



28 January 2009

## **MINISTER SHOULD ACT ON TWO-HEADED FISH NOW**

News that Primary Industries Minister, Tim Mulherrin has announced a Task Force to look into fish deformities at a fish hatchery on the Noosa River is welcome, however, the Minister should act now to protect local residents from the chemical Carbendazim.

"In a letter to me dated 2<sup>nd</sup> December, Tim Mulherrin stated that his department had been looking into this specific issue at this fish hatchery and conducting tests for two years and now he announces yet another enquiry.

"The Minister must surely recognise that the paramount issue at hand here is the protection of the health of local residents in the immediate vicinity of the fish hatchery.

"I call on the Minister to immediately ban the use of Carbendazim in and around the area concerned until such time as the chemical can be proven not to be harmful rather than subject locals to the constant worry about their health caused by spray drift coming into contact with their skin and the residue from the spray being washed off roofs into their water tanks, the water from which they use to drink, to cook with and to wash.

"My own research, which I will make available to the media, shows that Carbendazim has a huge black cloud hanging over its use and carries warnings for all females of child bearing age and for workers who are applying the chemical. Tests have also shown that Carbendazim can cause foetal abnormalities and can have harmful effects on the male reproductive system.

"There is also evidence of the effect on fish and frogs which are at the bottom of the food chain and which are one of the first indicators of extensive damage to a local environment.

"My other concern is run-off into Cooloothin Creek which feeds into the Noosa River and the on-going effects to the Creek and therefore, the entire river system.

"All Tim Mulherrin has to do is read the evidence available on the Internet and take notice of the published findings of independent fish expert Dr Matt Landos BVSc(Hons) MACVS (Aquatic Animal Health Chapter). Dr Landos is the Principal of Future Fisheries Veterinary Services and Honorary Lecturer and Research Associate at the University of Sydney and fortunately, he has been appointed to the Task Force to join staff from the Department of Primary Industries, the Environmental Protection Agency and Queensland Health.

"The time to act is now, not at the conclusion of yet another enquiry." **ENDS**

**For further information contact: Glen Elmes MP on 5449 8988 or 0400 800 114**

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