



FRDC STAKEHOLDER BRIEFING

September 2019

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Ron Boswell – Reappointed

The FRDC's chair, Ron Boswell, has been reappointed to lead the organisation for a second three-year term. His reappointment was announced by Senator Bridget McKenzie, Minister for Agriculture.

Since joining the board in 2016 Ron Boswell has overseen a number of significant milestones for the FRDC. Ron Boswell takes an active interest in commercial fishers and amateur anglers. He makes a significant contribution to helping the industry respond to White Spot Disease in Moreton Bay.

Ron Boswell joined the FRDC after a long and eventful career in the Australian Senate, where he was known as a champion of regional and rural Australians and a supporter of small business. He retired from the Senate in 2014, where he had served for 31 years, making him one of Australia's longest-serving senators.

Funding Round Update

Competitive Round Call for Expressions of Interest now open.

Closing 27 September 2019

The Fisheries Research and Development Corporation ([FRDC](#)) is calling for Expressions of Interest (EOI) that address research, development & extension (RD&E) priorities nominated by the FRDC's Advisory Groups: Research Advisory Committees ([RACs](#)), Industry Partnership Agreements ([IPAs](#)) and FRDC [Subprograms](#).

The nominated RD&E priorities for investment are outlined below. EOIs that address multiple priorities are encouraged.

Applicants may also submit an EOI that does not address a nominated priority; however, it should be noted that preference may be given to applications that address nominated priorities. If you do wish to submit an application that does not address one of these priorities, it is recommended that you first discuss your research concept with the relevant [FRDC Advisory Group](#) contact. In addition, FRDC strongly recommends that all applicants consult with the relevant stakeholder groups and expected end users to ensure that research concepts has the support of beneficiaries. Support can be demonstrated through formal letters of support, in-kind contributions and project cash contributions.

Download and read the [RD&E priorities for investment](#)

New Issues and Synthesis Page

The FRDC undertakes research across a wide range of topic areas. Some of these become 'hot topics or issues' that garner a lot of industry and public interest. Where possible the FRDC will provide an easy-to-understand summary of the research undertaken on that issue. The new [issues page](#) is broken into the following sections:

- Fisheries and Aquaculture Issues
- Environmental Issues
- Human Health Issues

If there is a topic you think should be covered let, the [Communications team](#) know and we will look at developing a briefing.

Marine Plastics

Globally the issue of microplastic contamination in our marine environment has been of increasing concern and as such, it is an area of interest for Australian and New Zealand (NZ) researchers. The majority of research focusses around determining the prevalence and type of plastics causing the concern, with only a small amount of work investigating the impact to human health. In February 2019, Food Standards Australia, New Zealand published a statement around [Microplastics in Food](#),

which indicated that based on the research to date plastic contamination of the food chain is unlikely to result in immediate health risks to consumers. As such, they have listed this issue as a 'watching brief'.

The FRDC have supported a pilot project [2017-199](#), led by The University of Adelaide and [SafeFish](#), to determine how widespread the presence of microplastics in the gastrointestinal tract of commercial species of Australian fish and molluscs and compare this to international data.

In addition, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) have also been looking at the issues and have produced two publications:

- Microplastics in Fisheries and Aquaculture – What do we know? Should we be worried? <http://www.fao.org/3/ca3540en/ca3540en.pdf>
- Microplastics in fisheries and aquaculture: status of knowledge on their occurrence and implications for aquatic organisms and food safety. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7677e.pdf>

Innovation Update

The FRDC experiment in partnering with the US based Fish 2.0 continues to show some excellent results. Eight of the 40 companies who will pitch at the Global finale at Stanford in the US later this year are Australian. Our innovators have done very well indeed! Speaking with the event coordinator Monica Jain, she noted it was a super tough scoring field this year and was not easy to get one of these spots.

The pleasing part of this is that all of these Australian finalists emerged through the two Australian events, and three companies were fostered via the [Fish-X incubator project](#). The finalists will all be taking stage to pitch to one of the largest gatherings of seafood investors ever convened. Last year over \$200 million in investment resulted from these pitches.

