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Sent: Saturday, September 20, 2025 4:51:20 PM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)

To: CNRA COPC Public <COPCPublic@resources.ca.gov>

Subject: public comment agenda item 6

Hello OPC

As a shellfish farmer off the coast of Santa Barbara for the past 27 years, I have been through too many to count harmful algal bloom events. As a shellfish farmer harvesting mussels off oil platforms in the 90's it was incredible rare that our shellfish which were sent in to CDPH for testing came back positive for toxins. During the 2000's domoic acid events became a norm and would occur in the spring and last a few months. 2011 was especially taxing and I remember this clearly because my wife was pregnant with my second child. I was closed for harvesting from the end of February until early August because of Domoic Acid. In 2018 I experienced my first closure due to paralytic shellfish poisoning. Now I have two harmful algal blooms affecting my business as a shellfish farmer. In just this last 12 months I was closed for harvesting in August to October 2024 from domoic acid. In March 2025 until June, I was closed for PSP. The PSP levels in April were in the 1500's (scary high). My farm is usually visited by marine mammals throughout the year, but for those two months the ocean surrounding the farm was completely empty of marine mammals. The whole episode was quite shocking to my psyche despite being used to these events. I would say a new threshold has been crossed. We are slowly but surely poisoning our oceans with HABs, acidity, and plastic. It's quite depressing and all the research that has been done so far has not given me any hope as a future in shellfish farming.

I am currently trying to start a kelp farm nearby. I wish you would encourage yourselves and other decision makers to get more invested in kelp farming. I think between restoration and ecosystem servicing, kelp is the only hope I have left to make a living on the ocean as a farmer. If you have any better suggestions to overcoming HABs and pollution, I eagerly await your reply.

Sincerely,
Bernard Friedman

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