



Australian Government

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

PROTECTED CABINET

PM
&C

Maugean Skate in Macquarie Harbour #5

Meeting note

Purpose	Responses to EPBC Act decision on salmon farming in Macquarie Harbour
Timing and venue	s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Attendees	Internal: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
	External: Bruce Edwards (A/g Deputy Secretary, DCCEEW); Kate Lynch (A/g Deputy Secretary, DCCEEW) [TBC]; Matt Lowe (Deputy Secretary, DAFF); Sarah-Jane McCormack (FAS, DAFF) [TBC]; David Mackay (Deputy Secretary, DITRDCA); Clare Chapple (FAS, DITRDCA) [TBC]; Joe Castellino (AS, DITRDCA); Tania Rishniw (Deputy Secretary, DEWR).

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

- **Matt Lowe** advised he met with Luke Martin from Salmon Tasmania, s 22(1)(a)(ii) industry s 22(1)(a)(ii) outlined s 22(1)(a)(ii) concerns around potential impacts on the West Coast and industry, with focus on keeping original decision in play. s 22(1)(a)(ii) industry expressed levels of concern around potential hard stop should salmon farming be a Controlled Action, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

PROTECTED CABINET

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FORESTRY

Division: Agvet Chemicals Fisheries and Forestry Division (ACFFD) G1

ACFF06

AQUACULTURE IN MACQUARIE HARBOUR AND MAUGEAN SKATE

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

- The salmon industry is concerned because the reconsideration decision has not been made and there is no indication of when it may occur. This creates uncertainty which impacts industry's ability to contingency plan, noting the process started in June 2023.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Telephone: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Last updated: 22/10/2024

SES Lead: George Day
Mobile Number: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
SB24-000087

OFFICIAL

If raised: Why is the department not providing assistance to the Macquarie Harbour aquaculture industry now?

- The department continues to engage with industry, and we acknowledge that the issue of most interest to industry is the reconsideration process, which is a matter for the Minister for the Environment under the EPBC Act.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

If raised: Engagement with impacted stakeholders

- Noting the reconsideration decision is a matter for the Minister for the Environment, Minister Collins and the department have supported meetings with key stakeholders to hear their concerns and views.
 - Minister Collins met with Salmon Tasmania in August 2024 to understand their concerns and the work driven by industry that is underway to achieve ecological balance in Macquarie Harbour.
 - The department also met with Salmon Tasmania and the Tasmanian Government in August 2024 to listen to their concerns and provided them with an update on future work the department is undertaking including the review of the National Aquaculture Strategy 2017.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



PRIME MINISTER
The Hon Anthony Albanese MP

15 FEB 2025

Reference: MC24-165175

Mr Doug Paulin and co-signatories
Salmon Australia
83 Salamanca Place
BATTERY POINT TAS 7004

Dear Mr Paulin and co-signatories

Thank you for your letter dated 20 December 2024 regarding salmon aquaculture in Macquarie Harbour.

I was pleased to take up the invitation to visit Strahan to hear from the community about the importance of this industry firsthand just before Christmas last year.

I understand there is a new scientific report from the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) which shows the Maugean Skate population is consistent with the long term average as at 2014 and that oxygenation efforts are showing positive signs which I expect will need to be incorporated into the current reconsideration request.

But even with this new and positive data, it is clear to me the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* – introduced 25 years ago – does not allow for a common sense solution on an acceptable timeline.

Further, I understand the importance of certainty and clarity for your industry, and I commend the advocacy of Senator Anne Urquhart and others in their unwavering support of your industry.

Given that, I can confirm that the Australian Government will introduce legislation to ensure appropriate environmental laws are in place to continue sustainable salmon farming in Macquarie Harbour.

My commitment to you, your employees, suppliers and the community is that salmon farming operations on Macquarie Harbour will continue and that no jobs will be lost.

