

Dear Premier

On behalf of Salmon Tasmania, I congratulate you on your re-election and reappointment as Premier.

As you navigate negotiations with the crossbench, we trust that you'll keep the critical importance of Tasmania's vital salmon farming sector at the forefront of your mind.

As a long-time supporter of the industry, and having visited facilities and talked with workers, you have seen that it's not just about business - it's about the livelihoods of thousands of Tasmanians and the economic backbone of many regional communities.

Your party made clear commitments to support the salmon industry during the election campaign, and my members expect those promises to be honoured regardless of the political negotiations ahead. The industry placed its confidence in those commitments and honouring that confidence remains essential.

We understand the political realities - neither major party can govern alone, which means working with the independents who have different priorities. However, our industry is deeply concerned about the misinformed rhetoric from some crossbench members regarding salmon farming.

What I'm asking for is your continued assurance that our industry will not be used as a bargaining chip. The salmon sector supports thousands of Tasmanian workers across the entire supply chain - from farms and processing facilities to transport, feed suppliers, boat builders, and countless other businesses in regional communities that depend on a thriving industry.

We've built a world-class, sustainable aquaculture industry here in Tasmania, and we can't afford to see it undermined by political negotiations.

I remain ready to work with your government to ensure we maintain the business confidence needed for continued investment and growth in this vital sector.

We are counting on your continued support.

Yours sincerely



John Whittington



The Hon Jeremy Rockliff MP

11th Floor, Executive Building, 15 Murray Street
HOBART
TAS 7000

Received

18 AUG 2025

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Premier's Office

Dear Premier

On behalf of Tasmania's salmon aquaculture industry, I am delighted to share with you **Edition 6 of SMOLT** – our industry magazine.

SMOLT is our way of opening the doors of the industry to you, our valued stakeholders, and sharing the stories, science, and people that make this such an important part of Tasmania's economy and community life.

In this edition, you'll find a wide range of articles covering environmental stewardship, new science and technology, community partnerships, and the many Tasmanian businesses that support our industry. We showcase innovations in aquaculture, long-running environmental monitoring programs, collaborative projects with Aboriginal communities, and the dedicated efforts of our farmers, scientists, and suppliers.

You'll also read about the benefits salmon farming brings to regional communities, from jobs and training, to event sponsorships and local investment, as well as our ongoing commitment to sustainability, transparency, and continuous improvement. We are proud to operate under some of the world's most stringent environmental standards, and to share openly how we meet them.

SMOLT also celebrates the people who make our industry what it is, from those working on the water and in hatcheries, to those in logistics, feed production, and research. Their stories highlight the skills, innovation, and passion that drive our success.

We invite you to take a moment to browse through the articles, and perhaps try the salmon recipes on the inside back cover. They're simple, healthy, and a delicious way to enjoy Tasmania's premium salmon at home.

If a story catches your attention, or you'd like to know more about any of the topics covered, please don't hesitate to contact **S 36** on **S 36** or email **S 36**.

Thank you for your interest in and support of Tasmania's salmon industry. We are proud to share our story with you and look forward to continuing to work together to ensure a sustainable and prosperous future.

Yours sincerely,
John Whittington
Salmon Tasmania

21 August 2025

The Hon Jeremy Rockliff MP
Premier
Level 11, Executive Building
15 Murray Street
HOBART

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Dear Premier,

As the CEOs of Tasmania's three salmon aquaculture companies, we write to express our extreme concern and deep personal disappointment with you, regarding your salmon aquaculture announcement made on Sunday, 17th August.

We also seek an urgent meeting and clarification of what exactly you mean by your announcement that there will be a "pause" of marine expansion while a "study" is undertaken.

As an industry that is worth around \$1.3 billion to Tasmania's economy, employing over 5,000 people mostly in regional Tasmania, we and our employees had been led to believe that we had the support of yourself, and your Government.

We now feel betrayed.

Over the past 18 months, we worked closely with you and the previous Minister Eric Abetz to stave off the Australian Government's threat to review salmon aquaculture in Macquarie Harbour, which had cast a pall of uncertainty over the West Coast.

Indeed, in the 2024 election campaign you released a [policy statement](#) which in relation to Macquarie Harbour called for a decision to "end the uncertainty", continuing that a potential EPC Act review "could set a chilling precedent for other resource based industries in Tasmania and nationally."

This 2024 policy statement also included a number of other commitments, including to "no moratoriums", and to "actively support the industry's expansion into the Designated Storm Bay Growth Area."

We were pleased to see these commitments and others broadly repeated in your 2025 election correspondence to us (via Dr John Whittington) of 2nd July.

Given the known anti-salmon sentiments of a number of independent candidates including Mr Peter George, the words under your own hand that you would "not trade the salmon industry in any way, shape or form in order to form or retain Government" were also of great reassurance to us and our employees as they decided who to vote for.