Building on this, FRDC has also recently agreed to support Tekfish, a program to take stakeholder 'problems and issues' and match them with innovative start-ups, existing technology and innovation partners to build new and novel ways to find solutions to these problems. The FRDC will be engaging with stakeholders to start to define these problems. These will then be exposed to the incubator and accelerator communities to draw out innovative ideas. These problems will also be communicated to existing venture funders to scope co-investment and existing technologies that could fast track solutions.

Planning for the future: FRDC's 2020-25 RD&E Plan

The world today is more complex and uncertain than ever before. Planning approaches that have served us well in the past are less effective today, which is why FRDC has taken a new direction toward planning future investment in research, development and extension over the next five years.

FRDC has partnered with Strategic Journeys, using a method well suited to dealing with uncertainty in complex adaptive systems. We have also partnered with a broad collective of innovators and leaders from across the wild harvest, aquaculture, recreational, indigenous and post-harvest sectors, as well as fisheries management and research communities, to co-design elements of the plan.

Working together in two groups, participants have been defining and exploring different possible futures for fishing and aquaculture in Australia, and considering the implications of each. Fishing and aquaculture is one component of a larger connected system, and so this process has required participants to consider trends across a range of areas and disciplines, including population growth and movement, geopolitics, climate and the environment, technology & innovation, human values, economics, and trade, among others.

The four future scenarios developed and explored by participants are as follows:

1. A world in 2030 wherein the prevailing motivation is confidence, and influencers are largely unifying and inclusive;

2. A world in 2030 within which the prevailing motivation is fear, and influencers are largely polarising and divisive;
3. A world in 2030 wherein aquatic systems are managed sustainably in an integrative manner, and key environmental impacts are largely known, measured & managed; and
4. A world in 2030 within which government policy is driven by populism, and key environmental impacts are largely unknown, unmeasured and unmanaged.

Each future scenario presents a range of possible implications for Australia's fishing and aquaculture community. Once these implications have been identified and collated across all scenarios, they offer rich insights of use in prioritising future needs to respond to key threats, and capture possible opportunities.

Key insights derived from the process to date by participants are summarised below.

- Regardless of scenario, there is a critical need to improve unity among all sectors. This will require investment of time and resources to enable the building and maintenance of relationships between all sectors. There is also a need to do so with other key players, including Environmental Non-Government Organisations (ENGOs).
- Mutual trust and respect must be foundational. Engendering broader community and consumer trust would require (among other things) an effective strategy to communicate the positive attributes of Australia's fishing and aquaculture community.
- Equitable and secure allocation among all sectors was likely to have played a critical role in easing inter-sectoral conflict in all future scenarios. There is merit in considering the capacity of all actors to influence this outcome given its critical nature.
- There is a need for a sophisticated communication strategy to deliver a shared narrative to the Australian community and consumers. This will require investment in capacity building for all sectors, noting the present capacity deficit in this area.
- New approaches to extension of R&D were required – by FRDC and others, including a need to reduce scientific nature of extension activities.
- The Indigenous sector is likely to be in a strong position as a result of their social licence. There is value to be gained in considering traditional ecological knowledge along with other forms of knowledge that are more commonly integrated into decision-making processes.
- Science was noted as a tool of variable effectiveness in different operating environments, of limited use in a populist world.
- Australia is in the process of losing small operators. This trend is enabled by prevalent systems of management, and this would need to be addressed with urgency if this trend is to be addressed.
- Future scenarios which delivered positive outcomes for fishing and aquaculture were noted to have high levels of cost and regulation. Participants noted this to be a likely to be a necessary precursor in order to achieve the high levels of transparency, compliance, and evidence to underpin a fishing and aquaculture community that is highly regarded and well supported in future.

The new planning approach used to derive FRDC's 2020-2025 RD&E Plan has been well received by participants overall, with many commenting favourably on the way it encourages participants out of their traditional sectoral views to take a shared 'big picture view'. It is hoped that some of the tools and methods used to derive FRDC's 2020-2025 RD&E Plan will also be of use to others when undertaking strategic planning for their sectors and/or businesses.