We have invested more than \$28.0 million to improve water quality and accelerate the captive breeding program and I welcome the offer from the sector to work with government on further steps that can be taken to protect the environment and ensure the industry has a sustainable and long term future producing high quality salmon.

To that end I have the asked my Department and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to work with you to build an enduring partnership that can provide certainty for your operations in the Harbour, your employees and their communities.

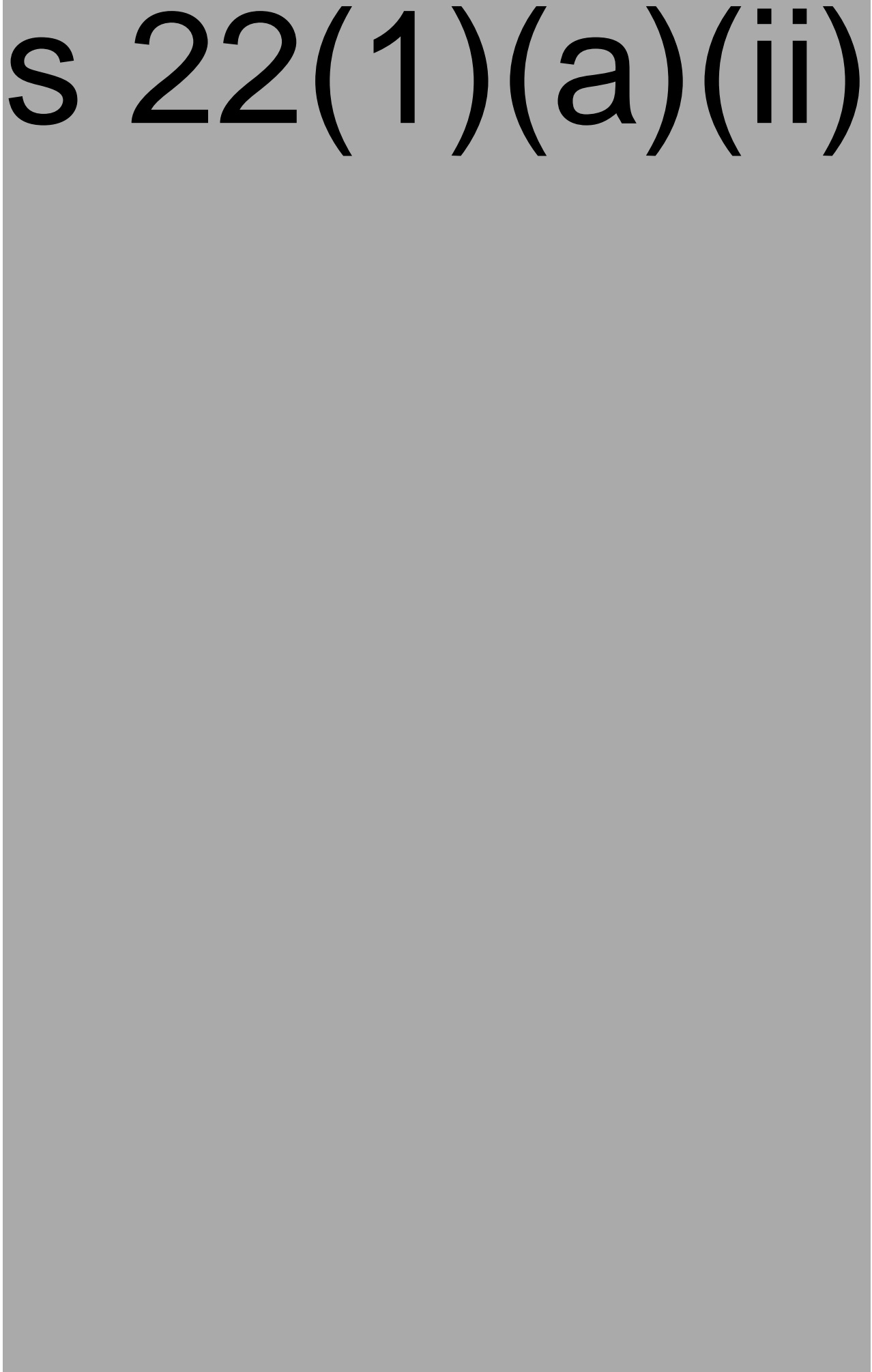
Yours sincerely

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

ANTHONY ALBANESE

Macquarie Harbour

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Background

Prime Minister's letter to Tasmanian salmon industry leaders

- On 15 February 2025, the Prime Minister wrote to Doug Paulin (Managing Director of Petuna Sealord), Mark Ryan (CEO & Managing Director of TASSAL Group) and Henry Batista (CEO & Managing Director of JBS Huon Aquaculture), who had written to him via Salmon Tasmania on 20 December 2024.
- The letter (*attached below*):
 - confirms the Government will introduce legislation to ensure appropriate environmental laws are in place to continue sustainable salmon farming in Macquarie Harbour

- notes the Prime Minister expects findings of the new scientific report from IMAS on the Maugean skate will need to be incorporated into the current reconsideration request
- in relation to industry's offer to work with the Government on further steps that can be taken to protect the environment and ensure the industry has a sustainable and long term future, notes the Prime Minister has asked PM&C and DAFF to work with the industry to build an enduring partnership that can provide certainty for salmon operations in the harbour, employees and their communities.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Timeline – Other correspondence on Macquarie Harbour

Salmon Tasmania

20 December 2024	The CEOs of the three aquaculture companies operating in Macquarie Harbour (Petuna Seafood, Tassal Group and JBS Huon Aquaculture) wrote, through Salmon Tasmania, to the Prime Minister regarding the EPBC Act reconsideration process.
15 February 2025	The Prime Minister responded confirming the Australian Government would introduce legislation to allow the continuation of sustainable salmon farming in Macquarie Harbour. The Prime Minister’s letter was reported in the media on 15 February 2024.
