

4 March 2022

Bay of Plenty Regional Council

**LETTER OF SUPPORT – TE WHĀNAU-Ā-APANUI PROPOSAL FOR A RESOURCE CONSENT FOR 5,000 HA OF SEAWATER SPACE**

The aquaculture sector has a very promising future. A future offering the sustainable and efficient use of natural resources, producing premium natural products that are revered here at home and in export markets. A future where regional economies will thrive with jobs and investment in infrastructure and innovation. A future where Māori are significant participants and can leverage their legacy for the generations that will follow.

We acknowledge Te Whānau-ā-Apanui have a longstanding and successful commercial fishing business in several species. And, have held quota for these activities for many years. Their experience in this regard in contemporary aquaculture activities in our local waters is unquestionable.

We believe this resource consent application will lead to further investments supporting the significant investments already being made in aquaculture by the Company, government, and many private investors in the Eastern Bay. It can and will continue to sure up the promising future this sector offers. Te Whānau-ā-Apanui are already significantly committed to the development of their mussel spat hatchery, this application to catalyse investment in research and farming activities is a natural next step for them – not unlike our own endeavours, only complementary.

Alongside the recent investment Te Whānau-ā-Apanui have made in the research and development of the mussel spat hatchery in Kaiaio, the Opotiki Harbour development, our own processing factory, and mussel farming operation, this application heralds the fifth significant aquaculture investment in the Eastern Bay of Plenty in the last few years. And, a timely one for the industry and the local economy, building on the momentum already created by these investments.

In the spirit of our shared aspirations, we are already actively supporting Te Whānau-ā-Apanui with the development of their mussel spat hatchery. We see supporting this application to secure seawater space for further research and farming activities as a natural extension of that support.

We are aware and have discussed with Te Whānau-ā-Apanui a number of competency and capability ‘tests’ (with weighted attributes) to be applied by government and regulators when considering this application. Knowing this, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui have sought and gained our support, knowledge, and experience in offshore marine farming in the follow ways:

- The in principle use and application of current resource consent conditions as a means of ensuring consistency with aquaculture development across the region.
- Our support with on water development and training for the use of systems and equipment to develop a marine farm in Te Whānau-ā-Apanui territorial waters. This includes:
  - Marine farming vessels;
  - Proven anchoring systems;
  - Design and installation methodologies;
  - Harvesting processes and supply chain logistics; and
  - Testing and monitoring regimes supporting the resource consent application.

**Peter Vitasovich**

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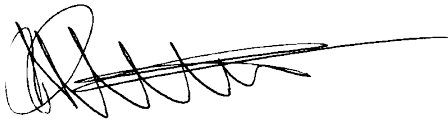
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- The access and route to market for the supply and distribution of farming activities. This includes:
  - Access to mussel processing activities - including route to market;
  - Product development – and merchandising;
  - Access to established local and international markets; and
  - There will be others as the aquaculture industry develops in the future.

If you have any questions or would like any further information in support of this application, please do not hesitate to contact me on 027 492 5781.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Vitasovich', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Peter Vitasovich  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**