A series of regional workshops will be held in late September/early October in Southeast, Southwest and Northern Australia, providing opportunity for broader input to help shape the plan. Due to resource constraints we have had to limit the number of invitees to the regional workshops to 50 in each region, however you have opportunity to provide input whether you attend or not, by emailing your thoughts and ideas to FRDC2025@frdc.com.au. We will also be providing ongoing updates as this work unfolds and access to key documents can be found on the FRDC RD&E Plan [web page](#).

Details for upcoming activities are summarised below:

Stakeholder Planning Workshop	25&26 September 2019
South-eastern Regional Workshop in Melbourne	30 September 2019
South-western Regional Workshop in Perth	1 October 2019
Northern Regional Workshop in Brisbane	14 October 2019
Workshop of Leadership and Innovation Groups to define strategic intent for fishing and aquaculture	29&30 October 2019
FRDC Board meet to define FRDC's strategic intent for 2020-2025	29 November 2019
Drafting complete	30 January 2020
Design complete	30 March 2020
2020-2025 RD&E Plan launched	1 July 2020

National RD&E Seafood Industry Safety Initiative

The National RD&E Seafood Industry Safety Initiative held its first Steering Committee meeting in late August. The Seafood Industry Safety Initiative was developed as a cross stakeholder partnership to address gaps and/or inefficiencies in the workplace health and safety space of the Australian seafood industry. The National Safety Initiative is chaired by John Harrison and for more information contact Chris Izzo (christopher.izzo@frdc.com.au). The Steering Committee members are:

- Michael Drake – [Australian Maritime Safety Authority](#)
- Michael O'Brien – Australia Bay Seafoods Pty Ltd (NT)
- Heidi Mumme – Paspaley Pearls, Vice President of Women in Seafood Australasia
- Alex Ogg – Western Australian Fisheries Industry Council
- Tanya Adams – WHS consultant

The Seafood Industry Safety Initiative Steering Committee agreed that the goal of the Initiative was to work towards zero deaths.

For more information on the range of safety projects and activities that the FRDC are involved in refer to – <https://www.frdc.com.au/issues/workplace-health-and-safety-in-fisheries-and-aquaculture>

Carp Update

The National Carp Control Plan (NCCP) program entered its final phase and is due to be presented to the Government in December. The FRDC originally planned to submit the completed NCCP in late 2018. However, research as part of the plan identified some critical knowledge gaps, and the FRDC applied to the Australian Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAWR) for an extension. DAWR approved a 12-month extension for the development of the plan in September last year.

Finalising the NCCP

To finalise the plan a number of activities are underway. As the research projects are completed, they are reviewed (independently and by the Scientific Advisory Group) before the NCCP team integrates the results into the development of the plan.

The development of the plan will take into consideration and include input from the Scientific Advisory Group (SAG), the Operations Working Group (OWG), regional case study workshops,

operational experts and feedback from stakeholder engagement. It is important to note all the NCCP research will be made available as part of the FRDC normal process as it is completed.

Once complete the National Carp Control Plan (December 2019) will be provided to Government for consideration and a decision. The FRDC will keep stakeholders apprised of when the plan is finalised and is available.

Seafood Directions

Every two years Seafood Directions brings together hundreds of seafood enthusiasts from across the country to champion Australian seafood. Seafood Directions 2019 will be held in Melbourne at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) from October 9-11.

The program for this year's Seafood Directions conference is taking shape to explore four key topics - sustainability, value, industry, and plastics. The full program (to be released shortly) will consist of presentations, panel sessions and workshops on these four key topics and more.

The FRDC will have a stand at the event and we encourage everyone to drop by and visit the staff. Matt Barwick, who is working on the next FRDC Research, Development and Extension Plan would love to hear your thoughts on the FRDC's future directions.

For updates and registration visit <https://www.sd2019.com.au/>

The World Fisheries Congress 2020

Australia will host the World Fisheries Congress 2020 ([WFC2020](#)) in Adelaide from 11 to 15 October 2020. Held every four years, the 8th World Fisheries Congress 2020 (WFC2020) will be one of the largest gathering of the research, industry and management sectors in 2020.

