

**APPLICATIONS FOR THE GRANT OF AN AQUACULTURE
LICENCE AND LEASE**

by

Eco Abrolhos Aquaculture Pty Ltd

Abrolhos Islands WA

March 2021

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

Eco Abrolhos Aquaculture Pty Ltd

File Ref	L67/20
Date of Application	12 June 2020
General Location	Abrolhos Islands WA
Area of Proposed Sites	3.683, 4.166, 0.020 and 0.074 hectares
Proposed species	various species of seaweed
Culture Method	grow-out
Other Sites (within 5 n mile)	Nathan Boothman Radar Holdings Pty Ltd Little Rat Coral Farm Pty Ltd Grange Court Pty Ltd Abrolhos Aquaculture Australia Pty Ltd Rat Island Coral Aquaculture Pty Ltd
Further Information	Contact Helen Lucich at DPIRD Aquaculture Management Directorate on (08) 6551 4337 or helen.lucich@dpiird.wa.gov.au .

Information provided by the applicant relevant to an application for grant 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 Eco Abrolhos Aquaculture Pty Ltd (EAA) for an aquaculture licence and lease.

Proposal

On 12 June 2020, EAA made an application to the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) for an aquaculture licence and lease at four offshore sites near Big Rat Island. The four sites comprise areas of 3.683, 4.166, 0.020 and 0.074 hectares, respectively (see attached site plan).

In its application, EAA seeks to establish an aquaculture operation for the grow-out and harvest of the following species:

- *Asparagopsis taxiformis*;
- *Caulerpa lentillifera*;
- *Ecklonia radiata*;
- *Gracilaria textorii/canaliculata/preissiana*;
- *Laurencia filiformis*;
- *Pterocladia lucida (Gelidium lucidum)*;
- *Ulva lactuca*;

In addition to the culture of the proposed species, EAA will also operate farm tours to make the operation more viable and boost tourism in the region.

Source of Stock and Methods

EAA will collect seaweed cuttings from wild stocks within the Abrolhos Islands under a Ministerial Exemption, subject to approval. The cuttings will then be attached to a suitable grow-out system within the proposed sites.

At the initial stages of the operation, EAA will be trialling various types of culture methods such as benthic plots, fixed off-bottom systems, floating rafts and the “Vertikultur” method (see Figure 1), to ascertain the best design for optimal growth rates. Moorings will be anchored in sandy substrate to avoid any damage to sensitive benthic habitats.

Panels, ropes and a system of layered mesh at EAA’s two smaller proposed sites will also be used to capture floating vegetation, encouraging it to anchor and grow. The nets will be monitored constantly for the types and quantities of seaweed that it gathers and will be used as a nursery.

Diagram

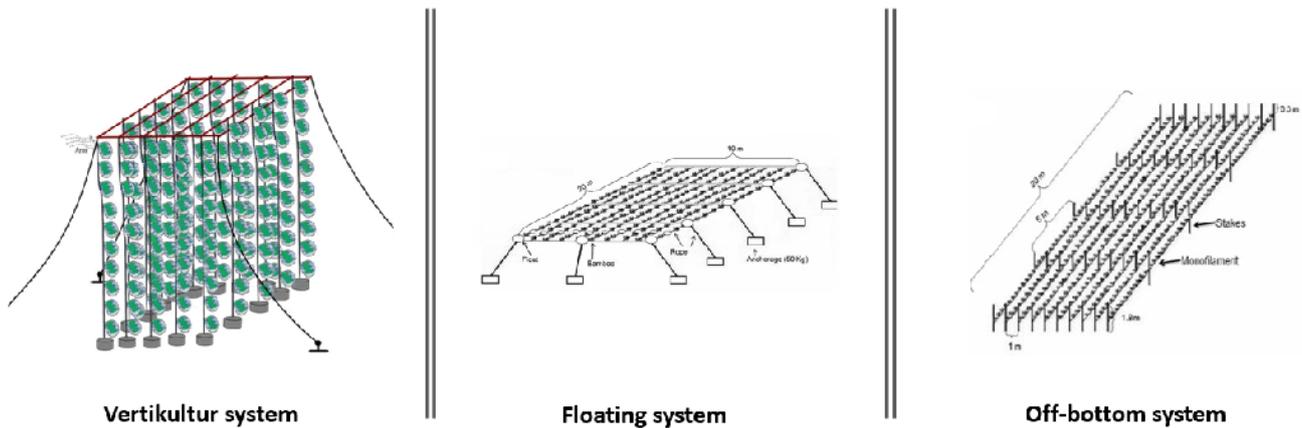


Figure 1:
Grow-out system examples.

Management and Environmental Monitoring

EAA has submitted a Management and Environmental Monitoring Plan (MEMP), which includes environmental management processes, biosecurity protocols and incident and emergency procedures. The biosecurity risk through the aquaculture of seaweed at the proposed sites is considered low, due to the species originating from local waters and not requiring any supplementary feed.

Monitoring stations will be implemented in and adjacent to the aquaculture sites to quantify any effects on benthos and marine fauna in the area. Each monitoring station will replicate the coverage of grow-out systems. Visual underwater surveys will be conducted at the monitoring stations prior to site establishment and quarterly afterwards to assess any changes in the environment. Boat crew and divers will also monitor environmental parameters during regular inspections of grow-out sites. Equipment aboard the vessel will provide parameters such as water temperature, current strength and turbidity levels. Visual observation will also assist to identify the presence of foreign organisms that may be present on the grow-out systems.

In the event of a marine mammal entanglement, EAA will invoke the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions' Marine Mammal Entanglement Plan. Further environmental aspects associated with EAA's operational components are covered in the MEMP.

The Ministerial exemption for the collection of broodstock will be subject to conditions that deal with biosecurity and environmental risks.
