

# Wrong way on salmon and planning

THE recent ABC *Four Corners* program on salmon farms highlighted the risks associated with allowing industries to operate outside of planning laws and in places which are public commons (ie the sea). Aquaculture operations have been exempt from the Tasmanian Land Use and Planning Act for close to 20 years now and inevitably a self-regulated industry will sooner or later exceed environmental thresholds (eg Macquarie

Harbour) in order to maximise production and profits. Unfortunately, the new Tasmanian Planning Scheme does not address this glaring deficiency in the Land Use and Planning Act (which currently exempts a range of land/sea uses including aquaculture, dams, mineral exploration and forestry on public and private land), but actually proposes additional exemptions. There is a growing awareness among the Tasmanian public

(as evidenced by the attendance at the Planning Matters meeting at the Hobart Town Hall recently) that excluding the public from participating in and scrutinising development proposals is fundamentally undemocratic and often leads to poor planning outcomes diminishing Tasmania's unique natural and built heritage.

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