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From the Coordination Program Leader

Welcome to 2024. There have been some changes to the AAHBCP Committee.

- Ian Anderson, Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, has resigned from the AAHBCP Committee, pending his retirement. On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank Ian for his excellent contribution to the FRDC AAHBCP and wish him all the best for his retirement.
- I would like to welcome two new AAHBCP Committee members; Francisca Samsing Pedrals of the University of Sydney and Ben Diggles of DigsFish Services.

Finally, please note the announcement of the **Aquatic Animal Health Technical Forum** on page 2 of the newsletter.

2023 FRDC Cairns conference

The **Sixth Fisheries Research Development Corporation (FRDC) Australasian Scientific Conference on Aquatic Animal Health & Biosecurity** was held on Gimuy-Walubara Yidinji and Yirrganydji Country from 3 to 7 July in Cairns, Queensland, Australia. The conference was a forum for presentations encompassing all areas of aquatic animal health and biosecurity across research,



Congratulations to the Sixth FRDC Australasian Scientific Conference on Aquatic Animal Health & Biosecurity Student award winners!
From left to right: Angelique Hoffmann, Karthiga Kumanan and Phoebe Arbon.

diagnostics, epidemiology, management, and policy issues.

For the 2023 conference, we had 90 participants including four keynote speakers:

- **Dr Saraya Tavornpanich**, Department of Aquatic Animal Health and Welfare, Norwegian Veterinary Institute.
- **Dr Kevin Christison**, Aquaculture Innovation and Technology Development, Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, South Africa.
- **Dr Mark Crane (retired)**, CSIRO Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness Fish Diseases Laboratory.
- **Dr Steve Percival**, Aquaculture Development and Veterinary Services and FRDC.
- An **Industry Panel session**, showcasing women in or nominated by the aquaculture industry, with aquatic animal health and biosecurity expertise and the important nexus between research and the successful fulfilment of their roles.
- **Jo Marshall** running our **Wellbeing and Safety session**.
- and **50 aquatic animal health and biosecurity presentations**.

Thank you to all participants, presenters, and chairs for your contributions.

A big congratulations to the Student award winners:

- 1st Karthiga Kumanan
- 2nd Phoebe Arbon
- 3rd Angelique Hoffmann

Feedback from participants at the conference was extremely positive. Thank you for your opinions. Feedback will be discussed at our next meeting where we will commence planning for our next FRDC Australasian Scientific Conference on Aquatic Animal Health & Biosecurity planned for 2025! We are seeking all input, including from those that were unable to attend the conference in 2023, to assist in planning. Please provide your input by the 29th of February, via the following link:

[PROVIDE INPUT for the 2025 CONFERENCE!](#)

For further information about the conference, please contact Nick Moody (nick.moody@csiro.au) or Jacqui Morris (jacqui.morris@csiro.au).

AAHBCP Meetings

Since our last issue AAHBCP had a face-to-face meeting prior to the FRDC Cairns conference in July and a videoconference in October. Items for discussion at these meetings included:

- Planning for the Sixth FRDC Australasian Scientific Conference on Aquatic Animal Health and Biosecurity
- Briefing about Catalysing Australia's Biosecurity (CAB)
- Updates from FRDC.
- Welcoming our new committee members.

The next AAHBCP meeting is a face-to-face meeting scheduled for March 2024 in Melbourne.

Announcements

10th Aquatic Animal Health Technical Forum and Workshop

Date: 20-22 March 2024

Host: Western Australian Fisheries and Marine Research Laboratories, WA

Venue: Hillarys Boat Harbour, Sorrento Beach

Background: The Aquatic Animal Health Technical Forum (AAHTF) training workshops play an important role in developing the aquatic animal health network.

Workshops are targeted at new and emerging technical staff working in aquatic animal health, including on-farm industry staff. The workshop attendance will be capped at 25 participants and priority given to those that haven't attended previously.

The workshops provide participants with the opportunity to exchange information with other attendees who have expertise and experience in aquatic animal health.

Participants have the opportunity to present work and participate in discussions about relevant cases/research/technologies in a less formal atmosphere than that of a larger scientific conference.

Currently, in Australia there is only a relatively small (but growing) number of experienced aquatic animal health specialists with well-developed skills and knowledge. With aquaculture expanding in Australia, transferring these vital skills and knowledge to a new generation will be of benefit to the aquatic animal health sector and aquatic animal industries in Australia.

For further information please contact Nette Williams (lynette.williams@csiro.au)

Aquatic Animal Health Technical Forum is supported from funding by the FRDC on behalf of the Australian Government

AAHBCP Website

Our website is located on the FRDC site and can be accessed directly under: <https://www.frdc.com.au/aquatic-animal-health-biosecurity>

There you can view this issue and all previous issues of Health Highlights - in addition to finding other information about the FRDC Aquatic Animal Health & Biosecurity Coordination Program and related issues.

FRDC Final Reports are searchable at:

<https://www.frdc.com.au/project-search>

FRDC News is available at:

<https://www.frdc.com.au/newsletters>

Please contact FRDC directly (Email address: frdc@frdc.com.au) if you have any problems with their website.

Newsletter submissions

The Aquatic Animal Health & Biosecurity Coordination Program welcomes contributions to *Health Highlights* on all aquatic animal health & biosecurity R&D news and events – both within and outside the FRDC. We aim to assist with the widespread exchange of information by including any of the following in each annual edition: project updates, milestone reports, final reports, research papers, project communication and extension outputs, info sheets, and letters to the editor. Announcements of conferences, workshops, meetings, job vacancies etc. are also welcome.

Mailing list

Health Highlights is distributed biannually to stakeholders via email as well as being posted on the FRDC website at:

<https://www.frdc.com.au/aquatic-animal-health-biosecurity>

A new mailing list system will be released in 2024. For now, to change contact details or to ensure inclusion on the *Health Highlights* mailing list, please contact Jacqui:

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