



Newsletter
**Moreton Island Protection
Committee Inc.**

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MAIL

POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA

Fish Cage Protest

Bay and Beach - All Welcome!!

Exhibition Day Wednesday 14 th August

A coalition of community groups, conservation groups, and tourist operators are organising an on site beach and boat protest to the proposed fish cages. For those without their own boat the Moreton Venture and the Tangalooma Flyer are providing discounted fares. The Tangalooma Flyer and the Get Wets Sports boat will take people wishing to participate in the boat protest. An on the beach meeting will be held in conjunction with an on site boat protest. \$20 includes the discount ferry fare and a small donation to operators assisting during the day.

Cost \$20 includes transport to Moreton and to the protest

Moreton Venture 4WD and passenger ferry.

Departs 6am

Return 3pm Leaves Moreton Island

Travel time across the Bay 2 hours

Moreton Venture Terminal

Howard Smith Drive, White Island-Lytton.

Please arrive 30 minutes prior to departure

Tangalooma Flyer Tangalooma Resort ferry.

Departs 10am

Return 3.30pm Leaves Tangalooma Jetty

Travel time across the Bay 1 hr and 15 min.

Tangalooma Flyer Terminal

Holt St, Pinkenba

Please arrive 30 minutes prior to departure

Please book to reserve a place on 3321 1463 now!

The beach protest will be held at Tangalooma Point or Shark Spit. The location will be chosen on the day once the weather and numbers are known. Transport from the ferries to the AGM/ beach protest site is being arranged. We will transport eskies for those who prefer to walk. Those arriving on the Moreton Venture will have time for a walk to The Desert, or the Big Sandhills if the protest is at Shark Spit.

The guest speaker for the beach meeting will be Dr Peter Hale, from The Ecology Centre of the University of Queensland. Dr Peter Hale will highlight the vulnerability of marine mammals - dolphins and dugongs in Moreton Bay. The guest speaker will be introduced once passengers from the Flyer have arrived at the beach protest. Those joining the water protest can board the Tangalooma Flyer at 11.20am on its arrival at Tangalooma, or The Get Wet Sports boat from the beach protest site. Interesting speakers will be on both boats.

BYO picnic lunch - tea and coffee will be provided at the AGM/beach meeting

Our AGM will be held prior to the beach protest, which starts at 12 noon

Boats to mark the cage site

If can bring your own boat to the protest then contact Natalie or Julie at the **Queensland Conservation Council** on 3221 0188 or **Moreton@qccqld.org.au** Web site: **www.qccqld.org.au/savethebay**

Concerned about fish cages in the Bay? Enjoy a day on the Bay and express your concern!

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Statement of Aims

1. To promote the preservation of Moreton Island as a natural area to be managed for public recreation and enjoyment, provided always that the recreational uses are consistent with conservation aims.
2. To foster the conservation of the vegetation, fauna and natural features of Moreton.
3. To facilitate public awareness and appreciation of Moreton Island as a natural area and encourage support for its preservation and management in accordance with these objects.
4. To co-operate with, or promote co-operation by any means with and among persons, trusts, corporations, firms, associations, institutions, governments, instrumentalities or government, municipal authorities and other bodies in the Commonwealth or its Territories or elsewhere for the purpose of carrying out any object of the organisation.
5. To oppose any development or usage of Moreton Island which is contrary to the preservation and good management of the island in accordance with these objects.
6. Generally, to take such lawful action as it considers necessary or appropriate in the interests of promoting the preservation and good management of Moreton Island in accordance with these objects.

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Moreton Island Protection Committee or its members. Contributions to this newsletter are welcome, but the editors accept no responsibility for alterations made to articles.

Printed by

Rex Leo Ph: 3878 5248
Editor: Alan Genninges

Fish cage proposals Calendar of events

Spring 1977 The Intergraph Corporation, Alabama USA proposes a fish cages S.W. of Tangalooma. Tangalooma Resort and Conservation groups object to the proposal during public consultation by the Dept of Environment.

Dec 1977 The Qld. Dept. of Environment refuses to issue the permit necessary under the Marine Parks Act 1982 or a licence under the Environmental Protection Act 1994. Officers concerns regarding the possible impact of the sea cages on a pristine area of the Bay were not able to be addressed by the proponent.

7th June 2001 A referral submitted by Dr Amos to Environment Australia is posted on the Internet. Dr Amos had approached the Dept. of State Development with a proposal for fish cages S.W. of Tangalooma Point. Discussions followed with the Dept. of Environment who recommended submitting a referral of the project to Environment Australia to determine if Environment Australia considered the project could have national environmental significance.

