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Aquaculture law and policy reform in New Zealand

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Aquaculture is the fastest growing agricultural sector in New Zealand and the industry target supported by the New Zealand government is to more than double its size to NZ \$1 billion by 2025. In contrast to most other global regions the New Zealand aquaculture industry is relatively clean and green with manageable environmental impacts although this largely results from its relatively small size. The industry has however come into conflict with local communities and authorities with respect to the utilization of coastal space and the impact of activities on areas deemed to be of outstanding natural beauty. Aquaculture has been subject to regular and radical reform over the last decade in order to try to respond to the aims to expand the industry and to manage spatial and environmental conflicts. This paper will examine the current regulatory environment for aquaculture in light of those reforms and the various policy aims including the dispute over ownership of the New Zealand foreshore and seabed. The paper will explore these issues through a case study on salmon farming in the Marlborough Sounds which resulted in two important Supreme Court decisions in 2014 and led to a significant change in approach to selected principles set out in the 2010 New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement. The paper will conclude suggestions and observations with respect to the future management of aquaculture in New Zealand.

Biography

Karen Scott is a Professor in Law at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand. She researches and teaches in the areas of the law of the sea, international environmental law and Antarctic law and policy. She has over 50 research articles and book chapters in these areas and is the Co-Editor of Rothwell, Oude Elferink, Scott and Stephens; *The Oxford Handbook on the Law of the Sea* (OUP 2015). She is currently undertaking a Research Project focusing on Oceans Governance in New Zealand funded by the New Zealand Law Foundation. She is currently the Vice-President of the Australian and New Zealand Society of International Law (ANZSIL).

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