

NSW DPI / Huon Yellowtail Kingfish Research Project - Stakeholder Update

July 2018

The Marine Aquaculture Research Lease was not impacted by the shipping containers lost at sea from the YM Efficiency in June, other than some rubbish washed into the sea pens. The rubbish was collected and disposed of appropriately.

Members of the Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council visited the Research Lease in June to view operations. The tour included a description of operations, feeding the Yellowtail Kingfish and getting an update from the Huon Aquaculture staff working on the lease.

Community information

ABC Landline ran a story on the Research Lease on 3 June – this can be viewed at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-06-02/future-fish:-commercial-trials-of-kingfish-farming/9828176>

Huon will be updating RMS and the Water Police on operations at the Research Lease in a meeting on 2nd August.

In response to a number of questions raised about the Yellowtail Kingfish project, DPI and Huon have prepared a *Frequently Asked Questions* advisory document, located at: <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/aquaculture/starting-up/finfish-aquaculture-lease-modification-application>

Research and environmental monitoring

A PhD student working at Port Stephens Fisheries Institute on Yellowtail Kingfish diets achieved an award for the best student presentation at a recent international fish nutrition conference in Spain.

The University of Newcastle will present the results of the environmental monitoring undertaken at the Research Lease at the NSW Coastal Conference later in the year. Although there has been little evidence of impact, the studies have provided a valuable insight into communities of benthic animals found in the marine park.

The latest independent results of the monitoring for water column, sediment chemistry and biological characteristics are available on the web at <https://www.huonaqua.com.au/about/portstephens/benthic-monitoring/>. The results show there has been no significant impact from fish farming activities on areas immediately below the sea pens, adjacent to, or at sites well away from the Research Lease.

Operational update

Technology improvements to sea pens developed by Huon Aquaculture are currently being trialled at leases in Tasmania. The sea pens at the Research Lease will be removed to allow for refurbishment and installation of the latest technology in off-shore farming equipment. Huon Aquaculture has designed the improvements based on knowledge and data acquired from both the Port Stephens Research Lease and its offshore operations in Tasmania.

A big part of the five year trial is to assess the structural integrity of the farming infrastructure. The improvements proposed involve changes to mooring system components and revised pen design.

The new equipment will be closely monitored to assess performance and to guide further development over the five year research trial.

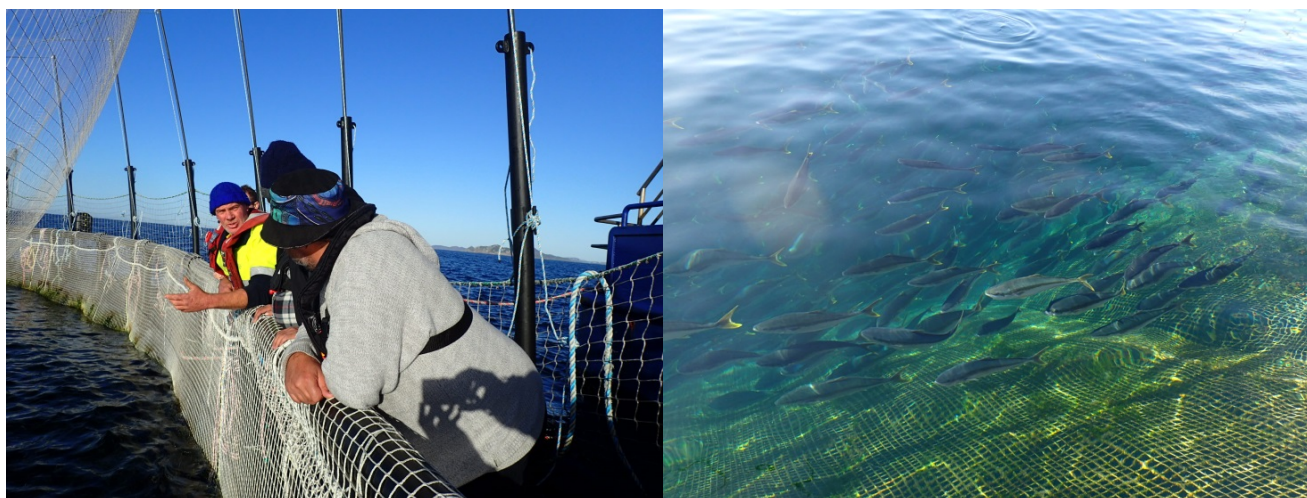
The intention is to complete the modifications to the Research Lease infrastructure before the next batch of fingerlings is transferred to sea.

Managing marine debris

Huon Aquaculture has secured one buoy lost in recent storm events and will retrieve one damaged buoy washed up above the shoreline at Yagon.

Regulation and compliance

The Emergency Response Procedure has been developed to an advanced stage. A Structural Integrity Management Plan will be updated to include modifications to both mooring and pen design. Updating these plans was a recommendation arising from the January fish escape event.



Worimi visitors at the Research Lease

Latest year class of Yellowtail Kingfish

The emergency contact number for the Research Lease to be used for any incident involving the sea pens is **1300 920 987**.

More information

<https://www.huonaqua.com.au/about/portstephens/>

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/aquaculture/starting-up/finfish-aquaculture-lease-modification-application>

or contact aquaculture.administration@dpi.nsw.gov.au

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