20 February 2025	The CEOs responded to the Prime Minister’s letter of 15 February 2025, welcoming the legislation, seeking a commitment to consultation and to introduce prior to the election, and reiterating the position that the 2012 EPBC decision should remain.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

MS25-000138

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 47E(d) , s 47C

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

7. The salmon industry has advocated for reconfirmation of the original NCA-PM decision as an outcome of the existing reconsideration process.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

1. On 15 February 2025, you wrote to Macquarie Harbour salmon operators confirming the Australian Government will introduce legislation to ensure appropriate environmental laws are in place to continue sustainable salmon farming operations in Macquarie Harbour (MC24-165175, Attachment C refers).
2. PM&C and DAFF convened initial bilateral meetings with Petuna, Huon, and Tassal on 1, 3 and 4 March 2025 respectively. Meetings were constructive, with stakeholders keen to consider further detail of proposed legislative amendments.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii) The Government's commitment to legislate has been welcomed by the salmon industry s 22(1)(a)(ii)
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Nadine Williams

Deputy Secretary

Economy, Industry and Resilience Group

05 March 2025

Policy Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Phone no: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Circulation

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PMO Chief of Staff;

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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s 22(1)(a)(ii)

CAB SEC:

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

CSO DLO

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



Australian Government
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet



PROTECTED CABINET

Meetings with salmon industry stakeholders

Deputy Secretary meeting brief

Purpose	Meetings with salmon industry stakeholders
Timing and venue	s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Attendees	Internal: Nadine Williams
	External: Matt Lowe, Deputy Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF)
	Salmon industry stakeholder biographies at Attachment A