We should also point out that during the election campaign we facilitated many meetings and site tours of our facilities for your Liberal candidates, where all to a person gave commitments to workers there that the Liberal Party would never trade salmon away. Our employees took their words on this and now feel betrayed.

It was therefore a rude shock when we received word on Saturday that you had broken your word and betrayed the salmon industry in order to secure the support of Mr George, Mr Garland, Ms Johnston, and arguably, the Greens, in order to retain Government.

Additionally, in announcing the “pause” and “study” you said that it was because we had been “on notice” since last summer’s mass mortality event.

To then use industry’s notification to use a new antibiotic under veterinary supervision in order to manage fish welfare as a pretext for your announcement was particularly galling. This is especially troubling given the confused briefing provided to the crossbench, which was facilitated by Minister Pearce.

As we thought you knew and understood, our industry works tirelessly and ceaselessly to improve our environmental outcomes and standing within the community, in the face of a dishonest, active and well-resourced (from the mainland and international sources) environmental movement.

Your statement that we should “welcome” a study which by your own admission [in relation to Macquarie Harbour] would create “uncertainty” and “set a chilling precedent for other resource based industries in Tasmania and nationally” was gaslighting of the worst order.

The truth of the matter is that it’s your announcement which has cast a pall of uncertainty over the sector, and it has set a chilling precedent for other resource-based industries.

Running multi-million dollar businesses is not a political game, the announcements you have made have had, and will continue to have, serious real-world consequences for us, and our employees.

Given that, we seek urgent clarification of the following:

- What exactly do you mean by a “pause” of marine expansion? What will be “paused”, and what won’t be?
- Mr George publicly stated that your “pause” included:
 - No more feedlots in Storm Bay
 - No increase in production tonnage
 - No expansion of the industry in Bass Strait

Are these claims correct, or not?

Additionally, we seek your advice on how you intend to implement this “pause”, noting that for example the granting of approval for or variations to leases, sub division of leases, and the issue of marine farming licences are governed by statutory processes.

We would also like to let you know we will likely be required to seek legal advice on these matters.

As an industry that is worth around \$1.3 billion to Tasmania's economy, employing over 5,000 people mostly in regional Tasmania, we and our employees had been led to believe that we had the support of yourself, and your Government.

We have been subject to multiple reviews in recent years, one of which remains ongoing, along with two "salmon industry plans". The Government has yet to fully implement its commitments arising from these reviews.

We request a meeting with you at your earliest convenience, to discuss this matter of serious consequence to our business and our employees.

Please contact Dr John Whittington, CEO of Salmon Tasmania or **s 36** to arrange a mutually convenient time.

Mark Ryan, Managing Director & CEO, Tassal Group
Charles von der Heyde, CEO, Huon Aquaculture
Doug Paulin, CEO, Petuna Aquaculture



PREMIER OF TASMANIA

25 August 2025

Dr John Whittington
CEO – Salmon Tasmania
By Email: S 36

Dear Dr Whittington

Thank you for your letter of 21 August, on behalf of the three Tasmanian salmon CEO's outlining their views on this Government's announcement of 17 August. I acknowledge your obvious and deep personal disappointment with the announcement and look forward to meeting with you tomorrow.

In regard to your collective request for clarity on Mr George's public statements concerning the pause on spatial expansion, I provide the following details.

The intent of the pause is that the total area leased and authorised for the purpose of salmon farming in state waters will not increase while the study is being undertaken. Government will, however, honour the intent of planning approvals which have already been granted and existing lessee(s) commencing a formal planning process to reposition part or all of an existing marine farming lease area.

While the pause is in effect, approvals will not be granted for the deployment of pens in the northeast of Storm Bay, and existing lease areas not currently licensed for, or actively pursued for, the purposes of finfish farming, but located in a marine farming zone that provides for finfish will, not be granted approval for salmon farming activities.

Additionally, consistent with this Government's priorities under the Tasmanian Salmon Industry Plan 2023, the Government will be progressing consultation on a process to remove finfish farming from zones where the area is not subject to an existing marine farming lease.

The legal framework that applies to existing farming operations, including mandated lease, licence, biosecurity and environmental and operational controls will continue to apply while the pause on spatial expansion is in effect.

Production levels will continue to be considered in the context of environmental sustainability and regulated by the independent EPA. Industry will be required to operate and plan production cycles to ensure compliance with any Total Permissible Dissolved Nitrogen Output (TPDNO) limits determined by the independent EPA.

In regard to expansion of the industry in Bass Strait, a fisheries arrangement is in place under Commonwealth and State legislation, which provides for aquaculture research to take place in an area of Commonwealth waters in Bass Strait. There is no legal mechanism to enable commercial-scale salmon farming in that area. This Government's existing policy for aquaculture research in Commonwealth waters will continue to apply.

I trust this clarifies your queries.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Rockliff'.

Jeremy Rockliff MP
Premier

cc. Minister Pearce