

Waters to which an aquaculture permit may apply

Policy number:	RDOC24/184317	Version:	3.0
Authorised by:	Director, Fisheries & Aquaculture Management	Authorised date:	30 October 2024
Issued by:	DPIRD Fisheries	Effective date:	30 October 2024
Category:	Operations and Industry	Review date:	30 October 2026

Policy statement:

NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) is required by the provisions of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* and the Fisheries Management (Aquaculture) Regulation 2024 to issue aquaculture permits to authorise aquaculture activities.

Scope:

The policy applies to aquaculture permit applications using freshwater resources to culture fish in accordance with the provisions of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* (the Act) and the Fisheries Management (Aquaculture) Regulation 2024 (the Regulation).

The policy outlines what freshwater resources (non-tidal) can be utilised to culture fish under a land-based aquaculture permit.

Permit holders and lessees using estuarine or marine waters (tidal) in the culture of their fish are not considered under this policy.

Requirements:

The following requirements outline the nature of waters to which an aquaculture permit will or will not be issued to authorise aquaculture.

Natural freshwater billabongs, lakes, swamps

1. Aquaculture permits are not to be issued over natural freshwater billabongs, lakes or swamps that are:
 - a. type 1 key fish habitat (defined in the DPIRD Fisheries Policy and Guidelines for Fish Habitat Conservation and Management 2013) as they are either known or expected habitat for threatened fish species.
 - b. within the boundaries of a wetland recognised under international agreement (includes RAMSAR listed wetlands) or listed in the Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia.
 - c. hydrologically connected to CLASS 1-3 classified waters during ARI 100-year floods. CLASS 1-3 are defined in accordance with the DPIRD Fisheries Policy and Guidelines for Fish Habitat Conservation and Management (2013).

2. Aquaculture permit applications relating to natural landscape depressions, not classified in accordance with clause 1a, that may intermittently or permanently hold water will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Applications over these subject sites will require consultation with DPIRD, Freshwater Environment Unit.

Dams or ponds constructed on river, stream or creek

3. Class C, E and F (extensive aquaculture) aquaculture permits may be issued for dams or ponds constructed on CLASS 4 classified waters. Class 4 waters are defined in accordance with the DPIRD Fisheries Policy and Guidelines for Fish Habitat Conservation and Management (2013). Species permitted will be restricted to those species naturally occurring within the catchment in which the proposal is located.
4. Aquaculture permits will not be issued to authorise aquaculture on CLASS 1-3 classified waters. CLASS 1-3 are defined in accordance with the DPIRD Fisheries Policy and Guidelines for Fish Habitat Conservation and Management (2013).

Infrastructure constructed on freehold land

5. Aquaculture permits may be issued to authorise aquaculture in constructed ponds, dams, tanks, raceways, channels, on-farm irrigation channels (not the property of an irrigation corporation) and off-stream storages on freehold land in accordance with the provision of the Act and the Regulations.
6. Class C and E (extensive aquaculture for Yabby only) aquaculture permits may be issued for irrigation infrastructure that is the freehold property of an irrigation corporation, such as those listed in Schedule 1 of the *Water Management Act 2000*:
 - a. Coleambally Irrigation Cooperative Ltd
 - b. Jemalong Irrigation Ltd
 - c. Murray Irrigation Ltd
 - d. Murrumbidgee Irrigation Ltd
 - e. Western Murray Irrigation Ltd
7. If the land is freehold and is held by another entity to the prospective permit holder; then a lease or other suitable authority must be granted by the freehold landowner.

Infrastructure constructed on Crown land

8. Aquaculture permits may be issued to authorise aquaculture in ponds, dams, tanks, raceways, channels, irrigation infrastructure and off-stream storages constructed on Crown Land in accordance with any landowner's consent and the provision of the Act and the Regulations. These aquaculture permit applications will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and will take guidance from the above sections and the respective Crown land status.
9. Applications over these subject sites will require consultation with DPIRD, Freshwater Environment Unit.

Application of this policy

10. This policy will apply to all aquaculture permit applications received from the approval date of this policy.
11. Where there is an existing aquaculture enterprise or a site of an abandoned aquaculture enterprise and there is a proposal to upgrade or re-establish an aquaculture operation on that site, this policy will apply.

Roles and responsibilities:

- Policy Officer Aquaculture: implement the requirements of this policy.
- Fisheries Manager, Aquaculture: implement the requirements of this policy.

- Senior Fisheries Manager, Aquaculture: implement the requirements of this policy.
- Senior Policy Officer, Aquaculture: implement the requirements of this policy.

Legislation

- *Fisheries Management Act 1994*
- Fisheries Management (Aquaculture) Regulation 2024
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Primary Production) (2021)
- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*

Delegations:

- Fisheries Management Instrument of Delegation (Minister) 2024
- Fisheries Management Instrument of Delegation (Secretary) (No 2) 2024

Definitions:

- **Fish:** is defined in accordance with the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*.

Related policies:

- NSW Land Based Aquaculture Sustainable Aquaculture Strategy

Revision history:

This policy replaces IND-O-256 Waters to which an aquaculture permit may be applied policy v 2.0 (RDOC22/3360).

Version	Revised date	Details
3.0	30 October 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typographical edits addressed, update to Fisheries Management (Aquaculture) Regulation 2024, Class F permit included in clause 2.