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 47E(d) , s 47C

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s 47E(d) , s 47C

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

- The Prime Minister wrote to Macquarie Harbour salmon operators on 15 February 2025 committing to:
 - establish a partnership between the Australian Government and the salmon industry in Macquarie Harbour
 - introduce legislation to ensure appropriate environmental laws are in place to continue sustainable salmon farming in Macquarie Harbour.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
To: [Dean KNUDSON](#); [James TREGURTHA](#); [Anna-Liisa LAHTINEN](#); [Rachel PARRY](#); [Bruce EDWARDS](#); matt.lowe@aff.gov.au
Cc: [McCormack, Sarah-Jane](#); [Williams, Nadine](#); [Luchetti, Narelle](#); [Strapp, Matthew](#); [DEPSEC EIR Office](#)
Subject: RE: 3pm | Catch Up: PMC/DCCEEW/DAFF [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Wednesday, 26 March 2025 3:49:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image005.jpg](#)
[image004.png](#)

OFFICIAL

Dear all

Please find below points promised yesterday on consultation. Nadine has approved.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

- × DAFF, with PM&C, engaged with salmon industry stakeholders and Macquarie Harbour salmon farm operators to understand their concerns and lessons learned from their experience of the reconsideration process, and their interests with respect to any legislative amendments.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Happy to discuss

s 22(1)(a)(ii)


s 22(1)(a)(ii) | A/g Assistant Secretary
Industry, Infrastructure and Environment Division | Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
p. s 22(1)(a)(ii) e. s 22(1)(a)(ii) [@pmc.gov.au](mailto:s22(1)(a)(ii)@pmc.gov.au) w. www.pmc.gov.au
Gunnawall Country, One National Circuit Barton ACT 2600 | PO Box 6500 CANBERRA ACT 2600



The Department acknowledges and pays respect to the past, present and emerging Elders and Traditional Custodians of Country, and the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Macquarie Harbour

s 22(1)(a)(ii)




s 22(1)(a)(ii)

- The s 22(1)(a)(ii) salmon industry have advocated for reconfirmation of the original decision governing marine farming operations in Macquarie Harbour through the

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Macquarie Harbour

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



s 22(1)(a)(ii)

- DAFF, with PM&C, engaged with salmon industry stakeholders and Macquarie Harbour salmon farm operators to understand their concerns and lessons learned from their experience of the reconsideration process, and their interests with respect to any legislative amendments.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

- DAFF has convened a number of discussions with salmon industry stakeholders.

- Discussion has included [REDACTED] s 22(1)(a)(ii) [REDACTED], and engagement on the broad parameters of the legislative amendment.

