

Sounds Salmon Farms Hearing Presentation.

I am Norm Gourdie. I live here in the Sounds and I am passionate about looking after this environment, and all of NZ, the world for that matter.

I am just a layman, I have not studied Hearing Protocol and Etiquette, so I ask you to excuse me if I haven't adhered precisely to the correct format and detail in my comments. You may find my views strongly worded, but this, now, is actually a milder down version of my feelings, in my attempt to use diplomatic language. However I would appreciate your attention and assiduousness in passing them on to the Minister.

My comments will avoid repetition of the technical evidence and expert comment presented in other opposing submissions. Though I request the panel to note, that I endorse and support any information presented here that is factual, true and has integrity. While, at the same time I would urge the panel to join me in rejecting any manipulation of information, whether by selectivity, glossing over relevant points, or lying by omission, and accept only full honesty and full disclosure. In my view the information provided by MPI to the public, before the submission period, was in the nature of propaganda, painting a rosy picture of their proposal, and omitting relevant negative aspects.

I am addressing this important issue voluntarily, using only my own money and especially my own time, I actually resent having to devote my time in fighting this issue, but it is important to do so, to counter a campaign lacking in integrity and credibility, that threatens the wellbeing of the beautiful and, in healthy ways, the bountiful potential of the entire Marlborough Sounds and its visitors. I am concerned the Government are using the South Island and its sea as their dumping ground. Would this sort of pollution be acceptable in the Bay of Islands? No, I think not. They have given the Bay of Islands many new Marine Reserves but have denied the Sounds any, presumably to keep the gate open for greater exploitation here.

And, in saying that, I must express my mildest disappointment in the Ministry for Primary Industry, the Minister himself, and this National Government as a whole, who, in this case, are doing all they can, legally or not, morally or not, in spending an exorbitant amount of money and staff time, in a, patently obvious championing, of one company, New Zealand King Salmon, to help boost their profits, a company that is largely foreign owned, to boot. And to the obvious detriment of the environment. Had they used those resources of money, and staff time, to work towards a cleaner, greener NZ, they would have achieved a much healthier alternative for the world than their bending over backwards to provide the wealthy world with another luxury, at the neglect of the poor. I despair, that this appears to be business as usual, for them?

I question whether MPI's brief – mandate, whatever, gives them the go ahead to use tax payers' money to boost a monopoly operation which uses and abuses the Sounds' environment, absolutely free, while taking very little account, as shown by their selective proposal documents, of all the other values, including the obvious economic benefits, of maintaining the Sounds in a clean, beautiful state.

In adopting the machinations that they have, this Government, its Minister and its Ministry, is being, undemocratic, condescending to its public, and unfair in its selective misdissemination of relevant information. This is especially illustrated by omission of mention of their salmon farm diseases, the glossing over of intelligence and facts, including data on, algal blooms, economics, King Shag welfare, inadequate reporting of monitoring of existing farms as required by the BOI, misrepresentation of statistics, and effects on other species, landscape and natural aspects. A whole lot of additional research and information, with the full, unskewed disclosure, of the effects of

salmon farm interference in the Sounds, should have been produced by King Salmon before the proposal was even looked at. I'm not sure whether this amounts to a lack of information, or selective provision of information, or manipulative disinformation, but I find this approach, to be immorally sneaky, disrespectful to everyone here involved, and personally insulting. What sort of government have we got that they think this basic dishonesty is acceptable? I don't. Perhaps I am an idealist but whatever happened to basic humanity, honesty, respect and plain speaking here, in this wonderful, world leading, country of ours?

Others, appearing, have submitted more detail in regard to those issues so I won't elaborate. However, please note I do support evidence submitted that shows detriment to the Sounds and its waters, in more detail than my own, and rebuke the Ministry for their selective failure to investigate fully these aspects.

Very little attention has been paid by MPI on many areas of relevance. Aspects such as; Benthic destruction, Water column maltreatment, Nitrogen imbalance, Oxygen depletion, Methane production, Ozone depletion, Consequent global warming effects, Head in the sand neglect of data from other salmon farm best practice, in different parts of the world, Navigation hazards, Effects on the welfare of fish, shellfish and a natural, balanced, sea environment for all of the native species already living in the Sounds, these are vital questions, to which MPI has hardly attended.

Even the panel's terms of reference appear to be used as a means of direction towards MPI's wants. They appear to be applying not fair but foul means to achieve their, craved for, outcome. It seems the previous attempt, via the BOI, was not lucrative enough for them, so they're trying, underhandedly, in my opinion, a method which is less democratic, less transparent, less opposable and tries to deviously bypass the previous, existing, legal rulings and limitations regarding salmon farming in the Sounds.

King Salmon is a careless operator who, throughout their time of interference with the Sound's environment, have been a serious polluter. A dearth of monitoring by MPI and evidence that the existing high flow farms are, even now, not meeting the benthic guidelines, suggests, very strongly, to me that King Salmon will continue to focus on their profits and treat the welfare of the Sounds as insignificant. How can anyone reasonably believe that they will perform any differently in the future, or that MPI, in their blinkered support for NZKS, will perform any better at policing them? What future is in store for the Sounds if this disaster goes ahead? More destructive intrusions will likely follow this precedent.

