



Hello

Welcome to the April issue of FRDC News.

In this edition of FRDC News, we welcome [our new Extension Officers Nathan Bicknell and Matt Jones](#). Our Extension Officers are part of significant changes at FRDC to deepen our engagement with you, our stakeholders. The Extension Officers will be based in each state and the NT and they'll work with people in aquaculture, commercial wildcatch, Indigenous and recreational fishing to accelerate uptake of research outcomes.



[Tuna Champions 2](#) is an exciting project working with commercial and recreational tuna fishers to develop and adopt best practice stewardship of our tuna stocks.

[Congratulations to Rob Fish](#), who we're sponsoring in the Australia Rural Leadership program. We're looking forward to the new perspectives Rob will bring to leadership.

The release of the [National Fisheries Plan](#) is an exciting development for our industry. It reflects the input of state, territory and the Australian Government and I encourage you to read through the plan.

Easter is a great time to eat seafood and there is [plenty of delicious seafood available](#), as you can see from this article from the Sydney Fish Market.

And finally, if you're looking for a good read over Easter, [Bob Kearney's book "Fishing in the Good Old Days"](#) is a great read.

Enjoy your Easter.

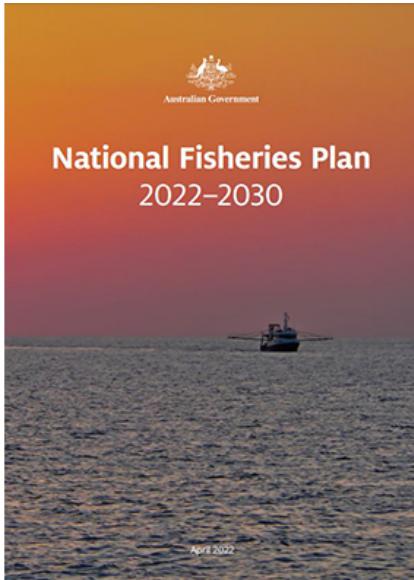
[Watch Patrick's video overview](#)



Extension Officers appointed (MD)

FRDC is appointing regionally-based Extension Officers across Australia to directly engage with the people involved in fishing and aquaculture, to increase the adoption of research outcomes and to help tailor research and development (R&D) to their needs. The Extension Officer Network is being developed based on feedback from fishing and aquaculture stakeholders.

[Read more](#)



The National Fisheries Plan

The National Fisheries Plan provides a shared vision to grow Australia's fishing and seafood sectors in a sustainable way. The Plan highlights recreational fishing benefits and focuses on improving resource access while emphasising the impacts of climate change and research priorities.

[Read more](#)



Rob Fish selected for the Australian Rural Leadership Program

A fishing industry veteran who is keen to foster a more collaborative approach to management of Australia's marine and aquatic resources has been awarded the FRDC's scholarship to participate in the highly regarded Australian Rural Leadership Program (ARLP).

[Read more](#)



Tasmanian Aboriginal fishers build commercial cultural market for Abalone

In March, an agreement was signed at a ceremony on Aboriginal land at Murrayfield on Bruny Island that enables the Land and Sea Aboriginal Corporation Tasmania to fish 40 state-owned Abalone quota units under a three-year lease.

[Read our media release](#)



Tuna Champions looks beyond bluefin

Engaging fishers as champions of change is leading to better practices for Southern Bluefin Tuna, and for other species including sharks and rays.

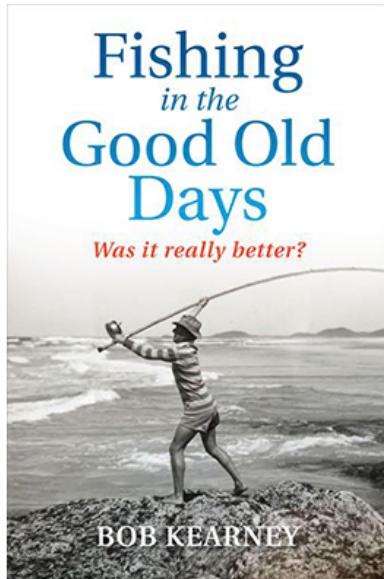
[Read more](#)



Safer seismic surveys the goal for Bass Strait fisheries

A two-year FRDC-funded study is investigating different seismic survey methods that will protect fisheries while giving oil and gas explorers the data they need.