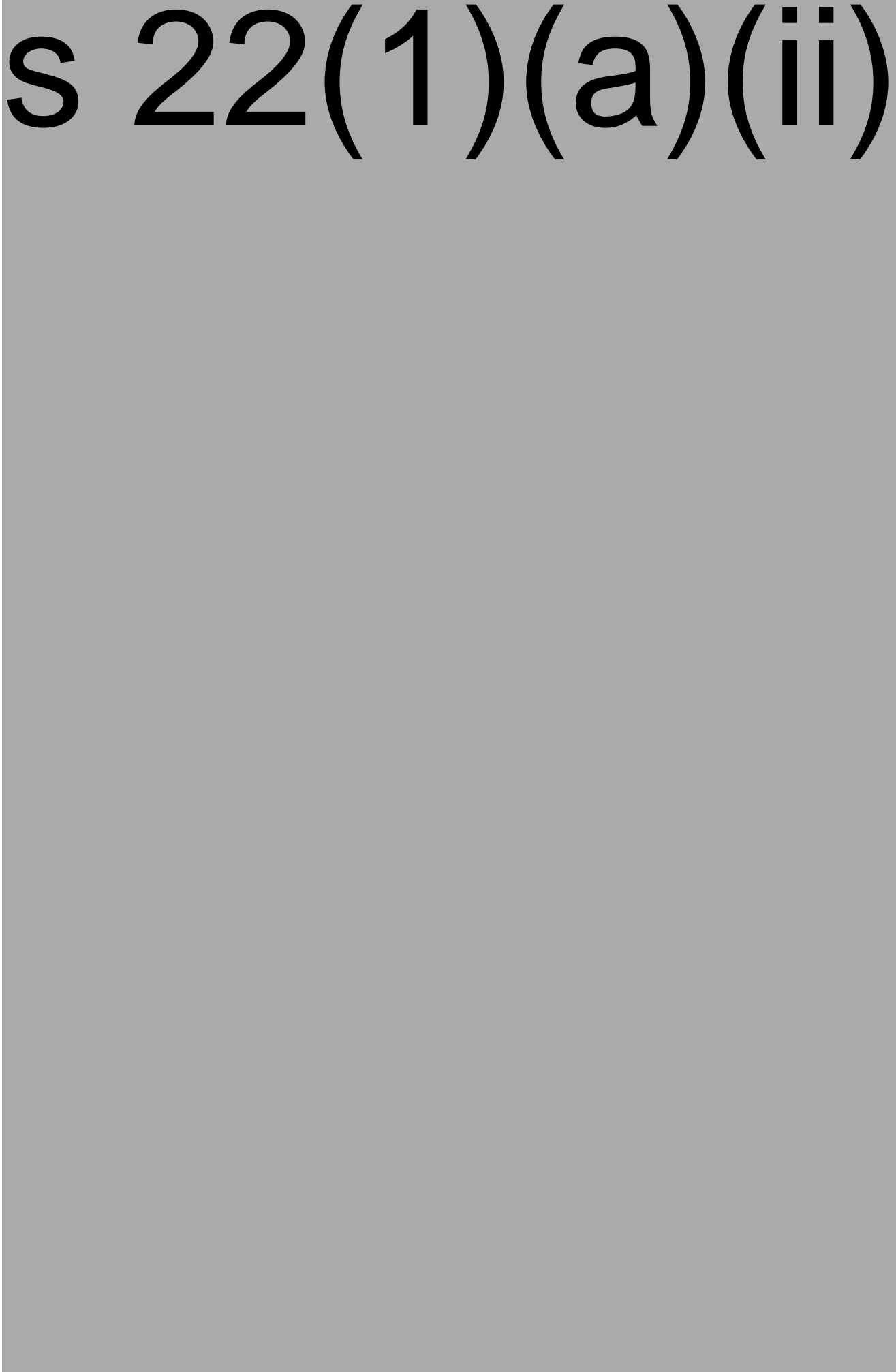
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

- The Prime Minister's letter of 15 February 2025 welcomed an offer made by salmon industry stakeholders to work with government on further steps that can be taken to protect the environment and ensure the industry has a sustainable and long term future producing high quality salmon.
- The Prime Minister's letter noted that to this end, he had asked PM&C and DAFF to work with the industry to build an enduring partnership.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Macquarie Harbour (backpocket)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



- As part of this work DAFF, with PM&C, engaged with salmon industry stakeholders and Macquarie Harbour salmon farm operators to understand their concerns and lessons learned from their experience of the reconsideration process, and their interests with respect to any legislative amendments.
 - DAFF convened meetings with Petuna, Huon Aquaculture, and Tassal on 1 March, 3 March and 4 March 2025, respectively.
 - DAFF convened further meetings with Salmon Tasmania, Petuna, Huon Aquaculture, and Tassal on 21 March 2025.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Background

Prime Minister's letter to Tasmanian salmon industry leaders

- On 15 February 2025, the Prime Minister wrote (letter attached) to Macquarie Harbour salmon farm operators advising:
 - the Government will introduce legislation to ensure appropriate environmental laws are in place to continue sustainable salmon farming in Macquarie Harbour
 - the Prime Minister expects findings of the new scientific report from Institute of Marine and Antarctic Science (IMAS) on the Maugean skate (*see below*) will need to be incorporated into the current reconsideration request
 - the Prime Minister has asked PM&C and DAFF to work with the industry to build an enduring partnership that can provide certainty for salmon operations in the harbour, employees and their communities.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)