

APPLICATIONS FOR AN AQUACULTURE LICENCE AND LEASE

by

Harvest Road Export Pty Ltd

Shark Bay WA

May 2018

**DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
APPLICATIONS FOR AN AQUACULTURE LICENCE AND LEASE
WESTAUS OYSTERS PTY LTD
SHARK BAY WA**

File Ref	L12/18
Date of Application	21 December 2017
General Location	Shark Bay, WA
Total Area of Proposed New Sites	0.6 ha
Species	Non-maxima oysters
Culture Method	Longlines
Further Information	Contact Clara Alvarez at the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) on (08) 6551 4346 or clara.alvarez@dpird.wa.gov.au .

**Information provided by the applicant relevant to applications for an
aquaculture licence and lease**
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Introduction

This document provides the information for consideration by agencies, stakeholders and community and industry groups regarding applications submitted by Harvest Road Export Pty Ltd (Harvest Road) for an aquaculture licence and lease.

Background

On 21 December 2017, Harvest Road applied to the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) for an aquaculture licence and an aquaculture lease in waters along the Wooramel Coast in Shark Bay.

Proposal

Harvest Road proposes to establish a small-scale oyster aquaculture project at a site that comprises nine separate intertidal and subtidal areas in the Wooramel Coast area of Shark Bay. The total area of the site (that is, the total of the nine separate areas) is 6,000 square meters, or 0.6 hectares. The total site area comprises approximately 0.0004% and 0.00006% of, respectively, the Wooramel Special Purpose Zone and the total Shark Bay Marine Park.

The proposed site is located within an A Class Marine Park Reserve (the Wooramel Special Purpose Zone of the Shark Bay Marine Park) and within the Shark Bay World Heritage Area.

The purpose of the trials that would be undertaken under an aquaculture licence is twofold:

1. to validate earlier investigations in respect of the biological suitability of the water to support commercial oyster farming; and
2. to undertake environmental investigations and generate data that can inform any future application that may be made for a larger, commercial-scale, including environmental impacts of oyster farming on the sea water, benthic habitats and marine fauna.

The proposed operation will not occur over areas where dense seagrass beds are present.

Harvest Road is seeking to culture the native rock oyster species *Saccostrea cucullata* and *Saccostrea scyphophilla*.

DPIRD notes that, if granted, any aquaculture licence and aquaculture lease would be for the areas specified in this current application. Any future proposal for a larger area would require an application to vary the licence and lease and consequently entail the full consultation process undertaken for the current application, as outlined in Administrative Guideline No. 1.

Source of Stock and Methods

For intertidal culture, Harvest Road proposes to utilise longlines set up in arrays of triplicate lines. Each triplicate longline will be supported by posts and hold 45 oyster baskets, with a total of 135 baskets placed on each trial site.

For subtidal culture, Harvest Road proposes to use single longlines that will follow naturally-occurring channels within the Wooramel Bank. The subtidal longlines will be supporting oyster baskets and suspended by floats held in place by two screw anchors.

Oysters that occur naturally in Shark Bay or the surrounding areas will be used as broodstock. The collection of broodstock would be made under the authority of a Ministerial exemption, which will be subject to conditions that deal with biosecurity and environmental risks, including biosecurity and genetic differentiation.

Oyster broodstock will be transported to the Albany Shellfish Hatchery, where they would be spawned and the larvae reared to produce spat to a certain size. The hatchery operates under strict biosecurity procedures to prevent any potential spread of diseases to wild populations of oysters or other marine shellfish. Prior to being moved from the hatchery, spat will be certified as being free of any clinical disease.

Diagrams

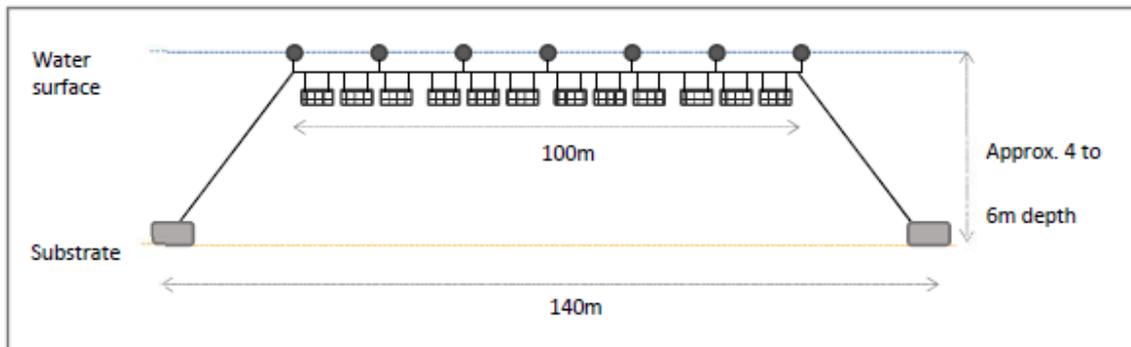


Fig:1 Layout of a subtidal site – blocks at either end indicate screw anchors.



Fig: 2 Picture showing baskets on a triplicate line

Management and Environmental Monitoring

The proposed sites are located within the Wooramel Bank, in the Shark Bay Marine Park, which was listed as a World Heritage area in 1991. The Wooramel bank is also zoned as Special Purpose for seagrass protection. Activities that do not threaten or damage the seagrass or associated conservation values are permitted under the zoning plan. Aquaculture is listed as permitted use provided it has been subject to assessment.

To ensure all known environmental risks are being considered, DPIRD is referring the proposal to the *Environmental Protection Authority under section 38 of the Environmental Protection Act 1986*.

Harvest Road is committed to a highly precautionary approach for environmental performance objectives, which ensures that the oyster aquaculture operation will maintain and protect the values of the World heritage property and the Shark Bay Marine Park.

Because the cultured oysters filter naturally-occurring algae from the sea water, there is no requirement for any additional or supplementary feeding; consequently, the aquaculture of the proposed species is considered to pose no significant environmental or ecological issues, with identified risks accommodated by Harvest Road's Management and Environmental Monitoring Plan (MEMP).