[Read more](#)



Fishing in the Good Old Days – was it really better?

FRDC Deputy Chair Colin Buxton reviews Bob Kearney's book of short stories. Bob is one of the lucky individuals who has combined a passion for fishing with a distinguished career in fisheries science and marine ecosystem management.

[Read more](#)



SeSAFE won safety award at QSI

Congratulations to SeSAFE for winning the Queensland Seafood Industry (QSI) Safety Award 2022. The safety award is presented to an entity that has addressed a high-priority safety area or risk that was end-user driven and produced outcomes that contributed to the safety record of the seafood industry. The award was sponsored by the Australian Prawn Farmers Association.

In Brief

Tasty and Affordable Species Swaps for Easter

The upcoming Easter season is the perfect opportunity to support Australian east coast seafood suppliers, who are now returning to normal trade following prolonged treacherous conditions, including widespread flooding across Queensland and NSW.

Nuffield scholarships open

Applications are now open for an FRDC-sponsored Fisheries and Aquaculture Scholarship as part of the Nuffield Australia scheme.

Seafood Industry Australia welcomes Australia-India Interim FTA

'This announcement marks a period of renewed growth and opportunity for the Australian seafood industry, and we look forward to building strong and vibrant relationships with Indian seafood consumers,' SIA CEO Veronica Papacosta said.

A **Webinar on productivity analysis in fisheries management** will be held on 9 May 10:30 am–12:30 pm ACST for managers, policy makers and advisory groups to provide an overview of productivity analysis and the role it can play in supporting fisheries management.

Early bird tickets are now available for **Seafood Directions 2022** in Brisbane from 13-15 September 2022.

The **Traceability Chooser** has been developed to help businesses understand the most suitable traceability technology for their business model.

Applications are open for the **Indian Ocean Territories Marine Parks Grants** to support local community groups and organisations, industry and research organisations to engage in the management, protection, conservation and promotion of Indian Ocean Territories Marine Parks.

Applications are open for the **Pacific Fisheries Leadership Program (PFLP)** that offers a unique customised programme for current and emerging Pacific fisheries leaders to develop additional skills relevant to mobilizing change on national and regional fisheries priorities.

The **2022 Tasmanian Salmon Symposium** will be held between 10 and 11 May 2022 at the Wrest Point in Hobart. It is taking expressions of interest from those wishing to attend and due to limited numbers, the event will also be available as a virtual symposium. The symposium will consider ethics, values and social license of aquaculture in offshore environments.

Final reports

- **Long-term recovery of trawled marine communities (2017-038)**

This project investigated the extent to which trawled communities of Australia's North West Shelf have recovered from high levels of trawling before the exclusion of foreign fleets in 1990 and after the imposition of tight controls on trawl and trap fishing in the early 1990s. The results suggest the region has largely recovered from the effects of heavy foreign trawling and that the existing trawl effort is not impacting on habitat-forming filter feeder benthic habitats or fish stocks to a level that affects the health of either. The overall aims of the adaptive management experiment in the 1980s and 1990s and the fisheries management arrangements were achieved. The project also supported the premise that filter-feeder habitats support, or are at least associated with, a higher biomass and diversity of demersal fish species. There is little evidence that fishing effort since 2005 has prevented continued recovery of filter feeder habitats.

More information: john.keesing@csiro.au

- **Building indigenous capacity in fisheries management (2017-069)**

This project aimed to address the need to increase the number of Indigenous Australians with capacity to engage in management and governance of fisheries and aquatic resources, by developing a capacity building program with supporting materials and conducting

capacity building activities with several groups of Indigenous people. In consultation with the Indigenous Reference Group, educational materials were developed covering technical components of fisheries management and science, formal meeting processes and leadership skills. A three-day interactive workshop was held in Brisbane and in Adelaide, each featuring a series of videos and PowerPoints. Printed summary sheets were provided. At the request of the Torres Strait Regional Authority, an additional workshop for 14 Protected Zone Joint Authority members was held. A total of 40 Indigenous people from around Australia took part in the workshops. The videos feature Indigenous presenters and case studies aligned to Indigenous fishing practices and they promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their cultures and connection to fisheries to other stakeholders. The materials produced can be used across Australia to empower Indigenous participation in sustainable fisheries management. They are now being utilised in a subsequent four-year project by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment to foster more effective engagement of representatives of Indigenous, recreational and commercial fisheries with Commonwealth fisheries management processes.