The Committee are keen to hear from any organisation who are keen to participate or showcase their organisation to 1500+ delegates from around the world and provide an opportunity to be part of and build the largest fisheries event and tradeshow in 2020.

Download the [Sponsorship and Exhibition prospectus](#) or contact the Sponsorship and Exhibition Manager at conference@aomevents.com and ask about the opportunities at WFC2020. www.arff.net.au/nrfc/

Film Festival

The FRDC will be running a short film festival, using the World Fisheries Congress as a way to focus a global conversation on fisheries and the role they play in the lives of millions of people.

The festival will be open to school students from around the world. A holding page has been developed at <http://littlefilms.fish/> and more content will be uploaded in the coming weeks.

The key objective is to raise awareness of the conference and its themes. A secondary objective is to raise awareness and exposure to fisheries science with a younger generation. The focus for the content generated out of the World Fisheries Film Festival will revolve around the four-core conference themes:

- Sustainable fisheries (assessment, regulation, enforcement)
- Fish and aquatic ecosystems (biodiversity, conservation, ecosystem function)
- Fisheries and society (contributions to sustainable development)
- Future of fish and fisheries (innovations in fisheries)

Key events 2019

Date	Event	More information
9-11 Sept	World Seafood Congress, Malaysia	https://wsc2019.com
9-12 Sept	Fine Food Australia, Sydney	https://finefoodaustralia.com.au
14 Sept	San Remo Fishing Festival	www.srfishfest.com.au
16-20 Sept	Ocean Obs 19, Hawaii	www.oceanobs19.net/#main
9-11 Oct	Seafood Directions 2019, Melbourne	www.sd2019.com.au
14-17 Oct	Australian Society for Fish Biology Conference 2019, Canberra	www.asfb.org.au
30 Oct-1Nov	China Fisheries and Seafood Expo, China	http://chinaseafoodexpo.com
4-8 Nov	International Larviculture Workshop 2019, Thailand	www.aquaculture.ugent.be//larvi/index.htm
18-21 Nov	International Symposium on Fisheries Sustainability, Italy	www.fao.org/about/meetings/sustainable-fisheries-symposium/en
21 Nov	World Fisheries Day	
19-22 Nov	LACQUA 2019, Costa Rica	www.was.org/meeting/code/lacqua19
27-28 Nov	FRDC Board meeting, Canberra	02 6285 0400
10-11 Dec	2019 National Recreational Fishing Conference, Hobart	www.arff.net.au/nrhc

Dates for seafood festivals for 2019 can be found on the FRDC FishFiles website
<http://www.fishfiles.com.au/Media/Seafood-Festivals>

FRDC board meeting dates and locations

Date	Location
27-28 November 2019	Canberra

FRDC RAC meeting dates

Date	Research Advisory Committee meetings	More information
8 October 2019	Victorian RAC	See the FRDC website - http://frdc.com.au/Partners/Research-Advisory-Committees
15 October 2019	Queensland RAC	
18 October 2019	Tasmanian RAC	
23 October 2019	Northern Territory RAC	
29 October 2019	South Australian RAC	
30 October 2019	Western Australian RAC	
31 October 2019	New South Wales RAC	
7 November 2019	Commonwealth RAC	

Key new projects approved since last update in June 2019

NOTE: some projects may have not yet been contracted

Project Number	Title	Applicant	Principle Investigator	Budget \$
2018-103	Storm Bay research program management, governance and extension	Mi-Fish Consulting Pty Ltd	Heidi Mumme	509,025
2018-131	Storm Bay Observing System: Assessing the Performance of Aquaculture Development	Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) Taroona	Jeff Ross	3,645,677
2018-174	Women in Seafood Australasia - Understanding, supporting and promoting effective participation by women within the Australian seafood industry	Women in Seafood Australasia (WISA)	Karen Holder	201,500

