

32-34 Georges Bay Esplanade  
St Helens Tasmania 7216  
T: 03 6376 7900 | ABN 96 017 131 248



Our Reference: 2025/05925

Contact: Polly Buchhorn

Monday, 17 March 2025

Mr Brendan Alvaro  
Assessment Officer, on behalf of the *Threatened Species Scientific Committee*  
International Environment, Reef and Oceans Division  
Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water  
GPO Box 3090,  
Canberra ACT 2601

Email: [brendan.alvaro@dcceew.gov.au](mailto:brendan.alvaro@dcceew.gov.au)

Dear Brendan Alvaro,

***Ostrea angasi* oyster reefs of southern Australia – comment on draft listing assessment**

Council welcomes your invitation emailed to us on 22 January to comment on the draft Conservation Advice and listing assessment for the *Ostrea angasi* oyster reefs of southern Australia.

I am pleased to provide this submission on the report following Council's consideration of the draft report at our monthly Meeting held today. We are grateful for the extension of time to provide comment on it after our Meeting and for the helpful briefing Department staff provided to Council on Tuesday 4 March.

Our views on the draft listing assessment are from a local government perspective. Break O'Day Council is not a marine scientific body, and we have not attempted to address detailed consultation questions in the draft assessment. However, we are responsible for the municipality that hosts in Georges Bay, according to the draft Conservation Advice, the best remnants of the original *Ostrea angasi* oyster reefs currently known and likely to meet the characteristics of the ecological community described in the draft listing assessment.

Break O'Day Council supports the 'tentative' finding that the *Ostrea angasi* oyster reef community of southern Australia as a Critically Endangered threatened ecological community under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 Act, based on the definition of the community in the draft Conservation Advice and due to its severe decline in geographic distribution across southern Australia.

We recognise that the healthy remnants of *Ostrea angasi* oyster reef surviving in Georges Bay are a significant asset and that they survive after decades of urbanisation, recreational and industrial activity on and around the Bay that continue today. Our community values highly, and does not want to lose, the recreational and commercial uses and livelihoods Georges Bay supports (tourism and a \$7M aquaculture industry for example) and its future potential. Council is concerned for the implications of possible listing of the oyster reefs for existing and future use and development of St Helens, Georges Bay and its catchments. We look forward to a strategic management plan that protects the reefs while supporting the continued use and production of the Bay.

Council calls on both the federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water and the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania to commit resources and funding to surveys of the oyster reefs in Georges Bay, their conservation management, and to programs to inform and engage the community that lives on and around Georges Bay and industries about their reefs and their care and management. Council can assist and support that work with the Break O'Day community, but Council is not a marine resource management and conservation agency.

We are also pleased to provide a copy of data from the Georges Bay estuary Water Quality Monitoring program between 2007 and 2011 and reports from the associated Bringing Back the Bay project, both supported by past Australian Government funding programs. We hope this additional information will assist with the completion of your conservation advice and listing assessment.

Our NRM Facilitator, Polly Buchhorn, will share the above additional information with Dr Alyssa Giffin, in Marine Species Conservation Section of the Ocean and Wildlife Branch in your Division. If you have any further enquiries please contact Polly on (03) 6376 7900 or [polly.buchhorn@bodc.tas.gov.au](mailto:polly.buchhorn@bodc.tas.gov.au).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mick Tucker".

**Mick Tucker**  
Mayor

CC

1. DCCEEW: Robin Brown, Assistant Director Nature Positive Regulation Division, and Alyssa Giffin (Senior Assessment Officer, International Environment, Reef and Ocean Division)
2. Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania: David Midson, General Manager, Marine Resources and Sharna Rainer (Senior Fisheries Manager)