More information: ian@fishwell.com.au

- **Options to monitor and regulate recreational catch in the Tasmanian Rock Lobster fishery (2019-183)**

Southern Rock Lobster is an important fishery species in Tasmania. The commercial sector harvests approximately 1000 tonnes per year to a landed value of approximately \$90 million, while more than 18,000 recreational licensees harvested more than 80 t in the 2020–21 season. Lobsters are also taken as part of Indigenous cultural activities and by Indigenous individuals, thought to be more than 1000 participants. The East Coast Stock Rebuilding Strategy was introduced in 2013 to limit the recreational and commercial catch in this zone. Based on historical usage, 79% of the total zone catch was allocated to the commercial sector and 21% was allocated to the recreational sector. The catch share arrangement does not apply to the Indigenous sector. Since then, the recreational sector has exceeded its notional limit four times, including an over-catch of 46% in 2020–21. This project investigated alternative options to monitor and constrain the recreational catch. It found that effective catch constraints could be achieved by shortening the season, decreasing the bag limit or introducing an individual season limit (ISL). A smartphone app for real-time monitoring of ISLs without a need for other measures, such as catch tags, was developed. The app was trialed in April 2021 by recreational fishers who had previously taken part in a survey, with most finding it very easy to use. The app was rolled out on a voluntary basis by Tasmania’s Department of Primary Industries Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE) for the 2021–22 recreational Rock Lobster season. This voluntary trial period will help ensure the app meets the objectives of catch monitoring and is practically acceptable to fishers. Findings from this rollout, and a literature review of alternative management and monitoring options included in the project, will be used by the Department to determine changes to current management arrangements over coming fishing seasons.

- **Impact of stocking on Queensland’s east coast Barramundi catch (2018-047)**

Researchers from Queensland’s Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, James Cook University and the University of Western Australia tested a range of otolith-based and genetic methods to identify hatchery-born from wild-born Barramundi. The project took place in the Dry Tropics region, where extensive historical and ongoing impoundment stocking (release of hatchery-born Barramundi into freshwater bodies) may be contributing

to the downstream wild-capture marine and estuarine fishery.

Fish samples were collected from the commercial and recreational wild-capture marine and estuarine fishery in 2019 and 2020, following the major Townsville floods in February 2019. The team identified a cost-effective means of using trace elements in fish otoliths to reliably distinguish hatchery-origin from wild-origin fish, measure the contribution of stocked fish to the wild population, and assess the sustainability of the wild-capture fishery. The report found that Barramundi that spend time in fresh water as juveniles grow faster and larger than those that spend their entire lives in salt water. It found that 33 per cent of barramundi caught in the Townsville and Burdekin marine fishery had spent at least one year in fresh water as juveniles.

More information: Susannah.Leahy@daf.qld.gov.au

See also: [Barramundi benefit from ‘gap year’ in fresh water](#)

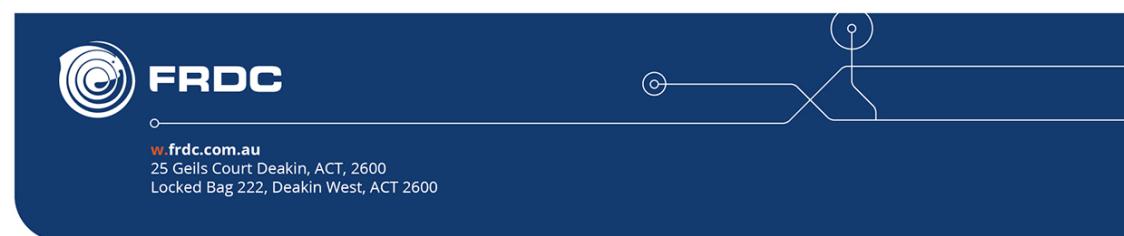
As always, we love your feedback and story suggestions, which you can submit on our website <https://www.frdc.com.au/contact-us>

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