

FINAL REPORT (DEVELOPMENT AWARD)

AWARD CODE and TITLE

2008/314.20 **FRDC People Development Program: 2010 FRDC International Travel Bursary**

AWARD RECIPIENT: Lowri Pryce

ADDRESS: OceanWatch Australia, Locked Bag 247, Pyrmont NSW 2009

HOST ORGANISATION: OceanWatch Australia

DATE: September 2010

ACTIVITY UNDERTAKEN

- Attendance, presentation & participation at the World Ocean Council's Sustainable Oceans Summit in Belfast, UK developing contacts and generate ideas to improve the delivery of good news stories relevant to the Australian fishing industry.
- Visits to Irish & UK organisations involved in developing wild caught seafood EMS to share problems, solutions and discoveries to add value to Australian EMSs being developed through the OceanWatch program, SeaNet.
- Dissemination of bursary findings to the OceanWatch team (so they can directly relate them to the fishermen they are assisting), to the SeaNet Steering Committee, and others industry stakeholders through the report and production of an article on the SOS for the wider stakeholders for inclusion in the SeaNet newsletter.

OUTCOMES ACHIEVED TO DATE

- Gained knowledge of best practice sustainable activities globally
- Better understanding of successful marine industry partnerships
- Develop understanding of successful development & adoption of EMS in UK and Ireland
- Increased contacts in allied industries
- Ideas for telling the story to community about grassroots activities

Acknowledgments

- Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) for granting the International Travel Bursary
- OceanWatch Australia's Board of Directors for their encouragement and willingness to allow time away from the company

- Paul Holthus of World Oceans Council (WOC) for his invitation to attend and present at Sustainable Ocean Summit (SOS)
- Ted Loveday, Seafood Services Australia for his kind assistance with the Irish Sea Fisheries Board (BIM) contacts
- Sydney Fish Market for their generosity with knowledge and Seafish contacts
- The staff at BIM and Seafish for their frank and insightful comments

Background

The purpose of the bursary was to attend the Sustainable Ocean Summit (SOS) which took place in Belfast, Northern Ireland from the 15th - 17th June 2010. It was the first international, cross sectoral ocean sustainability conference for the private sector. The summit convenor was the World Ocean Council (WOC), in partnership with Golder Associates. The WOC is the only international business leadership alliance on ocean stewardship.

With the theme of *"Reducing Risk, Increasing Sustainability: Solutions through Collaboration"*, the SOS brought together a wide range of industries that use marine space and resources, including shipping, oil and gas, fisheries, aquaculture, ports, mining, insurance, legal issues, renewable offshore energy, tourism, dredging, marine technology and others. Some of the key topics discussed at the summit included; Seafood from Crowded Seas, Regional Ocean Industry Alliances and best practice mitigation measures to reduce issues such as Marine Debris.

A secondary purpose of the bursary was to undertake further travel to the Irish Republic to meet with staff from the Irish Sea Fisheries Board (BIM) which is the Irish state agency responsible for developing the Irish Sea Fishing and Aquaculture industries. BIM role is to drive growth, add value, enhancing competitiveness and create jobs, as well as provide advisory, financial, technical, marketing and training supports services to all sectors of the Irish seafood industry. BIM activities are funded from the Exchequer, the European Commission and via fee for services. The purpose of visiting BIM was to learn about their operator-based Environmental Management Systems (EMS) and its impact on market share.

In addition, an opportunistic visit to Seafish in the North of England was also scheduled into the trip. Seafish, the UK authority on seafood, works across all sectors of the UK seafood industry to promote quality, sustainable seafood. Similar to BIM in Ireland, they are the sole UK cross-industry seafood body working with fishermen, processors, wholesalers, seafood farmers, fish fryers, caterers, retailers and the import/export trade. A public body, they are sponsored by the four UK government fisheries departments through a statutory levy on all fish, shellfish and seafood products landed, imported or cultivated in the UK. This was an opportunity to understand and learn from the UK experience of incorporating good environmental management into the business of seafood.

Need

As Executive Officer of OceanWatch Australia (OWA) it is vital to stay abreast of best practice developments in advancing the sustainability of the Australian seafood industry and find ways to improve the reporting on our successes.

