A Sustainable Growth Story

New Zealand's aquaculture sector is a vital part of the nation's economy, recognized for its leadership in sustainable and responsible management. The sector's growth is driven by innovation, advancements in technology, and a commitment to environmental sustainability.

Aquaculture in New Zealand

- $400 million sector
- Currently 3 commercial species: Greenshell™ mussels, Pacific Oysters, King 'Chinook' salmon
- Growth target of $1 billion by 2025 (potential to be much higher)
- Growth through scale, productivity and value added marketing
- Underpinned by a commitment to environmental sustainability
Commitment to Sustainable Practices

Pristine environments = Pristine products

Underpinning the aquaculture development strategy is a firm commitment to further build the environmental sustainability and integrity of the sector.

The industry’s current environmental framework is composed of Environmental Codes of Practice (ECOPs) specific to each species. These ECOPs have been independently benchmarked against similar international standards and performed exceptionally well in comparison.

However, the environmental sustainability landscape is rapidly changing and there is an ever-increasing need to demonstrate verification of our sustainable practices to both the New Zealand public and our international markets.

A Sustainable Future

In order to achieve this, the industry intends to develop an evolving and cohesive environmental management framework that:

- Improves environmental outcomes
- Delivers operational benefits to sector participants
- Maximises market opportunity for New Zealand’s aquaculture products
- Recognises the expectations of stakeholders and communities
- Enhances the sector’s reputation for credible environmental stewardship

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<tr>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Economic</th>
<th>Environment</th>
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<td>• An opportunity to strengthen relations with local community</td>
<td>• To gain the greatest commercial benefit through environmental integrity</td>
<td>• To build an environmental management framework to protect its local eco system</td>
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Revised Environmental Standards

We are currently re-drafting the three species ECOPs so that they reflect current industry practices, the current regulatory framework, current market issues and leading global standards.

Eight key objectives have been identified towards a high level of environmental management. These are demonstrated in the ecowheel diagram which shows each key programme element in the green ring with objectives within these programmes radiating out from the centre.

In conjunction with the revised ECOPs we will be developing KPIs for assessment of compliance with the standards and a protocol for scheduled third party assessments against the ECOPs’ KPIs.

The next stage will be to develop an online sustainability assessment and reporting tool for individual operators, third party auditors and AQNZ to score and improve performance across the agreed standards.

Biosecurity

The New Zealand aquaculture industry recognises the value of the rich biodiversity of the New Zealand marine environment and the need for its protection.

The ECOPs recognise that industry can manage its activities to reduce its own vector risks, particularly relating to the movement of stock and gear.

The ECOPs identify objectives, targets and indicators relating to biosecurity and link to a reviewable biosecurity management plan in the Appendices of the documents.

Industry is also mindful of the need to work closely with a range of stakeholders to identify and manage the range of additional vector pathways that are outside the industry’s control.
Towards Global Recognition

The final element of the new programme will be the development of a brand story and communications package which can be utilised by AONZ and individual companies to support the industry’s environmental proposition, both in New Zealand and in global markets.

Furthermore, the EMS will be developed so that it integrates with a range of global certification systems, recognising that various international markets have a preferred certification system that represents their requirements and aspirations of a sustainable product.

The ECOPs will contain mapping tables that link the leading global certification systems to the operational objectives of the AONZ EMS. These can be used to trace the objectives and reporting within the AONZ EMS to meet the relevant certification process. Individual operators can then utilise the New Zealand system as a stepping stone towards fully accredited international certification.