



Defending our Environment

**MEDIA RELEASE On behalf of NEIGHBOURS OF FISH FARMING AND
THE TASMANIAN ALLIANCE FOR MARINE PROTECTION.
TUESDAY, MARCH 17**

The Tasmanian Alliance for Marine Protection (TAMP) and Neighbours of Fish Farming (NOFF) welcome the guilty plea by Huon Aquaculture today on charges of breaching environmental protection notices and on depositing pollutants.

The case was heard in the Hobart Magistrates Court today when pleas of guilty were made to six charges. Penalties will be announced on May 4.

The fact that the offences occurred on a number of occasions despite assurances given to the Environment Protection Agency that there would be no repetition indicates that, as prosecutor Emily Bill noted, “environmental management” is not a key priority in the company.

NOFF also notes that Huon’s counsel, Phil Zeeman, acknowledged the serious nature of the offences and took full responsibility for them.

At the same time, however, he said the causes of the offences were human errors caused by operational staff. Ms Bill said they indicated “systemic failures”

NOFF is concerned that negotiations between the Environment Protection Agency and Huon Aquaculture resulted in a diminution of the charges against the company.

The original charges included causing material harm to the environment through polluting and of discharging oil or an oily waste into the Huon River.

NOFF calls for a full disclosure of the nature of the negotiations that led to the downgrading of one charge and of not proceeding on the latter.

Neighbours of Fish Farming
PO Box 83, Cygnet TAS 7112

Email: fishfarmingneighboursof@gmail.com

FB: <https://www.facebook.com/Neighbours-of-Fishfarming-1588714601446106/>

President: Peter George 0426 150369

NOFF waits in the hope that the industrial fish farming behemoth will, as the prosecutor urged, reflect the seriousness of the offences and act as a future deterrent.

NOFF president and co-chair of TAMP, Peter George, says previous penalties for breaching licence conditions by fish farms have amounted to little more than a slap on the wrist for companies that are multi-million dollar earners.

Community and professional organisations that are concerned about fish farm operations and their expansion plans believe the offences to which Huon Aquaculture has pleaded guilty are merely the tip of the iceberg.

“We all want to see greater transparency and more oversight of fish farm operations,” Mr George says. “It’s not just crucial to our marine environment but to Tasmania’s excellent reputation throughout Australia and the world.”

Neighbours of Fish Farming
PO Box 83, Cygnet TAS 7112

Email: fishfarmingneighboursof@gmail.com

FB: <https://www.facebook.com/Neighbours-of-Fishfarming-1588714601446106/>

President: Peter George 0426 150369