. Currently, no off-shore based aquaculture facilities exist in the Shire. Geographically, much of the Shire's eastern boundary consists of marginal coastal land that is sparsely populated. Existing land uses consist of grazing and intensive agriculture.

- Traditionally, land based aquaculture development in the Burdekin Shire has generated strong objection from adjoining landowners who use their land for intensive agriculture purposes. (e.g. sugar cane) Main reason for such objection has been based on allegations of unacceptable levels of salt water intrusion and mounding caused from ponds filled with salt water constructed above the natural ground surface level. Many investigations, appeals and challengers involving Council, State/Federal Agencies and adjoining landowners have taken place over a long period of time. To date, many of the issues are unresolved. A lack of funding and commitment from stakeholders have been unable to solve all of the outstanding issues.

- If development areas are to be identified in appropriate areas throughout Queensland whereby an aquaculture proposal may be considered using a lesser level of assessment (e.g. code assessable), any proposed 'code for assessment' must contain outcomes acceptable to all potentially affected stakeholders.

- Agree strongly that a clear 'code for assessment' of development applications needs to be developed with the involvement of all three tiers of Government and any other stakeholder that can contribute towards achieving acceptable outcomes for all parties. The code needs to identify acceptable 'methodology techniques' to ensure that modelling and testing of any ponds associated with land-based aquaculture development is achievable to the developer and acceptable to adjoining landholders. The adopted methodology needs to be comprehensive enough to ensure that any action whereby salt water may negatively impact on surrounding land uses, including aquifers, can be managed effectively.

Aquaculture proposals within our Shire are considered to be an acceptable land use in identified areas. Suitable areas must have the appropriate zoning and the intended use must fit within our defined uses. The use will be included in our new planning scheme with appropriate maps and codes drafted to ensure appropriate control measures are able to be imposed. Measures need to

be reasonable and relevant as well as both environmentally and economically sustainable. If regulatory reforms are established, they may be of some benefit when planning scheme codes are reviewed to ensure any identified objectives are met.

Please contact me on 47839800 if you require further clarification on the above comments.

Regards,

Shane Great
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