12th June 2001. An article by Siobhain Ryan, in the Courier Mail reported the opposition by Sun Fish to a proposal by Sun Aqua for a fish cage culture S.W. of Tangalooma Point. Proponent Dr Amos, Director of Sun Aqua Pty Ltd, is quoted "We understand that there is support for this proposal at a political level." Siobhain Ryan was alerted to the issue by the referral to Environment Australia being posted. The C.M. article alerted the public to the proposal. Numerous submissions were made by conservation groups, tourist operators and scientists to Envi-

ronment Australia. Environment Australia declared the project potentially significant, and therefore required an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The EIS process administration was handed over to the Qld government.

July 2002 Working to the Terms of Reference, a draft EIS is being prepared by Dr Amos and will be submitted to the Co-ordinator General (Qld). If the Co-ordinator General deems the EIS to have adequately addressed the terms of reference for the EIS, then it will released for public comment. **The public then has 28 days to to comment .**

Opponents of the proposal are awaiting the public release of the EIS. As there are only 28 days for public comment following the release of the EIS, it is important for public awareness to be raised now. Individuals and organisation concerned about the proposed fish cages are currently informing the public and demonstrating to government that there is significant opposition to the proposal. By becoming well informed regarding the effects of fish cage aquaculture elsewhere in the world and the likely affects of their operation in the most pristine part of Moreton Bay, the public is becoming more strident in their opposition to fish cages in Moreton Bay.

Much depends on the perception of the meaning of a significant effect when State Government officers assess the EIS. We need to demonstrate that there is strong public support for any recommendations by public officers against this proposal.

An apology to our members for material repeated from previous newsletters. Alan

Fish Cage Culture

Concerns regarding cage culture

Nutrient escape into surrounding water. Land based aquaculture dams are required to meet stringent controls regarding the release of wastes from fish dams. Sea cages totally bypass this requirement as the holding of fish in cages open to the surrounding water allow uneaten food and fish excrement to escape unhindered into the surrounding waters.

A major problem with Sun Aqua proposal is that

- its **big**
- its positioned in the most pristine section of the bay in a position where nutrients can circulate around the bay.

How big is big?

Initially production is targeted at 600 tonnes per year with a planned potential to grow to 2,000 tonnes.

Currently all aquacultured barramundi in Queensland totals about 375 tonnes. This is produced at 3 different sites with only one of these sites being a sea cage facility. Total importation of Snapper from New Zealand is about 500 tonnes.

Production of 2,000 tonnes of fish per annum will require an annual input of 5,500 tonnes of food or 15 tonnes per day. (It takes about 2.76 tonnes of food to produce 1 tonne of fish) Fish harvested per day will average 5.5 tonnes.

Of the 15 tonnes of food fed daily to the caged fish, 9.5 tonnes of food will be released into the environment in the form of

#uneaten food

metabolic waste product - fish excrement

About 0.9 tonne of nitrogen and 0.24 tonne of phosphorus will be released into the surrounding waters each day.

Moreton Bay already has increased nutrient input in the form of sewerage from urban areas and nutrients leached from soils of urban areas and farms. The western part of the Bay has been significantly degraded by increased nutrients. Due to the inflow of oceanic water and dilution through distance the eastern parts of the Bay are still in pristine condition. Here lies the problem - pristine water is of course critical for a successful sea cage farm, but the farm will pollute the pristine waters of eastern Moreton Bay.

Since the above figures were calculated, it seems the proposed maximum production has risen from 2,000 tonnes to 2,400 tonnes per annum..

Sea cages a risk factor for algal blooms

Nutrient enrichment is a major cause of algal blooms. Lyngbya is a toxic blue green algae whose occurrence in the seems to be on the increase. This increase is thought to be linked to increased nutrient levels in the Bay. In the summer of 1996 a Lyngbya bloom covered 7 square kilometres of Deception Bay. Smaller Lyngbya blooms on Moreton and Amity banks have already been associated with decreased growth of Seagrass meadows. These meadows are an important for dugong feeding. The proposed site for the sea cages is adjacent to the Moreton Banks. The deeper areas where the proposed cages will be sited also have deep water sea grasses which also seem to be an important food source for dugong. Any decrease in water clarity due to particles from net cleaning, food or enhanced algal growth either in the water column or on the surface of the sea grasses will significantly decrease growth of deeper water sea grasses. Deep water grasses already have to cope with low levels of sunlight. Lower growth rates can result in elimination of sea grasses or at very least less food for dugongs.

Lyngbya blooms seem to be associated with increased Iron and Phosphorus levels. Fish food is high in iron to maximize fish growth. On the Barrier Reef just the increased nutrients (phosphorus) from droppings of seabirds roosting on a helicopter landing pad has resulted in a localised Lyngbya bloom. Lyngbya is very toxic to humans and fish and is suspected of adversely affecting turtles and dugongs in the Bay.

About the proponent

Dr Julian Amos, director of Sun Aqua Pty Ltd.

