

Consultation Plan for the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation's 2020–25 RD&E Plan

Purpose

This Consultation Plan seeks to:

- explain the purpose and objectives of consultation to inform FRDC's 2020-25 Research, Development & Extension Plan
- describe who will be consulted
- briefly outline an efficient and effective strategy for delivering consultation
- explain how input provided will be used.

Background:

Relevant documentation	Link
<i>FRDC's Funding Agreement with DAWR</i>	Funding Agreement
<i>PIRD Act 1989</i>	PIRD Act
<i>FRDC RD&E Plan 2015-20</i>	FRDC 2015-20 RDE Plan
<i>National Fishing and Aquaculture RD&E Strategy 2016</i>	National RDE Strategy

Established in 1991, the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) exists to increase the economic, social and environmental benefits for Australian fishing and aquaculture, and the wider community, by investing in knowledge, innovation, and marketing. The (FRDC) has been delivering economic, social and environmental benefits for Australia through investment of public and industry moneys in knowledge, innovation, extension, and commercialisation activities for some 28 years.

Fishing and aquaculture are major contributors to Australia's economy, society and culture. Approximately 110,543 tonnes of healthy seafood protein is served up to Australians every year by Australian fishers and farmers¹. Exports of Australian seafood generate approximately \$1.5 billion annually². Recreational fishing was reported in 2003 to engage approximately 3.4 million Australians in outdoor activities with friends and family each year, creating approximately 90,000 jobs³ and resulting in \$1.8 Billion in expenditure^{4,5}. And fishing continues to be central to Indigenous culture for many Indigenous nations, with 186,200 Indigenous people estimated to have participated in non-commercial fishing during 2000-01⁵, resulting in expenditure of approximately \$22.5 million.

¹ Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (2017) Australian Fisheries and Aquaculture Statistics. http://data.daff.gov.au/data/warehouse/9aam/afstad9aamd003/2016/AustFishAquacStats_2016_v1.0.0.pdf

² Australia's Seafood Trade (2015) Australian Government <http://www.agriculture.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/fisheries/aus-seafood-trade.pdf>

³ ABS 2003

⁴ Campbell, D & Murphy, JJ 2005, The 2000–01 National Recreational Fishing Survey economic report: a Fisheries Action Program project, FRDC project no. 99/158, National Heritage Trust, Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry, Canberra.

⁵ Henry, GW & Lyle, JM (eds) 2003, The National Recreational and Indigenous Fishing Survey, FRDC project no. 99/158, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Canberra.

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The FRDC plans and invests in RD&E activities on behalf of, and in consultation with Australia’s aquaculture, wild-catch, recreational and Indigenous sectors, government partners, research entities and the Australian community, on whose behalf Australian aquatic resources are managed. The performance and innovation enabled through this investment contributes to the competitive advantage that Australian fishers, aquaculturists and associated industries enjoy. It galvanises Australia’s clean and sustainable reputation, and it helps make our recreational fisheries among the most desirable in the world. And it continues to support Indigenous communities in their pursuit of recognised primacy and cultural practice, self-determination, economic development and enhanced capacity. These outcomes can only be achieved by incentivising collaboration, leveraging investment along the supply chain, and anticipating issues and opportunities that may threaten or enhance the sustainability and value of fishing and aquaculture in Australia as they emerge.

Investments made, and activities undertaken, by the FRDC are governed by its RD&E Plans established for each consecutive five-year period (refer Division 3 of the PIRD Act). Each plan:

- highlights key priorities for the FRDC over a defined five-year period
- describes the FRDC
- defines its business environment
- lays down, against the business environment, the FRDC’s planned outcomes for a defined five-year period
- outlines the framework for RD&E investment that will address national strategic challenges and priorities, and contribute to achieving its planned outcomes

Discussion

The purpose of consultation activities proposed to inform the 2020-25 RD&E planning process will be to:

1. facilitate discussion about current performance and possible future states for fishing and aquaculture in Australia
2. promote unity around the desired outcomes described within the Plan, and align strategic planning to pursue shared aspirations
3. provide opportunity for key stakeholder groups to have input into the FRDC’s strategic direction
4. ensure a targeted and balanced investment portfolio approach during 2020-2025 across issues of critical national importance as well as sectoral or jurisdictional stakeholder priorities.

