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NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
c-NSW Planning Portal

Friday, 8 May 2026

**RE: Submission to NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
State Significant Development – Eden 1 Marine Seaweed Aquaculture Project**

Regional Development Australia Southern NSW & ACT (RDASNA) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission regarding the proposed Eden 1 Marine Seaweed Aquaculture Project within Disaster Bay, near Wonboyn.

RDASNA is a regional leadership and facilitation organisation that works across Southern NSW and the ACT to support sustainable economic growth, workforce development, investment attraction and regional resilience. Through our recently launched regional vision, *THRIVE*, RDASNA advocates for strategic investment that strengthens regional industries, builds sovereign capability, creates skilled employment opportunities and supports resilient regional communities.

RDASNA broadly supports the proposed Eden 1 project, recognising its potential to contribute to economic diversification, regional employment, innovation in sustainable industries and Australia's transition toward lower-emissions agricultural practices.

Strategic Alignment with Regional Priorities

The proposed development aligns strongly with several pillars identified within RDASNA's *THRIVE* Regional Vision, including:

- Innovation and Business Growth
- Employment and Training
- Resilience and Sustainability
- Hubs of Regional Development
- Transport and Logistics

Southern NSW is increasingly being called upon to support emerging industries that contribute to national resilience, food security, renewable and circular economy opportunities and sovereign manufacturing capability. The proposed marine aquaculture project represents a significant opportunity to position the Far South Coast as a leader in sustainable blue economy industries.

Importantly, the project leverages existing regional strengths including:

- access to marine environments suitable for aquaculture
- proximity to export infrastructure and Twofold Bay
- established maritime capability
- strong agricultural connections across Southern NSW
- opportunities for research and innovation partnerships.

The proposed use of native seaweed species, including *Asparagopsis spp.*, also aligns with growing national and international demand for methane-reducing livestock feed supplements. This creates opportunities for the region to participate in emerging low-emissions agricultural supply chains and support broader decarbonisation objectives across Australia's agricultural sector.

Regional Economic Development and Employment

RDASNA acknowledges the significant economic challenges experienced across the Far South Coast in recent years, including the impacts of the 2019–20 bushfires, flooding events and COVID-19 disruptions.

Projects that support long-term industry diversification are critically important to strengthening regional economic resilience and creating sustainable employment pathways for local communities.

The estimated creation of 40–60 direct jobs associated with the project is a positive outcome for the region, particularly given the importance of creating skilled, year-round employment opportunities in coastal communities that can experience seasonal economic fluctuations.

Beyond direct employment, the project also has potential to generate:

- secondary supply chain opportunities
- transport and logistics activity
- marine services demand
- research and development partnerships
- advanced manufacturing opportunities
- future aquaculture investment attraction.

RDASNA particularly notes the strategic significance of the associated hatchery and drying facility at Edrom, which may help establish a broader marine biotechnology and aquaculture ecosystem within the region over time.

Innovation, Sustainability and Sovereign Capability

The development represents an example of the type of innovative regional industry that will be required to support Australia's future economic resilience and transition to lower-emissions industries.

Seaweed aquaculture presents opportunities to contribute to:

- sustainable food and feed production
- emissions reduction within agriculture
- export diversification
- marine research capability
- circular economy outcomes
- climate adaptation and resilience.

As outlined within the *THRIVE* Regional Vision, RDASNA considers it essential that regional Australia is supported to participate in emerging industries and innovation opportunities, rather than solely relying on traditional economic sectors.

The project also demonstrates the importance of integrating environmental sustainability with regional economic development outcomes.

Importance of Community Confidence and Environmental Stewardship

While RDASNA is supportive of the project in principle, we also acknowledge the importance of maintaining strong environmental safeguards and ensuring continued community confidence throughout the assessment, construction and operational phases.

The Far South Coast contains highly valued environmental, tourism and recreational assets that are central to the identity and liveability of the region. It is therefore important that:

- environmental impacts are rigorously assessed and monitored
- marine biodiversity and ecosystem impacts are carefully managed
- visual and navigational impacts are appropriately considered
- ongoing stakeholder and community engagement continues throughout the life of the project
- transparent reporting mechanisms are maintained.

Regional communities are increasingly seeking assurance that new industries can coexist alongside existing environmental, tourism and community values.

Infrastructure and Regional Coordination Considerations

RDASNA encourages consideration of broader enabling infrastructure requirements associated with industry growth in the region, including:

- workforce accommodation and housing pressures
- transport and freight infrastructure
- port and logistics capability
- workforce development and training pathways
- telecommunications and digital connectivity.

As identified throughout RDASNA's regional reports and *THRIVE* Vision, regional economic growth must be supported by coordinated investment in infrastructure, housing and workforce planning to ensure communities can sustainably accommodate new industry activity.

Conclusion

RDASNA supports the proposed Eden 1 Marine Seaweed Aquaculture Project, recognising its potential to:

- diversify the regional economy
- create skilled regional employment
- strengthen sovereign capability
- support emissions reduction initiatives
- position Southern NSW as a leader in emerging blue economy industries.

The project aligns strongly with the strategic priorities identified within RDASNA's *THRIVE* Regional Vision and represents an opportunity to demonstrate how regional communities can contribute to Australia's future economic and environmental resilience.

RDASNA encourages continued collaboration between government, industry, community stakeholders and environmental agencies to ensure the project delivers positive long-term outcomes for the Far South Coast region.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "O. C. West". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed in a light grey rectangular box.

Olivia West
CEO
RDA Southern NSW & ACT