

Marine Licence Application - Algal Farm - Loch Bracadale, North West Skye - 00011374

Summary

Struan Community Council (SCC) had been made aware of several residents' objection to the proposals from Kaly Kelp (KK) subsequent to their initial consultation. To address this SCC arranged a meeting with KK on 6th January this year to air the issues. At the meeting KK were asked what they would do if the community was against the proposal, the response was go ahead anyway, which makes something of a mockery of the consultation process! The primary objection from SCC is the detrimental effect the farm will have on resident fishermen's livelihood, resident boat owners and on the already pristine marine environment, not to mention the disruption to the natural marine lifecycle caused by the cyclical harvesting of the kelp.

SCC's Specific objections are:

1. The location of the kelp farm will adversely impact on the livelihood of Struan and other locally based fishermen by creating a 480,000 m²/120 acres exclusion zone
2. The location of the kelp farm will impede boats moored at the beach at Loch Bharcasaig and use of the same by leisure craft by creating a 480,000 m²/120 acres obstruction at the mouth of the loch
3. The installation of 1900 mussel floats/buoys and 120 large anchors along with chains, risers, growing ropes, special mark etc. will have an adverse impact on the pristine waters of Loch Bracadale.
4. The chains attached to the anchors will destroy the sea bed in their vicinity (13,234m² of pristine sea bed destroyed).
5. Apart from the visual impact of the surface equipment required the Kelp farm will be lit with flashing lights materially changing the outlook of the area, particularly at night.
6. Studies have shown that in the Spring when the kelp is harvested, the habitat for the juvenile fish is instantly destroyed and likewise all the spawning eggs that the fish have attached along with every other living organism on the kelp. This disrupts the natural spawning and adversely impacts the natural life cycle of the loch.
7. The myriads of cables lines etc. creates a cobweb in the sea that is a material risk to the water wildlife in the area (cetaceans, sea birds, basking sharks, etc.)
8. The near-by coastline is a potential seal haul out zone
9. The kelp farm will bring little or no economic benefit to Struan, indeed may actually have a negative impact on the economy.
10. The location is exposed to the prevailing wind and is likely to suffer storm damage that will result in floating and shoreline debris. Historically, aquaculture organisations have been slow or negligent in recovering the same.
11. Historically, aquaculture organisations have failed to clear up behind themselves despite it being a condition of the licence. On the event the application is granted the applicant should be obliged to provide a bond executable by the local community that can be executed in the event of the applicant failing to clear debris from storms etc. or failure to remove the infrastructure at the end of the term.