



Gavin Pearce MP
Federal Member for Braddon

Statement

8 November 2023

Is it Labor's goal to shut down the entire West Coast of Tasmania?

Is it the Albanese Labor government's intention to wipe out the entire West Coast, one of Tasmania's most productive and successful regions?

Regrettably, all the evidence is pointing to this disturbing ambition.

Since being elected in May last year, this Labor government has refused to rule on MMG's second tailings dam, leaving the mine and the future of Rosebery in limbo; has refused to match the Liberal's election commitment of \$3 million to provide more desperately needed aged care beds in Queenstown; and this week the Minister has opening admitted that she's prepared to take a wrecking ball to the West Coast's salmon industry.

All this points to a government that's prepared to side with environmental activists, to win votes in inner city Melbourne and Sydney, rather than support the West Coast and their industries crucial to Tasmania's prosperity. Don't they understand that they are playing dice with the very essence of the West Coast - hundreds of direct jobs, thousands of downstream jobs and the very viability of every township in the region.

I 100% endorse the sentiments of Premier Jeremy Rockliff in the statement he made last night. Minister Plibersek has publicly threatened to close down an industry without consulting the state government and without any scientific justification to do so. She is politically driven, not process driven and that's shameful.

Shutting down an entire industry under the guise of protecting the Maugean Skate has no scientific basis. Yes, conservation of the Skate must be a priority and the work to preserve this endangered species is already underway. Let's give the Conservation Action Plan time to deliver some meaningful data so we can move forward on the evidence.

Every key stakeholder - government, industry and local communities - is acting in good faith and progressing towards a win-win outcome. It's a shame the federal government has no faith in their capacity or this good intent.

Unlike Labor, the Coalition actively invested to build a strong and prosperous West Coast, because we understand the region and its people. Population does not equate to productivity and the West Coast deserves its fair share of support given the wealth it creates for Tasmania.

I call on all Tasmanian Labor members of parliament to publicly denounce this move by their minister and back the West Coast's crucial industries before it's too late.

ENDS