



Marine Farming Association (MFA)

Code of Practice to avoid, remedy or mitigate noise from marine farming activities in the Marlborough Sounds, Golden Bay and Tasman Bay on other users and residents

Purpose

The purpose of this Code of Practice is to;

1. Be sensitive and considerate to residents and other users when undertaking marine farm activities on the water.
2. Recognise the impact of noise from working marine farm vessels on other users of the Marlborough Sounds, Golden Bay and Tasman Bay and local residents
3. To provide methods/guidelines for marine farm industry operators to follow to reduce the impact of operation noise
4. To provide methods/guidelines for marine farm industry operators to follow to avoid unnecessary noise.

Background

5. Noise from working marine farm vessels in the Marlborough Sounds, Golden Bay or Tasman Bay can disturb the natural character of the areas if not managed properly.
6. The MFA recognises that the best way of embracing this issue is to develop a Code of Practice which when adopted will avoid, remedy or mitigate the impact of unnecessary vessel noise.
7. The harvesting of marine farm products in the Marlborough Sounds, Golden Bay and Tasman Bay has permitted use status.
8. The noise criteria for the Marlborough Sounds are listed in section 35.1.1.4.1 & 4.2 of the Marlborough Sounds Resource Management Plan.
9. The noise criteria for Golden Bay and Tasman Bay are listed in the Tasman Resource Management Plan.
10. The Aquaculture New Zealand Environmental Management Framework deals with Noise and sets out the environmental objectives, management practices performance measures expected of industry participants.
11. Non-operational noise from marine farming vessels is primarily related to the volume of either marine radios or music systems on the vessels.
12. The impact of noise from working marine farm vessels can be affected by a number of factors including; the management of noise policies on vessels, the distance of the vessel from residential properties, the weather and sea state and the type of noise emanating from the vessel.

13. Residents are more or less receptive of vessel noise at different times of the day.

Code of Practice

14. This Code of Practice has been adopted by the MFA in an effort to avoid, remedy or mitigate non operational and unnecessary noise from working marine farm vessels in the Marlborough Sounds, Golden Bay and Tasman Bay.
15. All vessels owned by members of the MFA are asked to adopt this Code of Practice as Policy.
16. At all times vessel skippers are to note the weather and sea state in the area they are working and modify non operational and unnecessary noises as may be appropriate. It is noted that sound waves carry a great distance in calm still weather.
17. Areas of high residential occupancy are regarded as noise sensitive areas. Vessels working in these areas should pay particular regard to the effect of non operational and unnecessary noise on residents in these areas.
18. When working in these noise sensitive areas no noises other than working noises (engines, pumps, lifting gear etc) should be heard above the noise of these permitted activities between the hours of 7.00pm in the evening and 7.00am the next morning.
19. When vessels are moored at night, noise from vessels must be kept to such a level that the occupants of the nearest residence are not able to hear the noise.
20. The Association recognises that maritime radio is used on vessels for communication and maritime safety (eg weather forecasts, hazard warnings and in emergencies). It is also recognised that members listen to channels of their choice and that radios may be left to scan various channels. To avoid clutter Channel 66 is provided by Marlborough Maritime Radio Ltd for the use of commercial operators (marine farmers, water taxis and fishermen). The MFA recommends that the volume of vessel radios be kept at a level such that it can be heard on board only.
21. The Association expects vessel skippers to ensure that there is not a “volume war” between users of the vessel’s maritime radio and the on board music system.

Review

This Code of Practice will be reviewed on an annual basis or as may be deemed appropriate by the MFA Environment Committee