

**BEFORE THE ADVISORY PANEL**

**IN THE MATTER OF**     The potential relocation of salmon farms in  
the Marlborough Sounds

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER**     Proposal for a regulation to make a plan  
change to the Marlborough Sounds  
Resource Management Plan

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**EVIDENCE OF MARINE FARMING ASSOCIATION (MFA)  
AND  
JONATHAN BRUCE LARGE  
Dated this 7<sup>h</sup> April 2017**

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## INTRODUCTION

1. My full name is Jonathan Bruce Large. I am a marine farmer and have been involved in the mussel industry for 38 years. I started as a youngster growing up in my family's mussel farming business in the Pelorus Sound.
2. I holiday, work and play in the Marlborough Sounds. Our family owns a bach in Kaiuma Bay which we frequently use. I use the Sounds as my playground. I am a land owner, a marine farm owner and a recreational user that fishes, scuba dives and hunts within the Sounds and the Marlborough region. I enjoy nothing more than taking my family and friends out in the Sounds to give them the "Sounds experience" that I enjoy almost every day.
3. I consider myself as being in touch with all aspects of the Sounds. I strongly believe in the need to protect the Sounds so all residents and users can co-exist in a harmonious way.
4. My wife, Narelle, and I in 2009 purchased as part of my father's estate our family marine farm in Nydia Bay (site 8355). This site has been in our family since the early 1980's.
5. I hold an Inshore Launch Master qualification (since 2001) and have extensive maritime experience in and around the Hauraki Gulf, Coromandel, Marlborough Sounds, Tasman Bay and Golden Bay.
6. Currently I am the South Island Marine Farm Manager for Cedneco Aquaculture Limited (Cedenco) based in Blenheim. I am also the Farm Manager for the MFA's 12 spat sites. I am responsible for the management of a further 15 marine farms in the Marlborough Sounds. These sites comprise of 12 spat catching and spat holding sites (owned by the MFA). I also farm sites owned by various individuals and entities.
7. From these sites I manage the 3000 tonnes (per annum) of crop. I am involved from the sourcing of spat and spat catching operations throughout the Top of the South, right through to the harvesting operations that provide product for the factories to process

8. I own and run my own business, Marine Farm Management Limited which includes a 12m and a 7m vessel. This enables me to carry out my work for Cedenco and MFA plus any other companies that contract me to do their on-water work.
9. I am the Chairman of the MFA's Environment and Compliance Sub-Committee which is responsible for the Beach Debris programme, biosecurity, marine farm compliance, industry training, and Maritime NZ Working Group. In recent times this Committee has driven the development of the Environmental Certification programme. This programme certifies companies that have proven to be committed to responsible environmental performance and monitors their compliance to the programme on an on-going basis.
10. I am a director on the board of Aquaculture New Zealand. Aquaculture New Zealand was formed in 2007 as a single voice for the New Zealand aquaculture sector to protect the current industry, while enhancing its profitability and providing leadership to facilitate transformational growth.
11. I am also the current President of the Marine Farming Association and have been re-elected each year onto the MFA Executive Committee since 2010. I am authorised to appear on behalf of MFA for the purpose of making a statement in support of MFA's submission for the proposal for a regulation to make a plan change to the Marlborough Sounds Resource Management Plan. I present this evidence as a non-expert witness.

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE MARINE FARMING ASSOCIATION**

12. The MFA is a subscription based organisation representing marine farmers in the top of the South Island of New Zealand. The MFA has 129 ordinary members who own, lease or sublease Greenshell mussel, oyster and King Salmon farms in the upper South Island. Marine farmers in the MFA's growing area grow 80% of the marine products farmed in New Zealand.
13. Sales from those farms exceed \$270 million per year. Marine Farms in Marlborough contribute around 5.7% of Marlborough's GDP (from farming and processing). The industry accounts for approximately 250 full time equivalent employment positions (FTEs) in farming and approximately 600 FTEs in processing in Marlborough.

14. The MFA was set up with the objective to promote, foster, advance, encourage, aid and develop the rights and interests of its members and the marine farming industry in general. The MFA works alongside other industry bodies to see the New Zealand Aquaculture sector recognised within New Zealand and around the world as producing healthy, high quality, environmentally sustainable aquaculture products.

## **HISTORY**

15. The proposed movement of a number of New Zealand King Salmon farms within the Marlborough Sounds is not the first such migration of cages. Salmon farms were first installed in the Sounds in the early 1980's. Farms were located where there were convenient mussel farm sites (which were converted to permit salmon farming) and where there was sheltered water, staff and vessel access for the delivering of cages, smolt, structures, feed and perhaps land based accommodation.
16. The first salmon sites were located around the hub of the pioneer mussel farmers in Wet Inlet, Mills Bay and Hallam Cove. The success of these original farms was not great for a number of reasons including; poor food quality, poor smolt handling techniques (resulting in scale loss), smolt too small to accept the seawater challenges and high summer water temperatures. Other factors included the general inexperience in farming King Salmon (they behave differently to Atlantic salmon) and the inadequate cage depth and size.
17. It soon became obvious that these first farm sites were unsustainable and the first wholesale movement of cages occurred. The Mills Bay farm was moved to the site of Marine Farm Licence 1 in Ruakaka Bay. The Wet Inlet farm was towed around to Port Underwood. Cages at Te Towaka were towed to new sites further down Hallam Cove and new farms were built at Waihinau, Port Ligar and Crail Bay.
18. The second migration of cages took place with the growth and expansion of Regal Salmon Ltd and Marlborough Salmon Ltd. New farms were located at cooler water sites in Tory Channel (Te Pangu and Clay Point), East bay and Forsyth Bay. The Ruakaka Bay farm was moved further out into the Queen Charlotte Sound to capture the cooler water flowing into the Sound via Tory Channel. Not all these new sites were successful but with the improvement of feed

quality, smolt performance and cage design, fish survival levels of up to 90% could be achieved.

19. The proposed site relocation process being undertaken by New Zealand King Salmon is an extension of these early efforts to move to better water for salmon growth and survival. The salmon industry in Marlborough needs these sites if it is to continue to grow and produce world class King Salmon at internationally competitive costs.
20. The MFA supports the mechanism behind the potential relocation of salmon sites in the Marlborough Sounds
21. The MFA supports the proposal to make regulations under sections 360A and 360B of the RMA to amend the Marlborough Sounds Resource Management Plan to enable the relocation of marine farms.
22. The MFA supports proposals which provide improved environmental performance for the industry.
23. Here in Marlborough we grow the best mussels, oysters and salmon in the world. If the world wants to continue to eat and enjoy the health benefits of this seafood, in the future this has to come from aquaculture production (as wild-catch levels remain relatively static). Here in Marlborough we are positioned well environmentally and reap the economic benefits from the aquaculture industry.
24. I personally consider the relocation process to be one of continuous improvement this has been shown in the past when salmon sites were relocated when the technology to be able to farm in deeper water came along. I see this process as another step in the process of farming salmon sustainably in the Sounds. As technology improves who knows where salmon will be farmed in 15 years' time. We need the flexibility to move with that technology.

**JONATHAN BRUCE LARGE**  
**7<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2017**