The FRDC began development of the new FRDC Strategic RD&E Plan for Australia’s fishing and aquaculture community for the period 2020-25 in February 2019. In addition to delivery of approved consultation activities, the 2020-25 RD&E Plan will also be informed by:

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- a. a contemporary situational analysis of fishing and aquaculture in Australia, which updates earlier work conducted in 2014 (FRDC Project 2014/503.20⁶) providing an updated understanding of what fishing and aquaculture looks like in Australia today, who is involved, what drives them, how they are performing, how the product (if retained) is used, what are the risks and trends
- b. a future-scanning process looking over a ten-year time horizon (2030) that considers geopolitical, social, economic, environmental and/or technical changes likely to occur over 2020-2030, drivers of those changes, and implications for fisheries production/targeting, trade, pricing, fishing participation, expenditure, and the environment
- c. strategic documents of Australia’s fishing community that are current for the planning period
- d. Stage 2 of an organisational transformation project to enable FRDC to explore new models for responding to both the changing operating environment and provide an effective way to stimulate and support disruptive, transformational innovations that will ‘future proof’ fishing and aquaculture in Australia.

Figure 1 describes the how each of these work elements will inform strategic planning outputs. It is important to note that each project has a consultation demand. This consultation plan describes only consultative process proposed to inform the RD&E Planning process during February - June 2020. However, priority will be placed on ensuring synergy with processes that will inform the situational overview, future-scanning, and FRDC transformation projects to ensure cost effectiveness and avoid consultation fatigue.

⁶ [Ridge Partners \(2014\) Australian F&A Sector Overview: A report supporting the development of Working Together: The National Fishing and Aquaculture RD&E Strategy. http://frdc.com.au/Archived-Reports/FRDC%20Projects/2014-503.20-DLD.pdf](http://frdc.com.au/Archived-Reports/FRDC%20Projects/2014-503.20-DLD.pdf)

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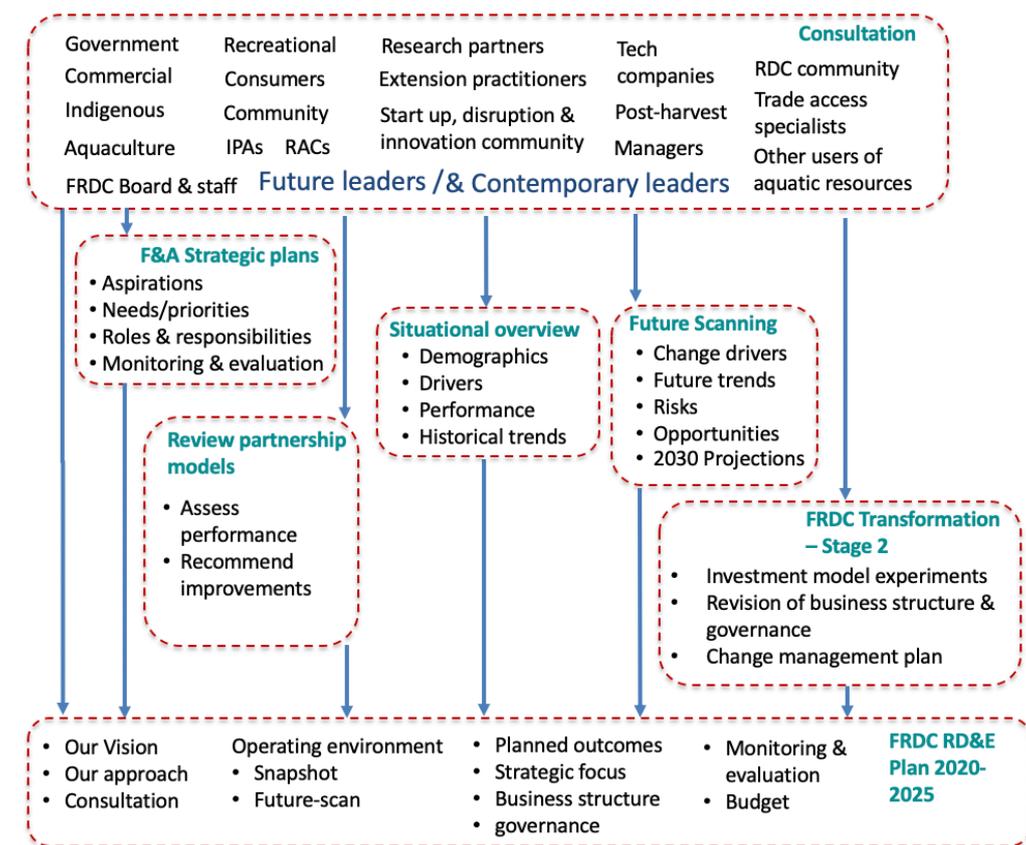