Presenting at the Summit, themed *"Reducing Risk, Increasing Sustainability: Solutions through Collaboration"*, was to increase my contact/collaboration with leading marine industries experts that use the marine space and resources. As the summit aims to assist marine businesses in addressing shared ocean environmental challenges and develop the

practical programs to develop and implement solutions - issues raised at the 2010 Seafood Directions, there was opportunity to gather ideas, techniques and contacts relevant to the sustainability of Australian fisheries and mechanism for improved communication to the public.

Attending this summit allowed me to personally meet and discuss issues with international colleagues working within the fishing industry, as well as in allied industries. It was also an opportunity to hear case studies in projects/ideas/programs that have worked, and lessons learnt along the way. It also provided me with the opportunity to discuss the work of OWA in the context of marine industry sustainability, as an organisation which has achieved good outcomes. Communicating with seafood industry representatives at the summit also gave me new context and a wider network than previously. The ability to discuss issues and share ideas is something I consider vital for my personal development and role at OWA.

Visiting key seafood organisations was a bonus of being able to attend the summit. BIM and SeaFish are well regarded organisations within the seafood industry. As OWA is tasked with developing and promoting the importance of responsible fishing through assisting industry develop EMS (via the SeaNet program), this was an opportunity to meet and discuss at firsthand the BIM and Seafish experience in this field, as well as cross-fertilise with OWA methods and approaches, and further assist the work of OWA and the industry nationally, particularly the inshore fisheries which often are in direct conflict with other estuarine/marine user groups.

Objectives

1. Attend, present & participate in SOS – **completed**
2. Develop contacts/networks & gather ideas/strategies to improve the delivery of good news stories relevant to Australian fisheries – **completed and ongoing through development of projects such as ‘telling the story’, reinvigorating projects such as fishing for waste/litter and the outcomes of the Seafood Industry Partnerships in Schools project**
3. Visit Irish organisations involved in developing wild caught seafood EMS to share problems, solutions and discoveries to add value to Australian EMSs being developed through SeaNet – **completed and also visited Seafish in the UK**
4. Disseminate findings to the OceanWatch team, to the SeaNet Steering Committee, and others industry stakeholders. **Partially completed - SeaNet team have been briefed on the visit to BIM and Seafish and I delivered a verbal report on the SOS in Belfast, the SeaNet Steering Committee and Board of OWA will receive a report on the bursary at the next meeting**
5. Produce article on the SOS for the wider stakeholders for inclusion in the SeaNet newsletter **completed - due for distribution in late 2010**

Methods

Activities include;

1. Attend, present & participate in SOS
2. Develop contacts/networks & gather ideas/strategies to improve the delivery of good news stories relevant to Australian fisheries
3. Visit Irish organisations involved in developing wild caught seafood EMS to share problems, solutions and discoveries to add value to Australian EMSs being developed through SeaNet

Visit 1: Sustainable Ocean Summit

Under activity 1 of the methodology, the bursary afforded the opportunity to attend the Sustainable Ocean Summit and participate in roundtable discussions. A series of questions was put to principal participants to explore the views of different industries on what are areas of common ground. The Roundtable considered the needs and opportunities for industries to lead and collaborate on cross-cutting ocean stewardship issues such as best practice management of the marine environment. The experience of hearing the issues of other industries leaders and their solutions provided input for me to explore and develop the role of OceanWatch in Australia.

In addition, I presented on the role of OceanWatch Australia (OWA) which increased my exposure of presenting to a wider variety of listeners, and developed my skills in presenting the complex environmental, governance, partnerships issues faced by the Australian seafood sector to a broad, but influential audience. The presentations occurred during the fifteen themed sessions, which identified issues of key concern to marine industries.

Please note: key presentations of interest to the bursary holder are in bold, with further details of the discussions following. Information about other presentations can be accessed at the summit web pages, which is available through the WOC website <http://www.oceancouncil.org/site/summit/>

Topics for the themed session were as follows;

Session 1: International Ocean Policy and the Future of Industry

- How will businesses be affected by upcoming developments in the Law of the Sea, the Convention on Biological Diversity and Regional Maritime Policies

Session 2: Seafood from Crowded Seas

- **How are fisheries and aquaculture interactions with other ocean industries addressed?**

Session 3: Ports, Coastal Waters and Marine Environmental Quality

- What kinds of best practices are needed in near shore waters, ports and across the sector to maintain and improve the quality of the marine environment?
- What kinds of approaches, tools and innovations are making a difference?