This acceptance of the ongoing defilement, by King Salmon, illustrates clearly the attitude of the Government toward the Sounds. The Sounds biodiversity is already compromised by the Salmon Farms and the failure and indifference of the Ministry to prevent their pollution. Are they going to get King Salmon to clean it up? I ask the Minister to seriously consider this and answer.

I agree with the EDS' analogy of comparing, King Salmon' wanting to expand and move their polluting farms to areas with greater flow, to the dairy farmer polluting a small stream then, 'in mitigation', increasing his herd and dumping the augmented waste into a faster flowing stream, to dissipate it. This illustrates very clearly to me, the distorted attitudes of those up North, and business, towards our Marlborough Sounds, seeing its values as insignificant, and to be ignored in favour of more money.

MPI. What arrogance, their proposing to ride roughshod over the existing legal structure, which has been carefully studied and instituted in law including; the Supreme Court rulings, the RMA's intent for the area, the MDC and community's Regional Plan, the Regional Policy Statement, the Coastal Policy Statement. What disrespect they show the MDC in totally ignoring their local expertise, and

ability to manage their own area. How deep in the mire are MPI digging, in trying to use s360A for its very first outing in the hope of getting what they want for King Salmon' profits?

Already much work, careful considerations and legally binding rulings have been produced regarding Salmon farming in the Sounds, highlighting the values of the area, and limiting the intrusion of salmon farms, but here we are having to go over it all again because the Govt thinks it can inveigle in a new intrusion, for King Salmon exploitation of the area, by giving the same aims a slightly different, dodgy, angle.

I don't understand this. Surely this is not what Government departments are authorised to do. I worked for DoC for 18 years where, I'm sure, there was a well principled culture. MPI seems to have a deceptive, unhealthy climate pervading their own environment? I wonder if there is something questionable in this affair, between this Ministry, and what they seem to see as an attractive company. Be mindful of the history, particularly by the MPI's' MSWG – Marlborough Salmon Working Group, of less than fair, and even unprincipled, behavior towards the volunteer groups, representatives and individuals, as you consider MPI's approach to this argument. I thought government was meant to be for the people. This government is concerned, not with people, but purely for the economy, even the OECD identifies this. Please remind Government of the Paris accord and how they should be paying much more attention to the environment, even in the South Island.

MPI have shown now they are very aware of pollution from salmon farms yet they've practically ignored doing anything about it before, irresponsibly condoning it as if it was totally acceptable here in the Sounds. They appear to be taking, again selective, interest now that it suits them, so they are pretending now to be the salmon shit police, when they were so quiet before, letting King Salmon away with it all these years. Can we trust them to act any differently in future?

It would be laughable how MPI, in their proposal, note the area of the new farms to be equivalent to the existing, when in fact the effects will be multiplied so hugely, except we can't laugh when this is such an important distinction. Are they suggesting that 4 or 5 times the uneaten feed and 4 or 5 times the shit excreted from these farms are not going to impact on the water and seabed in a greatly extended area? They look at just their abbreviated footprint, no further. They either don't know or are not revealing this information, if they have researched this. I find their attitude towards everyone involved to be condescending at least. Was this a puerile attempt to hoodwink us?

Where is DoC? Where is MDC involvement? Where is the Ministry for the Environment? The very people who have the mandates and the expertise to consider the relevant issues in play here. Silence. All muzzled by Govt pressure to reinforce MPI's' one sided plan, with the aim of bulldozing through their inappropriate support for King Salmon. It is these organisations, in accord with the community, who's plan is being threatened with overturning. Who are the experts on the environment but DoC, the Environment Court, the Ministry for the Environment, for heaven's sake? Are they misnamed that they have been excluded, totally silenced here? Or do MPI consider this proposal has nothing to do with the environment?

I would like to complain, loud and clear, about the very short time frame we, the opposition, were given to compile our case and I apply for an extension of time now, to research especially, what additional information MPI has kept from us. We are ordinary people who have normal lives to live. This process is an imposition at best, an unhealthy stress, trying to gather the facts and putting them together in such a short time allowed, knowing that the MPI have been working on this for years. That is patently not fair. I put, to you, that they have been acting far from fairly throughout this process, and urge you to take this into consideration here. One public 'drop in' opportunity, if you could call it that, a one sided propoganda exercise that was meant to satisfy the public

consultation requirement. Yes, I attended one.

I'm closing now.

Perhaps you have noticed, but I emphasise I am, gargantuanly, opposed to this proposal and I would like you to tell the Minister, from me, to reconsider its legitimacy. I, personally would prefer to see all salmon farms removed from the Sounds. There are, after all, alternative, open sea and land based, options available. Perhaps more costly at this time, but minimal in comparison to the cost to the environment of this proposal's impact.

I have only attended a hearing once, before the Planning Tribunal. That was a good experience, especially because we won our case. I ask, please, that you now, don't, put a blot on my success record. Please recommend to the Minister that this case be thrown out on its ear, and berate him for ever presenting the proposal in the first place, wasting your time and mine and all that taxpayer's money.

Thank you.