

**APPLICATION FOR THE VARIATION OF AN AQUACULTURE
LICENCE AND LEASE**

by

Wildblue Holdings Pty Ltd

Abrolhos Islands WA

November 2021

**DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT (DPIRD)**

**APPLICATION FOR THE VARIATION OF AN AQUACULTURE LICENCE AND
LEASE**

**Wildblue Holdings Pty Ltd
Abrolhos Islands WA**

File Ref	L149/19
Date of Application	20/08/2021
General Location	Pelsaert Island Group, Abrolhos Islands, WA
Total Area of Proposed Site	11.4 hectares
Authorised Species	Various species of seaweed
Proposed species	<i>Asparagopsis taxiformis</i>
Culture Method	Grow out using longlines
Other Sites (within 5 n mile)	Abrolhos Island Oysters; Sea Urchin Pty Ltd; Pelsaert WA Pty Ltd, WTN Nominees Pty Ltd & Pelsaert (WA) Pty Ltd; West Australian Octopus Pty Ltd; Andrew Joseph & Tracey Lee Basile; Batavia Coral Farm Pty Ltd; and Peter and Karen Armstrong Bruce Cunningham
Further Information	Contact Druimé Nolan at Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (08) 6319 3659 or druime.nolan@dpird.wa.gov.au .

Information provided by the applicant relevant to an application for the variation of an aquaculture licence and lease

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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 Wildblue Holdings Pty Ltd (Wildblue Holdings) for an aquaculture licence and lease.

Background

On 20 October 2018, Wildblue Holdings was granted a Licence in the Arolhos Islands, which authorises the aquaculture of several macroalgae or seaweed species (macroalgae are large algae such as kelp, which often occur in dense beds attached to the seabed) at a site within the Pelsaert Island Group of the Arolhos Islands.

Proposal

Wildblue Holdings has made an application to vary its Licence to add the algae species *Asparagopsis taxiformis* to its Licence.

Source of Stock and Methods

The site consists of 200 algal growth panels 15m x 1m in dimension and consists of 15m lines strung at 1 m intervals. The panels are held on the water's surface using four floats. The panels are held in place by 4 x 10 kg galvanised sting ray anchors, embedded 10-20 cm beneath the sand bottom and fixed to each float.

Wildblue Holdings has a land-based nursery aquarium system. The nursery aquarium system is used to develop fragments of algal colonies before being deployed onto one of the production panels for grow-out.

Under an existing ministerial exemption Wildblue Holdings uses seaweed fragments from local broodstock collected within a one nautical mile radius of the Wallabi, Easter and Pelsaert Island Groups.

The seaweed fragments are placed in the growout plot until harvest.

New licence conditions will be imposed to authorise the collection of *Asparagopsis* sp. seedstock

Diagram

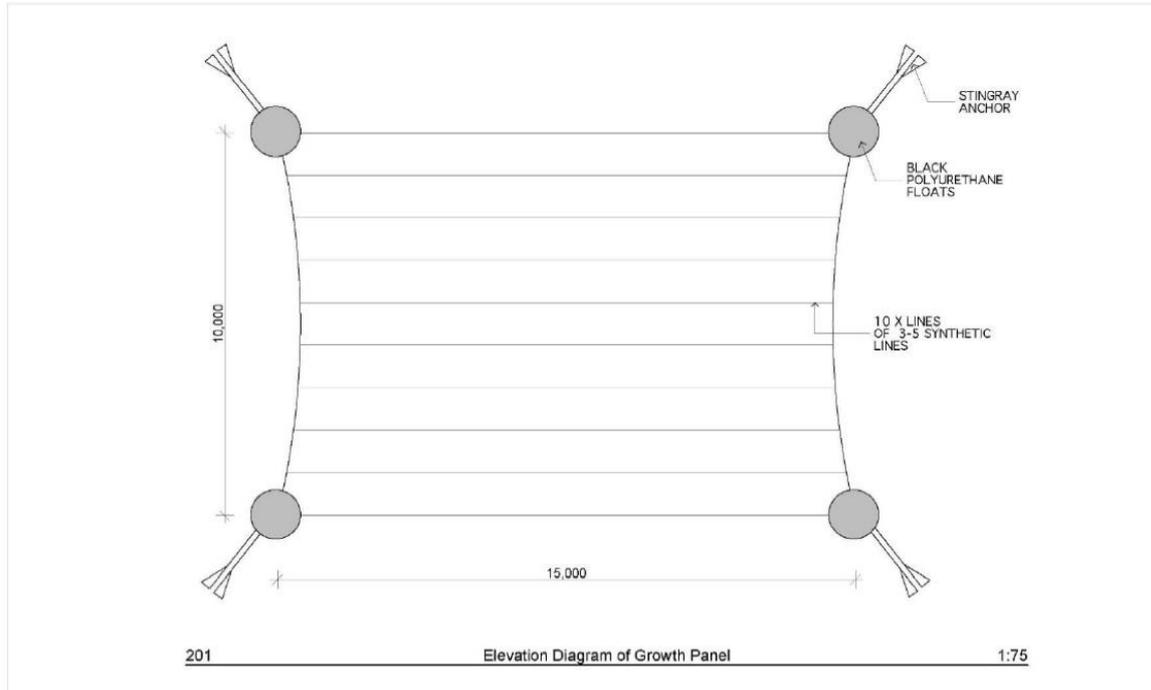


Figure 1:
Production Panel configuration

Management and Environmental Monitoring

The biosecurity risk of this project is considered low due to the proposed species originating from local waters. As seaweed produce no faecal material and require no supplementary feed, it is unlikely that the water or sediment quality will be impacted by the operation.

Seaweed broodstock will originate from within the Abrolhos Islands to ensure that no exotic pathogens are introduced to the area.

New licence conditions will be imposed to authorise the collection of seedstock of proposed species. Collection of broodstock and seedstock is subject to reports being made to DPIRD and biosecurity measures as described in the approved Management and Environmental Monitoring Plan (MEMP).

Wildblue Holdings has submitted an updated MEMP, which includes biosecurity protocols and incident and emergency procedures. The risk of disease through seaweed aquaculture is considered low.

It is also unlikely that the operation will have an impact on marine fauna because of the shallow nature of the proposed site and the proposed seaweed species for aquaculture not being subject to any significant predation. Nonetheless, the proponent will be implementing management strategies to protect marine fauna from entanglement and other interactions.

Risks

The proposed aquaculture activity poses no significant environmental issues, with identified risks proposed to be mitigated by WildBlue Holdings MEMP.

The proposed species of seaweed occurs naturally in the surrounding environment, therefore the risk of the introduction of disease is low. All spores and fronds, produced for grow out will be the progeny of local broodstock and will be transferred to Aquaculture Licence Site 1655 Pelseart Island, as per the licence conditions.