

Oyster farming environmental checklist – Marine farming sites

Issued August 2019

EPA 1118/19: To facilitate compliance with the Code of practice for the environmental management of the South Australian oyster farming industry (2017), four checklists have now been developed to help oyster growers undertake audits of their facilities against the requirements of the code.

Introduction

To assist industry in meeting the requirements of environmental legislation, the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) developed the *Code of practice for the environmental management of the South Australian oyster farming industry (2017)*. The code identified potential environmental issues associated with oyster farming and providing management strategies to address these issues by specifying mandatory requirements that must be complied with and best environmental practices that are generally outcome-based to allow growers to continue their own individual methods of farming oysters.

Purpose of the checklists

Checklists have been developed for the four key components of oyster farming which are:

- 1 [Hatcheries](#) – facilities used to grow oyster spat.
- 2 Marine farming sites – where oysters are farmed.
- 3 [Oyster depots](#) – where grading, packing, and equipment maintenance and storage takes place.
- 4 [Use of vehicles and vessels](#) – operation and maintenance of vehicles and vessels used on the farm.

These checklists are a tool to assist oyster growers to identify if they are meeting EPA requirements by undertaking a self-audit of their business. It can also be used by relevant government agencies to check compliance with environment protection legislation during site visits. The requirements specified in this checklist are referenced from the code.

You should note the checklist only reflects the operational practices of oyster farming and the mandatory requirements of the code ie the 'musts'. For further information on EPA requirements for construction of new facilities and how you can implement best practice to further demonstrate general environmental duty on your farm, please refer directly to the [Oyster Code](#).

Scoring the checklist

The checklist is scored based on the findings that are observed on the farm. The scoring system reflects a traffic like approach to identify areas that are compliant, require some improvement, or have resulted in a breach of legislation or environmental harm.

The following table provides an explanation of each scoring category and actions that you should be taking in response to the findings. The EPA adopts a risk-based approach to regulation and will support any oyster farmer who aims to take all reasonable and practicable measures to meet requirements and minimise the potential for environmental harm which may be caused by discharging, depositing or emitting a pollutant. The relevant sections of the code are referenced in the table (under 'Code ref').

		Action required
Compliant (C)	The farm meets this requirement.	Document evidence that demonstrates compliance. No further action.
Opportunity for Improvement (OFI)	Requirement is met however is not best practice. This may result in environmental harm or breaches of legislation if improvements are not made in the future.	Undertake risk assessment to identify potential for non-compliance. Identify and document opportunities for improvement if required.
Minor non-compliance (Minor NC)	Requirement has not been met however no environmental harm is evident or the potential for environmental harm as a result is low.	Action is required to make sure that requirement is met within a specified time period which is written on the checklist.
Major non-compliance (Major NC)	Requirement has not been met and there is a significant risk of environmental harm or environmental harm has occurred as a result.	Immediate action is required to rectify the situation. Re-analyse within four weeks to ensure the corrective action has been successful. The EPA must also be notified as soon as reasonably practicable if the harm is considered serious or material.

EPA checklist for oyster farming

Marine farming sites – Where oysters are farmed

Farm:

Performed by:

Date:

Requirement	Code ref	Findings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence • Opportunities for improvement • Actions
		C	OFI	Minor NC	Major NC	
There is no environmental harm occurring at or adjacent to your site as a result of your activity. This may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • loss of seagrass • black sediments • excessive algal growth • increase in turbidity (water cloudiness) • impacts to aquatic fauna or flora. 	2.1.1 2.3.3.1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Pollutants such as fuels, lubricants, high-pressure blasting waste and decaying waste are not discharged or deposited into the marine environment.	2.1.2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sediment disturbance by construction or maintenance of infrastructure on site is managed to minimise the smothering of aquatic vegetation such as seagrass.	2.2.1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Requirement	Code ref	Findings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence • Opportunities for improvement • Actions
		C	OFI	Minor NC	Major NC	
Equipment used on the marine site is appropriately designed, manufactured and maintained to withstand local conditions to minimise equipment loss in the event of storms, wave action, currents, wind, etc.	2.1.4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Infrastructure that has been blown, washed or swept off site is recovered as soon as possible.	2.1.4 2.4.16	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Oysters are stocked at a rate that does not result in the accumulation of faecal matter (biodeposits) either on the sediment or within the water column.	2.3.1.5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Dead oysters are not disposed of at sea.	2.1.2 2.3.2.1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Requirement	Code ref	Findings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence • Opportunities for improvement • Actions
		C	OFl	Minor NC	Major NC	
Practices that disturb or impact seagrass and other sensitive habitats are avoided.	2.3.1.6	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The removal of biofouling from marine structures during cleaning structures on site does not result in the build-up of biofouling on the seafloor or damage to seagrass or other aquatic vegetation.	2.1.1 2.4.15	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Further information

Legislation

[Online legislation](#) is freely available. Copies of legislation are available for purchase from:

Service SA Government Legislation Outlet
Adelaide Service SA Centre
108 North Terrace
Adelaide SA 5000

Telephone: 13 23 24
Facsimile: (08) 8204 1909
Website: <https://service.sa.gov.au/12-legislation>
Email: ServiceSAcustomerservice@sa.gov.au

General information

Environment Protection Authority
GPO Box 2607
Adelaide SA 5001

Telephone: (08) 8204 2004
Facsimile: (08) 8124 4670
Freecall: 1800 623 445 (country)

Website: <https://www.epa.sa.gov.au>
Email: epainfo@sa.gov.au