

APPLICATIONS FOR AN AQUACULTURE LICENCE AND LEASE

by

Wildblue Holdings Pty Ltd

Abrolhos Islands WA

May 2018

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

**Wildblue Holdings Pty Ltd
Abrolhos Islands WA**

File Ref	L36/18
Date of Application	15 February 2018
General Location	Pelsaert Island Group, Abrolhos Islands, WA
Total Area of Proposed Sites	10 hectares
Species	various species of seaweed
Culture Method	grow-out using longlines
Other Sites (within 5 n mile)	Abrolhos Pearls WA Pty Ltd; Sea Urchin Pty Ltd; Pelsaert WA Pty Ltd, WTN Nominees Pty Ltd & Pelsaert (WA) Pty Ltd; Zeewyk Pearls & Diving Pty Ltd; Andrew Joseph & Tracey Lee Basile; Batavia Coral Farm Pty Ltd; and Peter and Karen Armstrong
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 and lease

Wildblue Holdings Pty Ltd

May 2018

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.

Please note that the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (the Department) has received and is currently assessing a total of six applications for the grant of an aquaculture licence in the Abrolhos Islands. Three of those applications have already been circulated for consultation; the remaining two will be sent out soon.

Further, it is important to note that the assessment of an application for an aquaculture licence is a separate and independent process to that required to hold structures on Body Corporate leased land on the Abrolhos Islands. To acquire and hold structures on Body Corporate leased land, holders of aquaculture licences must make contact with the relevant Body Corporate, which is the primary contact for enquiries and approvals in this regard.

Please note that comments received for previous applications for aquaculture licences in the Abrolhos Islands will be considered in the assessment of all applications for the same species groups in the Islands.

Background

In 2017, Wildblue Holdings was issued an Exemption to conduct an aquaculture trial on macroalgae or seaweed at a site in the Abrolhos Islands (macroalgae are large algae such as kelp, which often occur in dense beds attached to the seabed). After the trial, Wildblue Holdings made an application to the Department for an aquaculture licence and lease within the Pelsaert Island Group of the Abrolhos Islands. The area proposed in the current application is different from the trial site under the Exemption.

Proposal

Wildblue Holdings proposes to culture the following seaweed species:

- *Eucheuma denticulate*;
- *Eucheuma gelatinous*;
- *Eucheuma speciosum*;
- *Gelidiaceae*
- *Meristotheca papulose (jigunacai)*;
- *Solieria robusta*;
- *Pterocladia lucida*;
- *Dumontiaceae Gigartina*;
- *Pyropia*; and
- *Portieria hornemannii*.

These species have been selected because they may produce substances with potential medical benefits and will be cultured for a commercial and medical research purpose.

The proposed aquaculture site is located near Pelsaert Island and comprises a 10-hectare area of coastal waters over a sandy substrate.

Source of Stock and Methods

Wildblue Holdings is proposing to install 200 structured production panels within the site, consisting of floating parallel line systems. From each of the lines, a synthetic fibre line will be hung every 50 cm, which will be used to hold seaweed during growout.

The corners of each production panel are held on the surface of the water by a float, which is fixed to “Stingray” anchors to hold the panels in place. The anchors are placed on sandy bottom to avoid any damage to sensitive benthic habitats such as coral.

Wildblue Holdings proposes to use seaweed fragments from local broodstock collected within one nautical mile off the Wallabi, Easter and Pelsaert Island Groups. The seaweed fragments are placed in the growout plot until harvest.

