



P.O. Box 630
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30th May 2003

The Letters Editor,
The Manly Daily,
PO Box 286,
Manly 1655

Dear Sir,

Caulerpa taxifolia is an invasive, cold-water tolerant, green macroalga or marine weed that has been first discovered along the Eastern seaboard in 2000 and has now been identified in a number of localities including Lake Conjola, Sydney Harbour at Little Manly Cove and Clontarf, Pt Hacking at Fisherman's Bay and Gunnamatta Bay, Narrawalla Inlet and tributaries, Burrill Lake, Pulbah island and Chain Valley Bay in Lake Macquarie, and more recently at Quibray Bay in Botany Bay. It has been known to exist in Careel Bay in Pittwater where attempts to eradicate it by NSW Fisheries for over 2 years have included smothering it with coconut matting and treating it with salt. These are a strain of *Caulerpa* that is fast growing, extremely hardy and form dense communities that out-compete native marine plant species such as sea grasses. Elsewhere in the world there has been a decline in the populations of fish and crustaceans where *Caulerpa* has taken hold. One small fragment of the weed is able to grow and start a new colony.

To combat the spread of this marine weed, some coastal shires together with NSW Fisheries have a policy of strict wash-downs for all boats and other watercraft leaving their waters at council controlled ramps. With this in mind, one has to question the wisdom of Pittwater Council's removal of taps at the wash-down facility at the boat ramp at Rowland Reserve, Bayview. Although the Council's intentions are admirable in attempting to conserve water while voluntary water restrictions are in place, there will only be a shift of usage from one locality to many locations as water crafts are washed down at numerous homes. This is seen as increasing the potential for the inadvertent spread of *Caulerpa* into other waterways as wash-downs at the Council's ramp is controllable and the wash-down will occur prior to any travel to other parts of Sydney. Wash-downs at the numerous homes are not controllable, and fragments can be dislodged during travel. Surely it is preferable to have wash-downs occurring, and

infact enforced, at one controllable locality where any possible Caulerpa pieces can be trapped rather than risk a possible uncontrolled spread of this invasive weed.

Yours truly,

Phillip Ingram
President
Anglers Action Group (Sydney Northside) Inc.