Figure 1 workplan elements informing 2020-2025 RD&E Plan

Stakeholders

Consultative activities undertaken to inform the 2020-25 RD&E Plan will seek to engage:

- aquaculturists, and commercial, recreational and Indigenous fishers
- FRDC’s four Representative Organisations and the Indigenous Reference Group
- federal, state and territory governments including fisheries and natural resource managers
- the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources
- representatives of the Australian community, on whose behalf aquatic natural resources are managed
- seafood consumers
- other users of aquatic resources
- FRDC Industry Partnership Agreement stakeholders, Research Advisory Committee stakeholders, Subprogram stakeholders, and Coordination Programs stakeholders;
- members of the start-up/disruption/innovation community
- research partners including universities, government agencies, further education organisations (e.g. TAFE), and private-sector research entities
- relevant industry networks with expertise in trade access, seafood processing, research provision, extension
- relevant research and development entities outside fisheries.

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Consultation process

The consultation process is intended to apply best practice in the delivery of consultative activities, in that consultation with key stakeholders will start as early as possible, be continuous throughout development of the RD&E Plan, and authentically inform the focus and intent of the Plan. Methods proposed aim to solicit the best possible advice and harness insight from relevant industries and communities as well as the innovation, science and research ecosystem.

The consultation approach will seek to engage both established leaders and the emerging cohort of tomorrow's influencers. The FRDC will also strive to learn from both those with extensive history in and deep knowledge of Australia's fishing landscape and research environment, and those from other relevant spheres. And it is proposed to use mixed methods in an effort to ensure that regional participants have opportunity to share their views, and the quieter voices are also heard.

FRDC understands that fisheries people might not always be the best placed to solve fisheries problems. A series of initial interviews with subject matter experts from other sectors and industries will be conducted initially to gather information on alternative strategic planning processes, investment mechanisms, and system/process solutions to optimise RD&E investment.

Achieving agreement among diverse stakeholders can be challenging, and often this is made harder by differences in language and culture, in addition to varying perception of the issues and the desired outcomes. A series of regional workshops are proposed initially to build common understanding of the unique emergent properties of the fisheries and aquaculture 'ecosystem' among diverse stakeholders. Participants will work together as part of a constructive (as opposed to reductive) system mapping process to discuss and characterise major components which comprise the whole, identify key problems/issues, causal relationships, and build a common language and understanding as a foundation for future input. Three regional forums are proposed in Northern, South-eastern and South-western Australia bringing together relevant stakeholders from within each region. Forums will be facilitated so as to encourage participants to apply alternative frameworks and models in an effort to promote application of new ways of thinking to this planning process.

