

APPLICATIONS FOR AN AQUACULTURE LICENCE AND LEASE

by

Little rat Coral Farm Pty Ltd

Abrolhos Islands WA

April 2018

**DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT (DPIRD)
APPLICATIONS FOR AN AQUACULTURE LICENCE AND LEASE**

**Little Rat Coral Farm Pty Ltd
Abrolhos Islands WA**

File Ref	L35/18
Date of Application	15 February 2018
General Location	Little Rat Island, Abrolhos Islands, WA
Area of Proposed Site	total of 6.1 hectares
Species	various coral species
Culture Method	grow-out
Other Sites (within 5 n mile)	Radar Holdings Pty Ltd, Grange Court Pty Ltd, Abrolhos Aquaculture Australia Pty Ltd.
Further Information	Contact Clara Alvarez at DPIRD Aquaculture Branch on (08) 6551 4346 or clara.alvarez@dpird.wa.gov.au .

Information provided by the applicant relevant to an application for grant of an aquaculture licence

Little Rat Coral Farm Pty Ltd

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Introduction

This document outlines the information for consideration by agencies, stakeholders and community and industry groups regarding a proposal submitted by Little Rat Coral Farm Pty Ltd (LRCF) for an aquaculture licence and lease.

Background

Following successful coral aquaculture trials under an Exemption issued in 2015, LRCF has made an application to the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development for an aquaculture licence and an aquaculture lease within the Easter Island Group of the Abrolhos Islands.

Proposal

LRCF is seeking to establish a coral aquaculture operation at three sites within the Eastern Group: one Research & Development site located adjacent to the Little Coral Farm access jetty (0.048 hectares) and two grow-out sites west and east of Little Rat Island of 5.1 and 0.8 hectares respectively (Attachment 1).

The coral species proposed for aquaculture belong to the following genera:

- *Acropora*;
- *Pocillopora*;
- *Acanthastrea*;
- *Galaxea*;
- *Blastomussa*; and
- *Lobophyllia*.

The purpose for LRCF's proposed coral operation is to produce commercial volumes of coral for the Australian and International aquarium trade.

The proponent is also seeking to apply for an exemption to enable it to collect broodstock of the proposed species.

Source of Stock and Methods

LRCF proposes to asexually culture various species of corals by using the fragmentation technique. Locally harvested coral will be broken up into several pieces; the larger parts will be kept to establish broodstock and the smaller parts used for fragmentation, asexual reproduction and growth trials.

Once the fragments have been harvested, coral will be placed on either fixed or floating artificial substrates (Figure 1).

With regard to broodstock, LRCF proposes to collect endemic coral broodstock from within two kilometres of the grow-out sites. The collection area will be defined under the relevant exemption.

Diagram

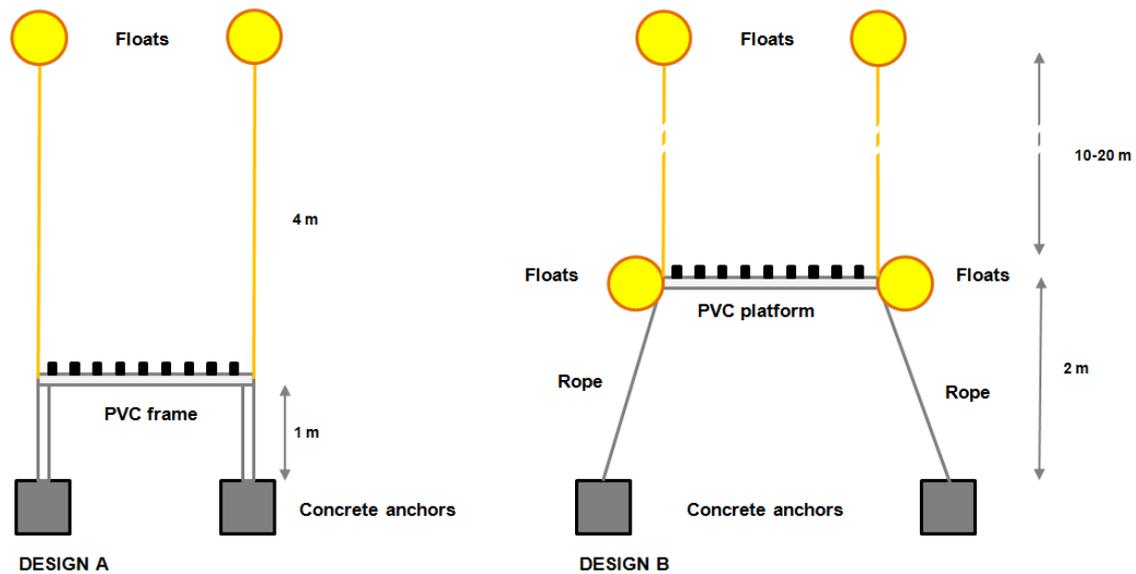


Figure 1:

Design A: PVC frame anchored to the seafloor for shallow water.

Design B: Floating PVC frames for deeper water

Both designs (A & B) will use PVV material to allow light penetration through the platform, and maximise water movement around the corals

Management and Environmental Monitoring

The biosecurity risk of this project is considered low due to the proposed species originating from local waters and not requiring additional or supplementary feeding.

LRCF has submitted a Management and Environmental Monitoring Plan (MEMP), which includes biosecurity controls such as quarantine protocols in the event of a disease outbreak. The risk of disease through coral is therefore considered low.

All broodstock will be subject to broodstock exemption conditions that deal with biosecurity and environmental risks.

Environmental monitoring will be conducted at a regular basis by conducting qualitative health assessments of broodstock and coral fragments on the artificial substrates at the sites.