2018-181	The End of an Era: Acknowledging the socio-cultural history and contribution of Australian small-scale fisheries	A Twigg	Lynda Mitchelson-Twigg	25,000
2018-183	Identifying and synthesizing key messages from projects funded by the FRDC Indigenous Reference Group	Land to Sea Consulting	Leila Alkassab	167,738
2018-201	FRDC Community Engagement Strategy Evaluation Framework	Clear Horizon	Victoria Pilbeam	89,891
2018-208	Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Ranching Research, Development and Extension Management Program	Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Industry Association	Claire Webber	98,177
2018-210	Long-term analysis of the sea-state in the Great Australian Bight	University of Adelaide	Charles E. James	21,261
2018-212	Establishing an industry recovery strategy for the Augusta subarea of the WA Abalone Managed Fishery	Southern Seafood Producers (WA) Association	Don Nicholls	25,800
2018-214	Rural Safety & Health Alliance - A joint RDC initiative	AgriFutures Australia	Jenny Medway	60,000
2018-216	Mud Crab RAS training - NSW RAC people development	Professional Fishermen's Association Inc (PFAI)	Jacob B. Blackburn	3,012
2018-217	Understanding and mapping the Tasmanian public perception to Atlantic Salmon farming	Tasmanian Salmon Growers Association Ltd (TSGA)	Andrew Gregson	98,000
2019-016	Estimating the biomass of fish stocks using novel and efficient genetic techniques	NSW Department Of Primary Industries	Meaghan Duncan	494,828
2019-021	Integrating recreational fishing information into harvest strategies for multi-sector fisheries	NSW Department Of Primary Industries	Ashley Fowler	447,894
2019-030	An updated understanding of Eastern School Whiting stock structure and improved stock assessment for cross-jurisdictional management	NSW Department Of Primary Industries	Karina C. Hall	420,285
2019-039	South Australian Pacific Oyster selective breeding program: Building POMS resistance to reduce risk for the South Australian oyster industry	University of Adelaide	Xiaoxu Li	756,428
2019-041	Development and validation of reduced thermal processing requirements for canned abalone	Fight Food Waste Cooperative Research Centre	Stephen Pahl	88,400
2019-045	Fish-X – Shifting fishing and aquaculture to an entrepreneurial culture (Year 3)	X-Lab Ventures Pty Ltd	Allen Haroutonian	180,000
2019-076	Strategic management of the Australian Prawn Farmers Association RD&E portfolio	Australian Prawn Farmers Association (APFA)	Kim Hooper	180,000
2019-077	Tasmanian Atlantic Salmon Research, Development and Extension Management	Tasmanian Salmon Growers Association Ltd (TSGA)	Sven Frijlink	150,000
2019-079	Knowledge for Productivity: Phase I - Lake Wooloweyah	University of Newcastle	Troy Gaston	150,000
2019-080	Attendance to the 2019 New Zealand Seafood Conference and the Trans-Tasman Rock Lobster Conference, Queenstown, NZ	Atlantis Fisheries Consulting Group (AFCG)	Natalie J. Manahan	2,500
2019-083	Scoping Study into establishment of a national P. monodon nucleus breeding centre	Dr Len Stephens	Len Stephens	17,000

2019-086	Development of a national sector-specific biosecurity plan guideline and template for the farmed freshwater native finfish industry of Australia	Freshwater Native Fish Association (FNFA)	Lisa Ryan	25,000
2019-087	Update of Whichfish Risk Assessments	bio.inspecta Australia Pty Ltd	Sabine Daume	36,750
2019-088	Development of a national sector-specific biosecurity plan guideline and template for the sea-cage finfish (non-salmonid) industry of Australia.	Department of Primary Industries and Regions South Australia (PIRSA)	Shane Roberts	25,000
2019-090	Lead Auditor Training Program for Aquaculture Biosecurity Plans	Swinburne Professional	Angela Steiner	69,823
2019-092	Seafood Escape Showcasing NSW	ET Productions Pty Ltd	Andrew Ettingshausen	235,000
2019-098	Setting strategic directions for the Australian barramundi farming sector 2020-2025	Australian Barramundi Farmers Association (ABFA)	Jo-Anne Ruscoe	90,000