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By email

[Jo.Palmer@parliament.tas.gov.au](mailto:Jo.Palmer@parliament.tas.gov.au)

Hon. Jo Palmer

Minister of Primary Industries and Water

Parliament House

Hobart Tas 7000

Dear Minister,

**RE: Fishing Regulations on the collection of intertidal animals**

We are writing to you about an issue with collecting of intertidal animals.

Our members have told us that, as a result of a steady increase in the numbers of overseas students and temporary workers, there has been a noticeable increase in the foreshore collection of shells and other intertidal animals for food in recent years.

We have reports from as far afield as Taroona in the Derwent, and Don Head in Devonport that the seashore has been stripped of all edible life. This kind of fishing activity is environmentally damaging and is entirely unsustainable.

The Government already has some measures in place including catch and possession limits, but these rules appear to be openly flouted. The current restrictions on taking of certain species like elephant snails also appear to be disregarded. When confronted by our members, who have explained the rules (including showing text in Mandarin), the collectors feign

ignorance. The issue appears to be a low commitment to voluntary compliance, which has been allowed to continue due to low levels of enforcement.

This seafood collecting is of little economic and social value. Even if a case could be made that it has an important social value to a section of the community, intertidal areas have been so stripped in most accessible areas that it is no longer an activity of much practical importance even to this small group.

This experience is not new and it has been an ongoing issue in other jurisdictions. It is our understanding that only places like Pt Cook MPA in Port Philip Bay (previously off-limits as a defence site, and later banned for collecting) have any intertidal animals.

Past studies indicate that these areas will recover if fishing ceases for an extended period. We ask that intertidal collecting of native marine animals be banned completely as education and enforcement resources are too limited to ever make this a fishery capable of sustainable management. This prohibition would have to be enforced with warnings, followed by sanctions like fines.

Collecting of feral shellfish like Pacific oysters and exotic mussels could continue, and these species are larger and more desirable for collectors anyway.

Thank you for your consideration of this issue.



Mike Jacques

Coordinator Tasmanians for Marine Parks/Marine Life Network Inc.

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