

New Group to shape Indigenous use of living aquatic resources for fishing and aquaculture

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From helping to develop a Kimberley Aboriginal Mud Crab Fishery, to Two-Eyed Seeing – a framework for cultural fishery assessments, FRDC is dedicated to investing in research, development and extension (RD&E) to advance the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In the last five years FRDC has invested in more than 30 projects for the benefit of Indigenous fishing and aquaculture. This investment would not be possible without the advice and direction of our Indigenous Reference Group (IRG).

The IRG plays a pivotal role, ensuring First Nations perspectives are integral to FRDC's RD&E agenda, through the provision of strategic advice, advocacy and guidance on Indigenous fisheries, aquaculture and sea country management issues. This ensures the alignment with the aspirations, values, and knowledge systems of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

FRDC is delighted to announce the appointment of new Reference Group members:

- **Ashley Perez**
- **Bryan Denny**
- **Dr Cass Hunter**
- **Craig Aspinall**
- **Delahay Miller**
- **Dennis Ah-Kee**
- **Frank Procter**
- **Shane Holland**
- **Stephan Schnierer**

The new cohort, being led by IRG Executive Officer Stan Lui brings together a diverse group of Indigenous leaders, traditional owners and professionals who are deeply connected to their Sea Country and have a wealth of experience in fisheries management, policy development, and cultural practices. These appointments underpin FRDC's commitment to embedding Indigenous knowledge and perspectives in all aspects of fisheries research, development and extension.

FRDC Managing Director, Dr Patrick Hone, congratulated the new members and recognised the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement in fisheries and aquaculture.

"The expertise and cultural knowledge the IRG brings is invaluable to ensuring that Indigenous communities have a meaningful role in shaping the future of Australia's fisheries," Dr Hone said. "We are excited to work with the new IRG members to build stronger partnerships and create opportunities through RD&E for Australia's First Nations and enable their passion for innovation".

The IRG will work collaboratively with FRDC stakeholders, including industry, government agencies and research institutions, to ensure Indigenous knowledge systems are respected and integrated into all aspects of fishing and aquaculture RD&E.

For more information on the FRDC Indigenous Reference Group and their work, visit frdc.com.au/IRG

Biographies of the Reference Group can be found on the following page.

About FRDC

Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) takes a leading role in planning and investment in fisheries research and development (R&D) 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.

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IRG Member Background Information

Ashley Perez

Ashley Perez is a descendent of the Muran/Iwaidja people from the Northern Territory, and Badu Island from the Torres Strait nations. Ashley is currently the Program Manager for the Sea Country unit within the Northern Land Council (NLC). He has insights into Indigenous fishing and resource management, as well as significant experience within the management of sea country, Indigenous ranger capacity building and advocating for Indigenous sea rights.

Bryan Denny

Bryan Denny is a descendant of Melukerdee nation from Southeast Tasmania. Bryan is currently a director/owner of Ocean Blue Diving and was instrumental in the landmark decision to grant abalone quota units from the Tasmanian government to the Tasmanian Regional Aboriginal Communities Alliance. Bryan also holds multiple committee and Chair roles within Sea Country, fishing and aquaculture.

Dr Cass Hunter

Dr Cass Hunter is a descendent of Kuku Yalanji from Far North Queensland and Maluiligal from the Torres Strait nations. Cass is currently the Indigenous Systems Researcher for CSIRO, an Indigenous Advisory Committee member to the Minister for the Environment and holds multiple Chair and committee roles within Sea Country, biodiversity and conservation management.

Craig Aspinall

Craig Aspinall is a descendant of Biripi nation from the New South Wales Lower North Coast. Craig is currently the Aboriginal Water Program Manager for the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. Craig also holds multiple committee roles within fisheries, aquaculture, and Sea Country and was appointed to the Board of Directors for OceanWatch Australia in 2005.

Delahay Miller

Delahay Miller is a descendant of the Wirangu and Mirning nations from the Far West Coast of South Australia. Based in Adelaide, Delahay serves as a Manager at Yamagigu Consulting, formerly known as PwC Indigenous Consulting. Delahay holds several Chair and Committee positions focusing on Sea Country, Fisheries Management, Fisheries and Aquaculture Research and Preserving and Protecting Cultural Heritage.

Dennis Ah-Kee

Dennis Ah-Kee, a Wanjuru Bindabarra Traditional Owner of the Russell River catchment that is part of the Yidinji nation. Dennis is a director / owner of Jaragun Ecoservices and has a background in fisheries and aquaculture. Dennis holds multiple Committee Roles within Land and Sea Country, Wet Tropics, Reef water quality, and Coastal Restoration.

Frank Procter

Frank Procter is a descendant of the Yadhaykenu Wuthathi People in Cape York and Gurindji people in the Northern Territory. Frank is a part owner of On-Country Seafood (OCS) based in Cairns and provides ongoing management consultancy expertise to OCS and numerous other Indigenous fishers in QLD. Frank holds multiple Chair and Committee roles within Fisheries and Community Engagement and Development Working Groups, with a strong focus on Indigenous economic development within Sea Country.

Shane Holland

Shane Holland is a descendant of Kurna and Narungga Nations in South Australia. Shane is currently the Manager of Indigenous Partnerships with Department of Industry, Science and Resources. Shane previously led Aboriginal fisheries management in South Australia and has participated in multiple Chair and Committee roles involving Sea Country, research and development, and fishing and aquaculture management and policy.

Stephan Schnierer

Stephan Schnierer is an Indigenous consultant, adviser and advocate for Indigenous fisheries, marine protected areas, rights advocacy, environmental science and management. Stephan has over 35 years' experience in academic and research roles and was previously an Associate Professor at Southern Cross University where he set up and then headed the College of Indigenous Australians.