

Public Forum – Full Council – 10 September 2020
Gaylene Wilkinson

I would like Council to thoroughly investigate the significant **negative** impacts from the mussel farming industry on locals and the environment in Golden Bay. I am a member of the local Marine Farming Impacts Group who are concerned about this. We conducted a 4 week survey to get an indication of how other residents feel.

72% of our 200 respondents indicate that they are affected by mussel boat noise.

We live at Patons Rock, around 10 kilometres away from the Port, as the gull flies, and 3 km from the nearest mussel farms. Picture this:

It's 3am. My partner is tossing around in bed enough to wake me. I ask what's wrong and get a gruff "Bloody mussel barges! " .

He's not alone. 135 survey respondents, from the entire arc of the Bay, stated that their sleep and tranquillity is disturbed by this low, resonant, incessant drone. It's typically not the decibels that are the problem, the noise is not loud. Rather, it is a vibrational, low frequency noise which gets to your core. It travels through walls, double glazing, and acoustic curtaining. The vibration even affects the hearing-impaired. This is **unreasonable noise**. The current Council regulations, and meters used, are not suited to this particular noise problem.

And it's not just about humans. Scientific research clearly shows that marine life is negatively affected by industrial noise too.

New Zealand's Climate Change Commission is tasked with ensuring that we are moving towards zero emissions. There appears to be zero consideration of this in the mussel farm expansion proposals, with diesel boats and trucks set to be transporting 32,000 tonnes of mussels out of Golden Bay annually. The MFA and TDC **will be legally accountable** to the Commission for this, but it has not been addressed. We believe any publicly funded industry should be planning AND actioning according to our Climate Change Act 2019.

The technology to deal with the noise pollution problem **and** the zero emissions actioning is readily available. Electric engines. Yes, this would put additional expense on the industry, but this would internalise the cost of their impact, and is the "best practicable option", as required in the resource consent.

Other major concerns are:

- industry waste in the ocean and washing up on beaches,
- microplastics in the ocean,
- visual pollution, with 2,200 hectares of mussel farm buoys, lines, and lighting,
- and truck traffic on the busy, narrow road from the Port, through five small settlements before reaching the main road out of the Bay.

Council staff have been aware of our concerns for some time, but no solutions are forthcoming yet.