

Draft Diploid Pacific Oyster Cultivation Policy

11 March 2016

Proposed Draft Policy

1. NSW DPI will consider applications for commercial cultivation of diploid Pacific Oysters (dPO) in Georges River, Hawkesbury River and Hunter River only, being those estuaries that are defined in Regulation as High Risk on the basis of their wild Pacific Oyster abundance.
2. Applications for commercial cultivation of dPO will **not** be considered from any other NSW oyster farming estuary.

NSW DPI considers that there is an unacceptable risk that the commercial cultivation of dPO in Low Risk and No Risk estuaries may exacerbate adverse impacts on the environment and the oyster industry.

Any application from a High Risk estuary would require an environmental assessment that analyses environmental, social and economic risks and includes consultation with relevant stakeholders.

NSW Shellfish Committee supported this draft policy at its 2 March 2016 meeting.

Your comments on this proposed policy are invited.

Comments will be received up to 31 March 2016 and can be directed to:

Email: aquaculture.management@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Post: Aquaculture Management
PSFI
Private Bag 1
Nelson Bay 2315

Phone: Tim Gippel - 49163823

Background

NSW DPI is aware that some growers are considering applications to cultivate dPO. The department is committed to following a consistent

management approach of commercial cultivation of dPO. To-date, dPO are declared as a Class 2 Noxious fish in all NSW waters except Port Stephens as a consequence of very high wild Pacific Oyster abundance. Port Stephens is the only estuary approved for dPO cultivation.

Eight NSW Estuaries are approved for cultivating triploid Pacific Oysters (tPO). Port Stephens is the only estuary approved for the cultivation of dPO. 2014/15 production of Pacific Oyster in NSW had a farm gate value of \$4M. Sydney Rock Oyster production for the same period was \$35M.

The recent Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome (POMS) outbreak in Tasmania has disrupted the supply of tPO spat from Tasmanian hatcheries into NSW. Southern Cross Shellfish advise that they can supply tPO spat to NSW farmers.

Port Stephens was granted approval to cultivate dPO in 1991 considering the overwhelming numbers of Pacific Oysters in Port Stephens at the time (Nell, 2001). dPO cultivation has historically not been supported by the department or the oyster industry in other estuaries due the risk of significantly increasing the wild population of dPO and impacting the Sydney Rock Oyster industry.

The department has strict movement controls on oysters and equipment to minimise the spread of Pacific Oyster to other estuaries. The controls are risk based and are enforced through aquaculture permit conditions under *Division 2A Fisheries Management (Aquaculture) Regulation 2012*. In this context 'risk' is the likelihood of translocating unacceptable numbers of dPO from the subject estuary.

NSW DPI has ranked four estuaries in NSW (Port Stephens, Hunter River, Hawkesbury River including Patonga Creek and the Georges River - Botany Bay estuary) as high risk for Pacific Oysters based on the abundance of wild Pacific Oysters from a 2010 statewide survey and extensive industry consultation.

© State of New South Wales through the Department of Industry, Skills and Regional Development, 2016. You may copy, distribute and otherwise freely deal with this publication for any purpose, provided that you attribute the NSW Department of Primary Industries as the owner.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (March 2016). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Department of Primary Industries or the user's independent adviser.

INT15/26988