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To: Southerly Ten
Subject: New submission from EIS Submission
Attachments: offshore-renewable-energy-submission-EES.EIS_.rtf

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Representative Information

Are you making this submission on behalf of someone else and/or an organisation?

Yes

Please provide the full name of the person and/or an organisation you are submitting on behalf of

Mitchelson Fisheries

Your Details

Name

[REDACTED]

Address

[REDACTED]

Email

[REDACTED]

Confirm Email Address

[REDACTED]

Phone Number

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- [offshore-renewable-energy-submission-EES.EIS_.rtf](#)

Submission Declaration

 This submission does not contain any material that could be regarded as defamatory or offensive to any person

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To EIS and EES Submissions.

We the Organisation of Mitchelson Fisheries PTY LTD known here after as MF P/L, are writing to inform you regarding our vested interest in the area of the Gippsland coast that has been determined would be suitable for offshore renewable energy projects. MF P/L supports renewable energy production in Bass Strait but not at the expense or detriment of commercial fishing enterprises.

MF P/L has been operating in the Area for approximately 50 years and the Mitchelson Family have been working the area previous to the establishment of MF P/L. Because of the historic relationship with the area and ocean, the impact will be felt more than just a financial loss, but also an emotional one that will not only effect the Mitchelson Family but also the wider community. The Mitchelson Family Has been conducting fishing operations in the area since approximately 1880. During that time the Mitchelson family have aided the establishment and growth of fishing practices in the area as well as becoming a significant family to the surrounding area and industry, as well as pioneering the Purse Seine method of fishing in the area, a method that MF P/L is the sole licence holder and operator in Victoria and as such the sole industry responsible for the supply of pelagic species (such as pilchard, Australian salmon and others) that is captured in Victoria. In that time the Mitchelson family have employed a significant number of the local residence across its many fishing practices as well as fish processing practices, indicating a continual source of employment for the area. Also of note the fishing vessel Maasbanker has been a tourist attraction for onlookers to watch the unloading of product. This has been represented through appearances in advertising, souvenirs in local gift shops and art as examples.

Following the collapse of the Sardine, Flathead and School Whiting fisheries in the waters covered by the Sea Seismic Survey. Our Company is concerned for our future catches in the area surrounding the proposed wind farm location and in waters adjacent to the Victorian coast.

The financial impact will not only be felt by MF P/L, but also cause a ripple effect that will also effect other companies within the East Gippsland community as well as Victorian and interstate companies that rely on the trade/produce from MF P/L. Such examples are freight companies, local trades and wholesalers (electrical, mechanical, packaging, parts and equipment, food stores for vessels), local and interstate restaurants and seafood wholesalers, recreational and commercial fishing methods from the supply of bait. In the year of 2014 an incident left the vessel Maasbanker out of operation for a period of approximately 5 months, during that time it was observed through informal conversations with business owners and operators situated in the local community of East Gippsland, as well as in the greater area of Victoria and interstate, that they had felt a financial impact as a result.

The organisation of MF P/L own and operate a number of licences, either owned by MF P/L itself or by individuals that operate under the organisation of MF P/L. It is a policy of MF P/L to keep the list of licenses private however in some instances the list of these licenses can be made available to approved individuals or corporations upon request. As such these licences owned and operated by MF P/L grant vessels working under MF P/L Licences the right to Access and Operate within the areas proposed for the project. Losing that right is one of the greatest concerns MF P/L has in regard to the proposed

projects. MF P/L is also in the practice of trading licences by means of purchase, sale or lease. There is also a concern that the future purchase, sale or lease of licences may also be effected in the future because of the proposed projects. MF P/L would like to highlight that the catch rate data for the Purse Seine Fishing performed by MF P/L is not on the public record. It is policy of MF P/L to keep the catch rate data private however in some instances this data can be made available to approved individuals or corporations upon request.

There will be an impact on the fishing operations performed by MF P/L. Some of the fishing methods used by MF P/L to capture product, as outlined by the terms of the licences held, will not be compatible with the project's usage of the area and will not be allowed to operate in the suggested areas. As such Protocols will need to be in place between maritime participants and developers of proposed energy generating systems, with regard to continuity of access to Bass Strait for maritime participants or Compensation, or a combination of both. Furthermore MF P/L is concerned regarding the size of the exclusion zones these projects will create and the impact on the future fishing operations of MF P/L. MF P/L is also concerned regarding the impact the work that will be undertaken to establish this project will have on the ocean floor and migration patterns of the species targeted by MF P/L.

MF P/L would like to highlight the impact this project will have on the Purse Seine fishing Method Performed by MF P/L on the vessel Maasbanker. The Purse Seine method performed by MF P/L is the only one in operation in Victoria and there are only a handful Australia wide, because of the limited access to this fishing method and the product it captures any loss will be significant in the industry. The target species can only be captured by the Purse Seine method because other fishing methods have been proved to be not suitable or very ineffective in capturing these target species. The Purse Seine method of fishing, relies largely on having large unobstructed areas of ocean and ocean floor to successfully capture product. In addition the migratory nature of the pelagic species targeted require as much accessible area of ocean to locate and capture the target species. One key factor to the method of Purse Seine fishing is the fact that while the net is deployed in the water the manoeuvrability of the vessel is reduced and depending on environmental factors (tide, wind etc) the vessel can drift in large distances and in unpredictable patterns. Because of this, as stated above, the exclusion zone created by this project is of great concern to MF P/L. Another major concern regarding this fishing practice is the nature of the plans to transport the energy to land. The size and amount of power lines is a great concern because the Purse Seine method cannot be performed around or over them because the nets can be damaged as well as danger to the vessel and crew if the net becomes pinned on the line. The net is designed to be most effective in capturing product if it can reach both the ocean floor as well as stay afloat. If the energy transportation method were to be under the sea bed and installed deep enough that it cannot be uncovered MF P/L would have no issues with the transportation method. We would also like to highlight the fact that the target species are pelagic migratory species and that their migrations change based on a number of factors (temperature, ocean currents, salinity), because of this our fishing grounds are in constant change. We also fear how the project itself including the works to build the project will have on these patterns, at the time of building but also the operation of the turbines and electrical network will have on these migrations into the future.

In the EES Chapter 25.8.2.1, it states fisheries may be asked to avoid anchoring or trawling over Export

Cables for safety reasons. The amount of transmission export lines from the wind farm to the shore for Star Of The South is expected to be 8. This would make Commercial Fishing Operations very Difficult Between the lines. In past Experience we have found the cables get uncovered and reburied due to tidal influences.

As Mentioned previously the method of transportation is of great concern to MF P/L. One of these great Concerns is regarding the Common Connection Points and the location of said connection points and what infrastructure will be constructed around said connection points. MF P/L maintains the strong belief that for access cooperation to be successful between MF P/L and stake holders in renewable energy projects the common connection points must be constructed on the land and all of the offshore transportation lines to be buried so that it cannot be uncovered would be ideal to allow access as granted under the terms of the licences held by MF P/L. As mentioned Previous any transportation infrastructure left uncovered is not compatible with Fishing Practices performed by MF P/L.

MF P/L would like to repeat the following statements made earlier. MF P/L supports renewable energy production in Bass Strait but not at the expense or detriment of commercial fishing enterprises and that protocols will need to be in place between maritime participants and developers of proposed energy generating systems, with regard to continuity of acces to Bass Strait or Compensation, or a combination of both.

Thankyou [REDACTED], Mitchelson Fisheries.