



National RD&E Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture

Boosting profitability, productivity and sustainability of fisheries and aquaculture through highly efficient and collaborative RD&E services

Communiqué, 20th October 2009

This communiqué updates stakeholders on:

- progress on the sector overview
- progress on the capability audit
- consultation and planning activities

Sector Overview (step 1)

Ridge Partners is undertaking a strategic review and analysis of the business environment for the fisheries and aquaculture industries (commercial, recreational and indigenous) to support the establishment of a national RD&E strategy.

As part of this work, Ridge Partners is mapping sectors to provide a comprehensive picture of the industry, and reviewing industry and sector plans to determine where RD&E priorities currently lie.

Ridge Partners will also consult with around 30 selected key people across the industry / sectors who can provide insights into the risks and opportunities for the industry now and into the future and building future scenarios for industry. Likely significant international and domestic impacts are being factored into these scenarios. In addition, submissions are welcomed from all stakeholders with regard to this work.

This work is due for completion November 2009

Capability audit (steps 2 and 4)

The audit seeks to identify existing RD&E, and then assess gaps in the current RD&E capability with respect to meeting defined future sector strategic priorities.

The first phase of the research is currently underway with RDS Partners collecting capability data against areas of research expertise relevant to the fisheries and aquaculture industry, which includes commercial wild catch fishing, commercial, aquaculture, Indigenous customary, and recreational fishing.

R&D financial investment, staff resources and infrastructure will be considered as capability. The analysis of capability against industry future needs will be informed by the sector overview.

Seven steps to develop the fisheries and aquaculture RD&E strategy:

1. Sector overview
2. Capability audit
3. Draft RD&E strategy
4. Capability analysis against the draft strategy
5. Change plan
6. Approvals
7. Implementation

National RD&E Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture

An audit and assessment of research, development and extension capability in the field of fisheries and aquaculture is being undertaken. The scope includes capability in fields as broad as production systems, social sciences, economics, post-harvest, and environments as applied to fisheries and aquaculture. This activity is a critical stage in the development of a national RD&E strategy for this industry.

The capability audit seeks to identify existing RD&E, and to assess gaps in the current RD&E capability with respect to meeting defined future sector strategic priorities. The working group invites all research providers to participate in the capability audit. Please register your interest by email to:

ray.murphy@ruraldevelopmentservices.com.

The advertisement above was placed in the Weekend Australian on the 3rd October to ensure all public and private RD&E providers have an opportunity to be part of the audit. This work is due for completion December 2009

Consultation

Consultation on the development of the strategy is taking place through the following mechanisms:

The **leadership group** meets to provide advice to the working group and to test the RD&E strategy as it

develops. It includes nominees from Australian Fisheries Management Forum (AFMF), NAC, CFA, State seafood industry councils, Marine and Coastal Committee, Recfish Australia, DAFF, University sector as well as individuals with expertise in the areas of indigenous fisheries and aquaculture, small fishery sectors, and research. The next meeting of this group is scheduled for 30th October to further develop a strategy plan and priorities within this as a 'straw-man' for testing with others.

A meeting of **heads of research agencies** (State government, AFMA, BRS, CSIRO) is planned for the 26th October. The focus will be on airing of concerns, and discussion on the lead-participate-link concept for funding and delivery of RD&E.

The **university sector** is a critical one for the delivery of RD&E and will likely become more important under the current government. The working group is seeking endorsement by Universities Australia for Prof Colin Buxton to represent the views of the University sector on the leadership group in association with Prof Shane Raidal nominated by the Australian Council of Deans of Agriculture.

Empowering Industries project (FRDC Project 2009/300) is delivering a series of project workshops where a broad range of stakeholders, including grassroots fishers, will provide input into national R&D themes.

The initial **broad stakeholder workshop** for the National RD&E framework was held in July. (See communiqué 1) Forty-two participants attended and included directors of fisheries, fisheries managers, industry, researchers, research agencies, extension, the university sector, research funders and managers, and emerging leaders in a number of areas.

The purpose of the workshop was to introduce and discuss the development of a national fisheries and aquaculture RD&E strategy, obtain stakeholder views on opportunities and challenges for the fisheries and aquaculture industries and attendant implications for future RD&E and discuss, and develop ideas regarding characteristics, features and governance of a RD&E strategy to inform the Working Group's deliberations.

A second workshop with this group will be held on the 17th and 18th of November to further develop and test the strategy.

Once the strategy is fully implemented, the Australian fisheries and aquaculture industry will be supported by a research, development and extension system where:

Industry needs are better served

Industry's challenges and opportunities are identified and aligned with science capabilities, with industry taking a lead role in determining and reviewing strategic directions and priorities for RD&E, and having access to the best RD&E capabilities.

Necessary RD&E capabilities are built

Public research capability will become more specialised, have larger critical mass and will be less fragmented across the nation. While agencies will retain and build capability in fields strategically important to their jurisdictions and industries, they will collaborate with others to improve the capability of the national system in priority areas.

Effectiveness and efficiencies are enhanced through collaboration

By ensuring the substantial resources invested by government and industry in RD&E are managed cooperatively, a more efficient, effective and comprehensive capability will be possible. A commitment to national 'R', regional 'D' and local 'E' through strategic partnerships and sharing of expertise and research infrastructure will enhance collaboration and exploit synergies, and as a consequence improve return on investment.

Innovation is encouraged

The national research capability will be an integral component of a wider innovation agenda, supporting development and extension. To encourage rapid uptake of new technologies, research developed in one location would be available nationally for the whole industry.