Feedback will be synthesised into a summary document and distributed to participants to ensure that input received has been accurately captured. Once finalised, this input will inform an Insights Paper developed by FRDC staff members in collaboration with a collective of future leaders within Australian fishing and aquaculture community. The Insights Paper will use the stakeholder-developed systems map as scaffolding to promote thought and feedback on:

- possible future states of fishing and aquaculture in Australia
- activities to respond to key internal and external driving forces identified
- potential improvements to systems, investment frameworks and processes to improve efficiency in delivery of outcomes through investment in RD&E.

The paper will also build on and integrate relevant syntheses, reviews and studies already delivered, augmented with new data where available.

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Members of Australia’s fishing and aquaculture community will be invited to consider and discuss the Insights Paper and provide feedback to help shape an initial structure of the draft 2020-25 RD&E Plan. During the process of developing the Plan there will be several checkpoints at which the FRDC board, Representative Organisations and DAWR will have opportunity to provide insight and ensure comfort with the proposed approach. Key among them will be a workshop with the FRDC board in August 2019 to refine an outline of the Plan.

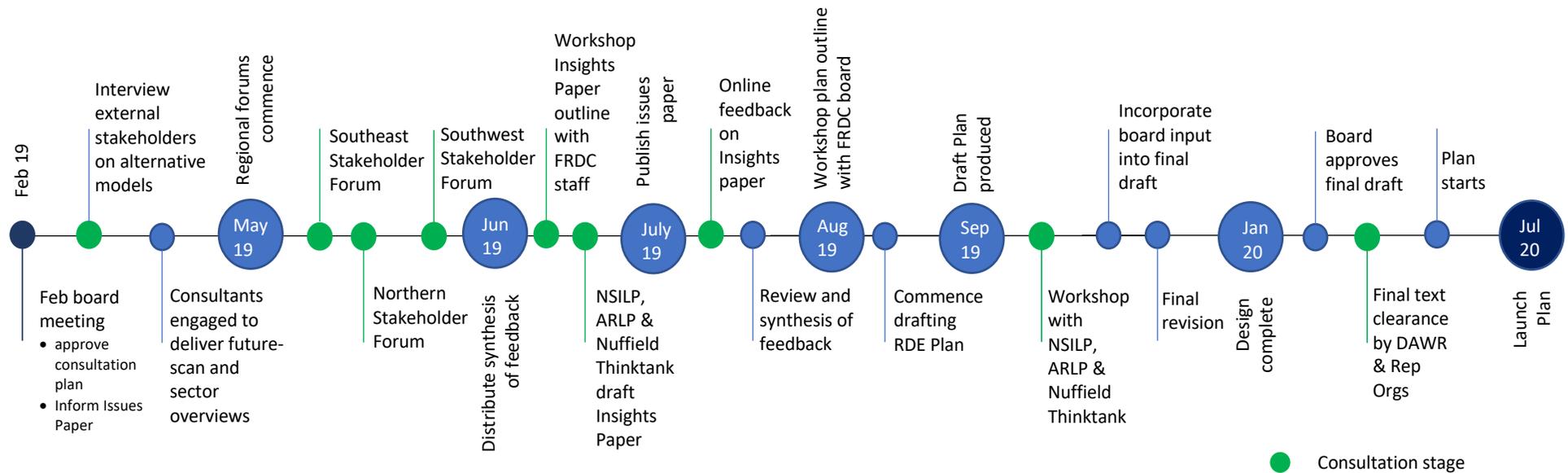
A final workshop involving emerging future leaders who co-designed the Insights Paper will take place in October 2019 to gain feedback on a refined draft of the Plan; with the design being completed in January 2019. The document will be launched in July 2020.

The proposed timeline for delivery of above-described activities is summarised below.

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Timeline

Consultation will inform development of a draft RD&E Plan by the end of 2019, including identification of strategic areas of focus, proposed changes to investment frameworks, business structure, governance and/or systems & processes to be implemented during 2020-25. The final plan will be launched in June 2020.



The 2020-25 R&D Plan will guide FRDC’s business and investment in research, development and extension activities during this period, in line with the Annual Operational Plan (AOP), PIRD Act, and relevant industry and Government priorities.