



Media Release

International fisheries leader to take FRDC helm

4 July 2025

International fishing and aquaculture leader Mr Sean Sloan has been announced as the new Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) Managing Director.

FRDC Chair, Dr Elizabeth (Beth) Woods OAM, welcomed Sean to the role as the Corporation enters an important new chapter.

“The FRDC Board is delighted to have secured such a high calibre leader with over 25 years’ experience in natural resources management, fisheries and aquaculture management, research, monitoring, assessment and development,” Dr Woods said.

“Strategically, the organisation is on the right path. Sean’s global experience will be instrumental in delivering on the ambitions of FRDC’s newly launched [Research, Development and Extension \(RD&E\) Plan 2025-30 Delivering Impact Through Collaboration](#) which sets a bold direction for FRDC’s work with our fishing and aquaculture sectors, researchers, government partners and the broader Australian community.

“It’s rough seas at the moment in the fishing and aquaculture sectors. The FRDC Board is confident Sean has the extensive experience and strong leadership necessary to navigate the challenges now and in the future.

“A highly accomplished professional and an established leader, Sean has a genuine passion for pursuing sustainable development of Australian fishing and aquaculture. He is highly respected amongst our stakeholders and is well positioned to lead FRDC.

“Sean has held senior fisheries positions in the Commonwealth and State Governments of Australia and at the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency based in the Solomon Islands. Having worked in fishing and aquaculture in Australia and internationally – and directly with FRDC – Sean has a deep understanding of the FRDC operating environment and has well established relationships with many of our stakeholders.

“Our people are our most important asset at FRDC. Sean has a proven track record of building highly effective, cross-functional teams in a variety of business and government settings, so we look forward to his leadership further enhancing and developing our FRDC team.”

Sean will join FRDC on 25 August 2025 from his role as Deputy Secretary for the Fisheries and Forestry portfolio at the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development.

“FRDC is thrilled to have attracted a highly accomplished and experienced Managing Director to lead the organisation, effectively transitioning the leadership to Sean from long-serving Managing Director Dr Patrick Hone,” Dr Woods said.

“On behalf of FRDC Directors and staff, I again congratulate Patrick for his outstanding leadership of FRDC as Managing Director for over 21 years. His vision and stewardship have positioned FRDC as a globally respected research organisation and we thank him for the incredible contribution he’s made to Australian fishing and aquaculture during his 30 years’ service with FRDC. We wish you all the best for your retirement on 12 August 2025.”

More information:

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About Sean Sloan

Sean Sloan has over 25 years of experience in natural resources management, fisheries and aquaculture management, research, monitoring, assessment and industry development, and more recently forestry.

Sean has held senior fisheries positions in the Commonwealth and State Governments of Australia and at the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency based in the Solomon Islands, involving management, research, assessment and development of fisheries and aquaculture resources.

Sean joins FRDC from the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, where he is the Deputy Secretary for the Fisheries and Forestry portfolio. His responsibilities included fisheries, aquaculture and forestry management, development, policy making, resource sharing, scientific research, monitoring, stock assessment, freshwater, coastal and marine environment conservation and management, the NSW Marine Estate Management Program, NSW Marine Park management, threatened aquatic species assessment and management, the NSW Shark Management Program, fisheries, aquaculture and hunting compliance, community education, awareness, enforcement, leasing and licensing.

Sean has led national work funded by the FRDC to establish guidelines for fisheries harvest strategy development, which has been adopted by Australian jurisdictions to support fisheries policy makers and technical teams working on harvest strategies.

Sean has well established relationships and partnerships with government and non-government natural resource management and research agencies, industries and key stakeholders across Australia and internationally. He is a strong advocate for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in Australia.

Sean studied applied fisheries science at the Australian Maritime College and University of Tasmania before commencing work in the fisheries and aquaculture sector.



About FRDC

FRDC takes a leading role in planning and investment in fisheries research, development and extension (RD&E) to support the ongoing sustainability of our aquatic sectors and aquatic ecosystems.

We are a co-funded partnership between the Australian Government and fisheries and aquaculture. We are a statutory corporation under the Primary Industries Research and Development Act 1989 (the PIRD Act) and are responsible to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

We plan, invest in and manage RD&E for fishing and aquaculture and the wider community, and we encourage adoption of the resulting knowledge and innovation for impact. We coordinate government and industry investment and work with stakeholders to establish and address their RD&E priorities.

On behalf of the Australian Government, we have a significant responsibility to ensure research is undertaken to assist in the management of fisheries and aquaculture resources for their ongoing sustainability. This means funding is directed to research that has a benefit for Indigenous, commercial and recreational fishing and aquaculture while also delivering a public good benefit to the Australian community.

