



TASMANIAN FISHING INDUSTRY COUNCIL
ABN 61 009 555 604



**Tasmanian
Shellfish
Executive
Council**

21 April 2008

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**TFIC & TSEC SUBMISSION:
Gap Analysis and Strategy Development
for Estuary Environmental Flows Policies**

TFIC as the peak industry body representing the interests of Tasmania's commercial fishers and marine farmers, in conjunction with TSEC as the peak industry body representing the interests of Tasmania's shellfish farmers, welcomes the opportunity to provide the following submission to the gap analysis project and workshop which will assess how well legislation and policy addresses environmental flows for estuaries specifically.

From the perspective of the Tasmanian seafood industry, the following statements describe the relationship and position of the industry with regard to environmental flows for estuaries:

1. Productivity of estuaries and near shore coastal waters as measured by maintenance of healthy fish stocks and farmed shellfish growth is dependent on the environmental conditions of estuaries and near shore coastal waters (inversely, farmed shellfish also contribute to water quality due to their significant filter function);
2. Estuarine health and that of near shore coastal waters is largely dependent on environmental flows; and
3. While estuarine health and that of near shore coastal waters are dependent upon sufficient quantities of environmental flows, water quality is an equally important factor.

With regard to legislation and policies as they address estuary environmental flows in Tasmania, the Tasmanian seafood industry's position is as follows:

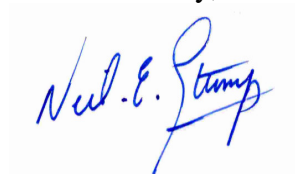
1. There is currently no policy at the State Government level specifically addressing estuary environmental flows, despite there being supporting legislation in the form of the *State Policy on Water Quality Management 1997*

and the *Water Management Act 1999*. It is acknowledged that a review is underway of the *Water Management Act 1999* and the following points are intended to contribute to this review process;

2. Specifically, lip service is paid to monitoring and collecting rigorous datasets (which then inform policy development, regulation and water resource allocation) regarding estuarine health, environmental flows and near shore coastal waters by the Water Resources Division of the Department of Primary Industries and Water;
3. More broadly, estuarine health is generally neglected in water management and environmental flows research and policy development in Tasmania;
4. As such, there are inadequate processes in place in Tasmania for determining and regulating environmental flows, and the processes which do occur neglect issues of estuarine and near shore coastal water health (and therefore productivity); and
5. Industry concerns regarding estuary environmental flows must be included in the broader development of policy.

Both TFIC and TSEC look forward to the outcomes of the workshop and to further opportunities to participate and contribute to the development of policy and regulation concerning estuary environmental flows as they affect Tasmania's seafood industry.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Neil Stump". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Neil Stump
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Tasmanian Fishing Industry Council

&

James Calvert
DEPUTY CHAIR
Tasmanian Shellfish Executive Council