

215 Akersten Street
PO Box 5135
Port Nelson
Nelson



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Brian Ashton
Business Planning, Reporting and Cost Recovery Manager
Ministry of Fisheries
P O Box 1020
Wellington

Tena koe Brian

Aquaculture New Zealand submission on the Proposed Fisheries Services for the period 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Ministry of Fisheries proposed fisheries services for the 2008/09 financial year.

Overall Aquaculture New Zealand supports the positive approach to aquaculture outlined in the draft consultation document. Achieving the goals stated in the New Zealand Aquaculture Strategy, and the government's response, Our Blue Horizons – He Pae Kikorangi, requires government and the industry working together in partnership.

The aquaculture industry has set itself ambitious but achievable goals, with a primary target of sales value of \$1b/year by 2025. This will be achieved through a combination of an improved regulatory environment; expansive research and development into new techniques and aquaculture species; and targeted market development and marketing.

The industry, through Aquaculture New Zealand, is working closely with a range of government agencies including the Ministry of Fisheries and others to achieve these goals. A continued partnership approach between the aquaculture industry and central and local government is critical to fulfilling the potential of aquaculture in New Zealand.

MINISTRY PRIORITIES

Contribute to economic transformation through the seafood sector Sustainable aquaculture development

- Lead government response to Aquaculture strategy

AQNZ supports the Ministry of Fisheries leading the government response to the Aquaculture strategy. AQNZ believes clear leadership within central government on aquaculture is critical.

- Work with stakeholders to identify and progress priority opportunities for aquaculture development

Identifying and progressing priority opportunities for aquaculture development are key short term goals for AQNZ. New space for both commercial development and experimental aquaculture research is critical to developing the industry. Industry must have a core role in identifying priorities for any new aquaculture development as it will be industry that will invest the capital and infrastructure to develop the new space and any new space must meet the needs of the industry.

Foster public confidence in aquaculture

AQNZ supports this priority. As with any industry operating in 'public space', the confidence of the public is critical to the future and ongoing development of the industry. There is a significant amount of misinformation regarding aquaculture in the public domain and providing accurate and easy to understand facts about the industry is required to improve the level of public confidence and support for the aquaculture industry. AQNZ has recently appointed a communications manager to support AQNZ communicating both with the industry and to the public generally.

- Facilitate development of the industry strategic research plan

Research and development is critical to the long term future of the aquaculture industry. While the support of the Ministry of Fisheries is important to the development of this plan, the development of the industry strategic research plan is being led by the industry through AQNZ. We consider it would be more accurate to describe this work area as: *"Support the development of the industry strategic research plan"*

- Complete outstanding permit applications

The outstanding permit applications have the potential to contribute much needed 'new space' for aquaculture development. AQNZ strongly supports these outstanding permit applications being progressed as quickly as possible.

- Reform statutory framework for aquaculture

AQNZ has been working closely with a range of officials, including the Ministry of Fisheries to seek a cabinet decision agreeing to a fundamental review and reforms to the current aquaculture regime. We support this as a priority activity for the Ministry and look forward to continuing to work with officials to progress the reforms.

Environmental Certification

- Support certification of wild fisheries and aquaculture

AQNZ supports this work priority. Sustainability is a critical aspect of New Zealand's aquaculture industry and appropriate certification will also be an integral aspect of marketing and market development.

- Develop New Zealand standards for sustainable aquaculture

This work priority needs to be clarified further to detail what the proposed format for these standards will be. AQNZ's understanding is this will involve development of codes of practice or independent certification standards to underpin an eco-certification regime. AQNZ does not support a regulatory approach through compulsory national standards.

Implement Treaty Strategy

- Assist with iwi rohe moana management plans

Iwi have a key role to play in the future development of the aquaculture industry both through the aquaculture settlement, and more generally through their economic development activities. Ministry support for the development of iwi rohe moana management plans would provide positive support for iwi to exercise both their kaitiakitanga responsibilities and also strategically assess and plan future aquaculture, and wider fisheries development.

Aquaculture Settlement

- Ministers plan for the future delivery of the Crown's obligations

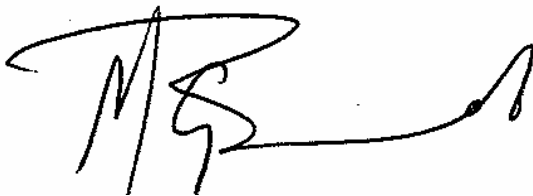
AQNZ believes that as much certainty as possible needs to be provided to both Iwi and existing industry stakeholders about how the Minister intends to progress delivery of the Crown's obligations under the settlement regarding the pre-commencement space. Therefore we support the development of the Ministers plan as required by the settlement legislation as soon as possible.

- Crown's obligations are honoured

As outlined above, Maori participation is critical to the long term development of the aquaculture industry. Honouring and fulfilling the Crown's obligations under the settlement is an important part of promoting Maori participation in the industry. This will also provide iwi with space and/or capital for aquaculture development and they will continue to be a key player in the aquaculture industry fulfilling its potential.

CONCLUSION

AQNZ supports the positive approach taken towards aquaculture by the Ministry in the draft consultation document on the proposed fisheries services for 2008/09. AQNZ is committed to working in partnership with central and local government to achieve the goals outlined in the New Zealand Aquaculture Strategy and we welcome the Ministry of Fisheries commitment to continuing that partnership approach.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M Burrell', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mike Burrell
Chief Executive