Diagram

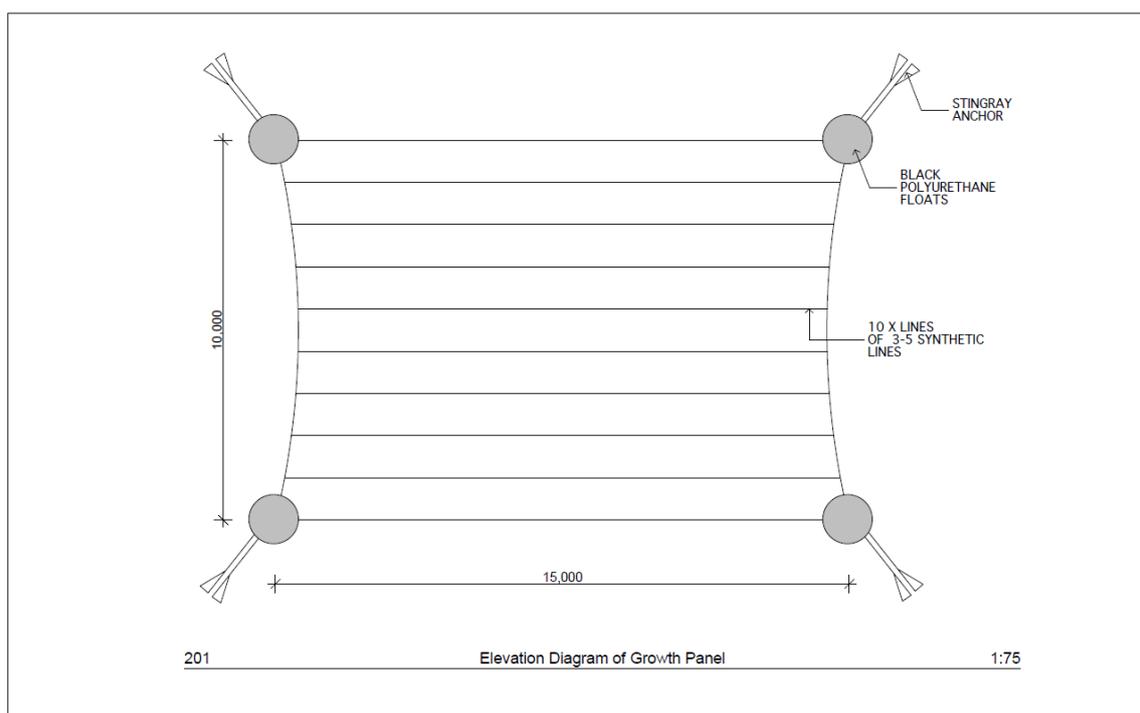


Figure 1:
Indicative diagram of production panel configuration

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 additional or supplementary feeding, it is unlikely that the water or sediment quality will be impacted by the farming of seaweed.

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

The collection of all broodstock will be authorised under an exemption and subject to conditions that deal with biosecurity and environmental risks.

Wildblue Holdings has submitted a Management and Environmental Monitoring Plan (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.

Diagram

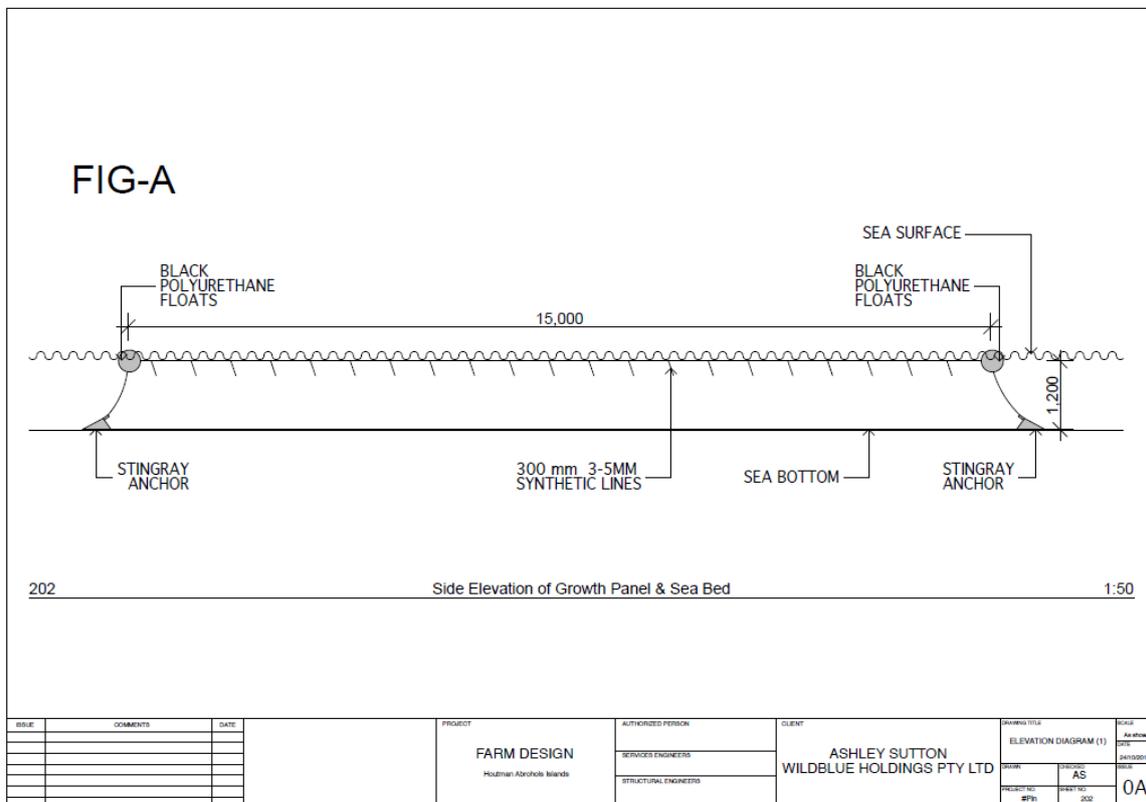


Figure 2:
Cross section of a production panel