Dr Julian Amos, was appointed to the Hydro Tasmania Board on 18th May 1999. His PhD is in Botany and he was a Cabinet Minister in the Tasmanian Parliament with the portfolios of Primary Industry, Energy and Forests. He has established his own business and was the founder of and currently conducts, a business management consultancy specializing in negotiating skills and dispute resolution. Dr Amos was also a director of the office of the Minister for Agriculture, Forests and Lands in NSW and the inaugural executive officer for Salmon Enterprises of Tasmania, the Tasmanian salmon industry's representative body. *Source:* <http://www.hydro.com.au/newsroom/photolib/board/>

On 12th May 2000 Dr Amos became chairperson of the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery Management Advisory Committee - a committee set up by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority.

Whats on!!! Bookings 3321 1463

Aug Wed 14 th Day trip AGM Tangalooma Pt.
Aug 26 - 30th - Alan setting up B.L. camp
Sept 13 - 15 Blue Lagoon Camp
Oct 18 - 20 Fully catered - Exchange Teachers Assoc
Nov 8 - 10 Blue Lag .

Nov 15 - 17 Blue L. BYO food Bus all weekend
Nov 22 - 24 Blue L. BBQ provided Bus all weekend

AGM and Fish Cage Protest

Bookings are required so we can co-ordinate transport. We are anticipated a strong media presence and so request members and friends to come and enjoy a day on Moreton and be counted.

Aug Mon 26 - Fri 30

Alan is setting up Members familiar with Alans camp are welcome to come along - ring Alan direct on **3371 6887** Cost; \$50 enough to cover barge fares and park fees.

Sept 13 - 25 Blue Lagoon Camp

The first Friday night barge for the season. Alan's camp is available BYO food and bedding.
Cost Adults \$60 (No transport during the weekend)

Oct 18 - 20 Fully Catered Blue Lag.

Exchange Teachers Assoc. This is the only fully catered camp this year and there are places available on this Exchange Teachers Association trip.
Ring Alan on 3371 6887
Cost for 6 pm Fri departure is \$140.

Nov 8 -10 Blue Lagoon

Alan's camp is available BYO food and bedding. Cost Adults \$60 (No transport during the weekend)

Nov 15 -17 Blue Lagoon BYO food.

Cost Adults \$60 (No transport during the weekend)
Adults \$85 (Transport during the weekend)
Planting spinifex grass at the Cape can include sunset at the Cape.

Nov 22 - 24 Blue Lag. Wildlife Pres Soc

BBQ Saturday night is provided.
Cost Adults \$100 High School \$65; Pre School \$50
Includes; pre dinner nibblies at the Cape at Sunset and BBQ Saturday night
4WD Bus transport during the week-end.

All Trips to Blue Lagoon

MIPC camps at Blue Lagoon use Alans Moreton Experience camp. Stretchers and marquee tents are provided. Your BYO food can be cooked using gas stoves in the camp kitchen. Chairs, trestle tables and wash up bowls are provided. Tea and coffee is also provided. Cost includes barge fares, transport to Blue Lagoon and applicable park fees. On the basic trips, the only 4WD transport provided is to the camp from the barge and then the return. To make up numbers all groups welcome non-members.

If interested in undertaking volunteer work please indicate when booking and we will contact the rangers to arrange a task to suit your interest.

For most trips there is an option of coming on the **8am Friday and or returning on the 2pm Monday** barge for an additional cost of \$5.

Bookings and information 3321 1463

We try to place any trip changes, errors in the newsletter, new trip details on the message bank. We will also confirm your booking with a return call. Executive members phone numbers are on Page 2.

Stop Press

A get-together at Blue Lake

Margaret Islin on behalf of the Minjerribah Moorgumpin Elders in Council have invited all to morning tea and a get-together on Sunday 25th August when visiting Neem-Be-Ba Lookout at Blue Lake on Stradbroke Island
(The Minjerribah Moorgumpin Elders in Council have joined as an affiliated group to National Parks Association and MIPC)

MORETON ISLAND PROTECTION COMMITTEE Inc.

Membership form

Name -----

Address -----

----- Post code -----

Phone

Res ----- Wk -----

Payment for memberships in arrears is not required but appreciated. Please allocate

\$----- for ----- years membership in advance

\$----- for arrears; \$ ----- as a donation
Annual fee \$10; Household \$15 Pensioners /Conc. \$5

LIKE TO BECOME MORE INVOLVED?

Then leave a message on 3321 1463 or mipc@acenet.net.au and we'll advise details of the next executive meeting - (First Sunday of the month)
Email address (PLEASE USE CAPITALS)

.....
I would prefer to receive my newsletter by Email
Yes or No _____

Any comments _____

Ph: **3321 1463** Email: **mipc@acenet.net.au**
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