Proposals for aquaculture reform:
an industry viewpoint

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“We must turn to the sea with new understanding and new technology.

We need to farm it as we farm the land.”

Aquaculture New Zealand.

The New Zealand aquaculture sector is recognised around the world as producing healthy, high quality, safe and environmentally sustainable farmed seafood.

Aquaculture New Zealand is the representative organisation for the New Zealand Greenshell™ Mussel, King Salmon and Pacific Oyster industries.
New Zealand Aquaculture industry.

Isolated from heavily populated and polluted areas, the high quality of its natural environment, spectacular coastlines and water purity make New Zealand one of the most ideal countries for growing seafood.

Seafood with the quality and flavour that is a true reflection of its source.

Satisfying the aspirations of the restaurant in London, the party in New York and the BBQ back home, the integrity of flavour and quality of our New Zealand Greenshell™ Mussels, King Salmon and Pacific Oysters is incomparable.

“The integrity of flavour is incomparable – it is almost as if New Zealand products have absorbed the beauty of where they are from.”

Tom Valenti, Chef/Owner, Quest Restaurant, New York
Aquaculture in New Zealand.

- Total value of 2008 exports was $246m
- Total value of industry for 2008 $NZ 380 million
- Employs 2,500 people
- 2 main locations in North Island:
  - Northland
  - Coromandel
- 4 locations in South Island:
  - Marlborough
  - Tasman/Golden Bay
  - Banks Peninsula
  - Stewart Island
Aquaculture in New Zealand.

- Around 66 percent of New Zealand’s aquaculture production is exported.
- New Zealand’s aquaculture produce is currently exported to 77 countries worldwide.
- The greatest contributor to the growth of aquaculture production in New Zealand has been Greenshell™ Mussels, with King salmon and Pacific Oysters as the other two significant species.
The Strategy.

- Developed in 2006 to focus industry and government on the environmentally sustainable growth of the aquaculture sector

- Main priorities are:
  - Enabling legislative framework
  - Environmental certification
  - Positive relationship with other stakeholders
  - Maori aquaculture settlement
  - Increased investment in R&D
  - Strong relationships with universities, research providers, and training providers
  - Highly skilled workforce
  - Emphasis on market development
The organisation.

- Based in Nelson, Aquaculture New Zealand was formed as a single voice for the New Zealand aquaculture sector and to implement the industry strategy.
- Aquaculture New Zealand brings together the membership of the individual species bodies, the New Zealand Mussel Industry Council, the New Zealand Salmon Farmers Association and the New Zealand Oyster Industry Association.
- Primarily funded through an industry levy, the organisation is focused on legislative reform and the creation and implementation of research and development and market development strategies.
- This work is underpinned by a focus on sustainability and recognition of the current and future role of Maori in the development of the industry.
The Vision: New Zealand’s next major primary industry.

- Aquaculture provides a real opportunity for step-change growth in New Zealand’s primary sector.
- With targeted investment in infrastructure, R&D, market development and a business friendly regulatory environment, aquaculture can grow from a boutique sector into one of New Zealand’s major primary industries.

**New Zealand Aquaculture**

- **2008**
  - $350 m
  - Focus on
    - Greenshell mussels
    - Oysters
    - Salmon

- **2025**
  - $1 bn +
  - High value species
  - High value products
  - New technologies & services
Ecologically sustainable growth.
The New Zealand Aquaculture story is ...
Environmental sustainability.

New Zealand has implemented rigorous environmental schemes to ensure rich harvests for our future generation.
Water quality.

Water quality is rigorously and constantly monitored with testing carried out to specifications and standards set by the U.S Food and Drug Administration, European Union and New Zealand Food Safety Authority.

“You can just look at the water and rich, green land and know things are pure.”

Shawn McClain, Chef/Owner, Spring Restaurant, Chicago
Quality assured shellfish.

New Zealand operates one of the strictest quality assurance programmes for shellfish in the world testing both the shellfish and water before product is declared safe for harvest.
Quality assured Salmon.

New Zealand growers are focussed on nurturing the Salmon throughout their natural growth cycle to ensure fish welfare and guarantee high quality and safe Salmon for the consumer.

This nurturing focus, isolated environment and lack of native salmon population has meant that New Zealand has not experienced the serious diseases that have been found in other Salmon producing countries where the use of antibiotics is a part of the Salmon’s diet.

New Zealand Salmon farming practices do not use antibiotics; this provides assurance the consumer is enjoying a natural and pure product.
Environmental sustainability.

- New Zealand’s isolation and island geography provides over 5,000 kilometres of coastline and pristine waters.

- The aquaculture industry protects the unpolluted waters by adhering to Environmental Codes of Practice.

- Recognition of the New Zealand aquaculture industry’s commitment to environmental sustainability has come from Blue Ocean Institute.

- Social sustainability is also of great importance to the industry – focused on ensuring Kaitiaki tanga, the sustainable use of New Zealand’s marine resources.
What environmental sustainability means.

- Environmental sustainability isn’t an optional extra for aquaculture.
- It is central to our business.
- Without a clean and healthy marine environment aquaculture cannot exist.
- If we don’t ensure that the marine ecology is cared for then we risk depleting the resources we depend on.
- And we risk undermining the confidence the New Zealand public have in us – which is what we depend on to be have access to water space.
Environmental benchmarking.

- As part of the Market Development Programme funded by NZTE, AQNZ have contracted a third part certifier to undertake a benchmark of the New Zealand Aquaculture Sector.

- I:FQC have completed Phase 1 of this work.

- The results are:
  - The New Zealand aquaculture sector Codes of Practice perform exceptionally well when compared to international standards and codes of practice.
  - All three of AQNZ’s ECOPs provide a sound basis from which the development of accredited standards and third party, independent certification programs can take place.

- The next stage is to explore options for international certification – including the recently announced Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC).
Opportunity.

- WWF has recently announced its intention to establish a new international environmental certification system for aquaculture – the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC).

- This will be similar in nature to the well know Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Marine Stewardship Council (MSC).

- We are in discussions with WWF and other environmental NGOs such as Forest and Bird to explore how New Zealand might certify New Zealand’s aquaculture sector.
Review of the Aquaculture Regime

An independent review by LECG and associates.

The LECG Report is an independent view and does not necessarily represent the views of the Government.

The report was presented to Government in April.

Government is considering its response.

Our understanding is that the next step is for Government to indicate its response to the report.
Summary of LECG Recommended Option.

- Creates a lead policy agency for aquaculture;
- Provides greater flexibility for aquaculture by removing the requirement that aquaculture can only occur within an AMA;
- Establishes a more bankable and transferable occupation right;
- Centralises the planning, allocation and consent decision-making;
- Builds on the first round of RMA reforms by making use of the EPA and national standards;
- Retains the UAE, but streamlines the process; and
- Promotes flexible methods to meet the Māori Aquaculture Settlement.
Initial thoughts.

Subject to further detailed work AQNZ supports the key elements of the LECG recommendations to:

- Create a lead agency for aquaculture;
- Establish a more bankable occupation right;
- Coordinate decision-making;
- Utilise the EPA to set national standards;
- Retain and streamline the UAE process; and
- Promote flexible methods to meet the Māori Aquaculture Settlement.
Initial thoughts.

Some of key areas which require further work:

- The precise characteristics of the occupation right;

- The location and scope of the planning regime (including the nature of AMAs); and

- The composition, function and delegation powers of the Commission.
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