Session 4: Renewable Energy from Crowded Seas

- What are the synergies and economies of scale in wind, wave and tidal energy development and how can interactions with other ocean industries be addressed?

Session 5: Marine Ecosystem Services and Climate Change

- What are the roles and incentives for industry to maintain or enhance marine ecosystems especially as they are being affected by climate change?

Session 6: Arctic Marine Ecosystem Challenges and Opportunities

- How can the responsible, sustainable development of the arctic be enhanced through cross-sectoral industry leadership and coordination?

Session 7: Climate change and ocean use

- Are there opportunities for cross-sectoral ocean industry leadership, innovation and synergies in addressing climate change causes and impacts?

Session 8: Biosecurity and Invasive Species

- How can diverse ocean industries collaborate to address the shared problem of marine invasive species?

Session 9: Regional Ocean Industry Alliances

- **What can we learn from regional cross-sectoral industry leadership and coordination on shared ocean use, sustainability and development?**

Session 10: Ocean Industries and Ocean Science

- How can ocean industries collaborate to improve science that in turn supports safe and environmentally sound ocean use?

Session 11: Environmental Education and Training for Marine Professionals

- What are the educational needs of maritime professionals to address the environmental concerns of shipping and other maritime industry operations?

Session 12: Risk and Ocean Environmental Issues

- How can ocean industries best manage uncertainty, whilst making progress as a responsible ocean business?

Session 13: Ocean Industries and Marine Mammal Interactions

- What are the opportunities for synergies and economies of scale in the research and development of solutions to the impacts of sound and ship strikes on marine mammals?

Session 14: Vessels, Structures and Marine Environmental Quality

- What kinds of best practices are needed on-board and across the sectors to maintain and improve the quality of the marine environment? What kind of approaches and innovations are making a difference?

Session 15: Marine Debris

- **How can ocean industries most effectively prevent, control and remove sea-based marine debris?**

Following presentations, each panel session explored the areas of common ground of participants and the need, opportunity and value of cross-sectoral industry leadership and collaboration. The sessions worked to identify priorities for ocean industry action in relation to the issue. Each session identified ideas for the WOC to work to address these priorities, such as identify cross-sectoral industry research, develop a working group, compile and disseminate best practices/case studies, etc.

Key SOS presentations of significance for the Seafood Sector included;

Session 2 – Seafood from Crowded Seas

Presentation: Donal Maguire, Aquaculture Development Director, Irish Sea Fisheries Board

Donal presented on the importance of developing mariculture in order to secure future seafood supplies in countries which are major importers of seafood (such as Ireland, the UK and Australia), but that it was essential to have the backing of other marine users. In recognising that Aquaculture would need to move offshore, (due to being out-competing other coastal users is unlikely), he believed by 2050 Mariculture must close the production cycle, move down several trophic levels and integrate into complimentary 'polyculture' systems.

However, shifts in community perception would also be essential. The sight of large fish farms on water should/would be as familiar as the sight of a fishing vessel. But the shift in perception was also needed from other marine users, many who currently use the marine environment as their sewers. There would need to be a twenty fold increase in footprint required (though still only 1% of the continental shelf – in Ireland). Essentially, all ocean users will need to stop using the ocean as an accepted dump. Fish farming is playing its part through organic certification, eco-labelling and environmentally friendly certified production, but other ocean stakeholders need to come on board, to consider the importance of productive oceans for food security and mitigate from they're impacts.

SESSION 9 - Regional Ocean Industry Alliances

Presenter: Saara Kankaanrinta, Baltic Sea Action Group

Saara reported on the work of the Baltic Sea Action Group (BSAG), a Finnish foundation that carries out environmental projects within the environmentally degraded Baltic Sea. They act as an initiator and a catalyst. They aim to find the most efficient way of doing things – by working top down.

The challenges are enormous, with 14 states in the catchment area, and a huge lack of cooperation and coordination and "silo thinking". BSAC have created a high level network, with strong political backing (essential as inter-governmental politics has been major obstacles to finding solutions in the past, rather than lack of funds).

In Feb 2010 the Baltic Sea Action Summit was convened and driven by cooperation between President of Finland, Prime Minister of Finland and BSAG Foundation. Leaders from 11 countries around the Baltic Sea attended and the commitments of countries were publicly presented. In addition, over 140 commitments from private and public sectors were presented and publicly announced during the BSAS, high attendance of international media with 1500 articles across the world in over 300 media outlets.

