

New Zealand King Salmon

Media Release

17 April 2014

Supreme Court ruling means yes to 150 green jobs

The Supreme Court of New Zealand has given the green light for three out of four new salmon farms in Marlborough. The new farms represent the first new space to be allocated for salmon for over twenty years.

New Zealand King Salmon CEO Grant Rosewarne says having a final decision is a relief to staff and management despite the disappointment over losing one of the farms. He says "We are pleased to finally have some certainty after three years of legal process. The decision enables us to bring economic benefits to the region while operating in an environmentally sustainable manner."

The Supreme Court decision comes three years after the company first applied for a change to the Marlborough Sounds Resource Management Plan, and for resource consents to farm salmon at nine new sites.

The applications were first submitted to the Environmental Protection Authority in 2011 and heard by a five-member Board of Inquiry.

The Board of Inquiry granted permission for four of the nine new sites applied for. The Board's decision was appealed in the High Court by two environmental groups, Sustain Our Sounds and Environmental Defence Society. The appeals in the High Court were rejected and the groups took their appeals to the Supreme Court where three of the four farms were confirmed.

Two new farms in the Pelorus Sound and one in Tory Channel total about four surface hectares in the Marlborough Sounds, and will eventually generate up to 150 new jobs for Marlborough and across the Top of the South.

The decision to grant the farm in Port Gore was overturned by the Supreme Court on the grounds the site is within an area of 'outstanding natural character and landscape'.

Mr Rosewarne says the benefits from the new farms will be significant, coming off a tiny footprint. He says "salmon farming has low feed inputs, high yields, uses little space and relieves pressure on the wild fishery. The jobs generated from this expansion could well be described as green jobs".

Once fully operational, salmon farming in Marlborough will generate around \$210m in direct revenues as well as flow-on business for local companies supporting the industry. These include transport operators, engineering firms, science providers, tourism operators, local contractors and retail shops.

In addition, without diminishing its commitment to Nelson, more of New Zealand King Salmon's operations could eventually be located in Marlborough such as some fish processing and

management functions. Mr Rosewarne says processing in Marlborough would reduce time to market by a day, meaning fresher fish to customers, while reducing costs at the same time.

Outside of the court room, New Zealand King Salmon, the Marlborough District Council, marine scientists and environmental campaigners have been working together to develop best practice guidelines for salmon farming. This work is being facilitated and guided by renowned international experts to bring confidence and independence to the process.

Mr Rosewarne says the best practice guidelines will provide a platform for agreement to be reached by all parties. He says "We are committed to work together on solutions that are acceptable all round, which are good for the economy and the community, while protecting the environment."

"This may involve some compromise by all parties to find the middle ground that is workable for both the industry and the community, and something we can proudly promote to the world."

He says the legal process including a Board of Inquiry and two court appeals has been expensive and exhausting for all concerned, and he is pleased this is over and a new era of communication and collaboration has emerged, and already a lot of common ground has been achieved.

In addition to engaging locally, New Zealand King Salmon has recently joined the Global Salmon Initiative (GSI). The GSI is a collaboration of the 14 major global salmon companies and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). It has the goal of providing a highly sustainable source of healthy protein to feed a growing global population, whilst minimising environmental footprint, and continuing to improve social contribution.

"This is a game-changer. The salmon sector working together and embracing sustainability is going to radically change aquaculture – and affect the food industry in a big way," said Dr Jason Clay, Senior Vice President of Market Transformation for WWF.

Today's Supreme Court ruling is generally consistent with the Global Salmon Initiative's goals to grow sustainably. The three new farms provide a ten year growth trajectory for New Zealand King Salmon, however, the precedent set by the decision casts doubts on all major developments in the primary industry that require space to grow - aquaculture, agriculture, forestry or horticulture.

ENDS

Contacts

Grant Rosewarne, CEO, NZ King Salmon M +64 27 246 0980

Mark Gillard, Environmental Compliance Manager, M +64 29 245 2529

Released on behalf of New Zealand King Salmon by:

Virginia Watson, Watson Ltd. T 03 579 1297, M 021 0263 9548