Through the summit, the issues facing the Baltic Sea was seen through a new approach: all nations participated. The summit generated strong political will and produced a common voice amongst all attendees. Actions included bringing in the private sector to speed up the work by and creating incentives and a positive spirit of working together.

SESSION 15 – Marine Debris

Presenter: Tom Piper – Fishing for Litter Program, Local Authorities International Environmental Organisation

Local Authorities International Environmental Organisation (KIMO) has over 152 Local Authority members from 15 Countries (mostly Europe – none from Asia Pacific). Fishing for Litter is a KIMO program encouraging European fishermen to take ashore litter they catch while fishing as a way of reduce marine debris. Marine Debris is one of the most significant environmental problems affecting the marine environment with a suspected 20,000 tonnes of litter dumped into the North Sea alone every year.

KIMO directly provides fishing vessels with large bulker bags to deposit marine sourced litter. When full, these bags are deposited safely on the quayside by the fishermen, to be collected for disposal.

This action reduces the volume of debris washing up on beaches and also reduces the amount of time fishermen spend untangling their nets. The initiative not only involves the direct removal of litter from the sea, but also raises awareness of the significance of the problem amongst each community. This pioneering project has expanded from an original pilot scheme in the Netherlands to now be a highly recognisable initiative in the United Kingdom and beyond.

SESSION 15 – Marine Debris

Presenter: Rene M. Mansho, SCHNITZER STEEL HAWAII CORP.

The *nets to energy* partnership program is a multi agency partnership between the fishing, ports, energy and government sector. The program collects, cuts and incinerates old commercial fishing nets and converts to energy on the Hawaiian Island of Oahu.

Similar to OWA's *Fishing for Waste* project (initiated in 2008, nets were recycled into fencing posts in Australia), this is a very successful program having gained the company who manages the program (Schnitzer Steel) valuable positive PR, boosting its home grown reputation for environmentally responsible behaviour with clients, government and the community. This was an effective presentation at exemplifying the private sector's capacity to take the lead on good environmental outcomes, as well as a prime example of how a corporate can benefit from the community acceptance and support.

Under Activity 2 of the bursary, I was to develop contacts/networks & gather ideas/strategies to improve the delivery of good news stories relevant to Australian fisheries, I was fortunate to be able to participate in the plenary session IMPROVING MEDIA, PUBLIC AND NGO UNDERSTANDING OF OCEAN INDUSTRIES.

The Media Panel was chaired by Carleen Lyden-Kluss, Executive Director, North America Marine Environment Protection Association (NAMEPA), who provided an introductory presentation to set the stage.

The Media panellists were;

Nicki Holmyard - Seafood Source News

Fred Pearce - New Scientist

Alisdair Pettigrew - BLUE

Neville Smith - Fairplay

Marcus Connaughton - Seascapes RTE Radio 1

The panellists considered how ocean industries can better communicate their efforts to minimize impacts and protect the marine environment and ensure other stakeholders are aware of the role of responsible ocean industry as ocean stewards. The session sought to devise strategies for improving stories about ocean usage/stewardship.

Discussion identified greater transparency of information and less historical 'navel gazing' as good starting points. The panel of media writers and journalists challenged the relevance and appeal to the general public of industry's efforts to be good ocean stewards. The panel discussed how improved crafting and delivery of the message in a more compelling grassroots fashion was desperately needed, and suggest outlets that would best receive this information.

The session produced the *ten commandments of effective media relations for ocean industries*. They were as follows;

1. Passion – make it happen
2. Vision - share it
3. Mission – statement use it
4. Values – demonstrate them
5. Truth – be
6. Transparent - be
7. Commitment - to the message
8. Patience - be
9. Reputation – be mindful
10. Relationships - develop it with your media and maintain it

Clear ideas emerged on how to improve media for the ocean industries from the panel.

These include;

- Changing media interest in ocean issues and industries
 - Some older industries may need to work to create a new image and relationships based on developing a new reality
 - investment in media and sustainability capabilities can provide real results – *‘real efforts to address environmental issues along with ramped-up communications can result in significantly improved media image and information dissemination.’ (SOS Report)*
- *Understanding the media*
 - *Stories need to pass the ‘so what’ test*
 - *Different media have different capabilities, local media are instrumental in delivering context to local communities – important for public perception and ‘license to operate’*
- *Developing a relationship with the media*
 - *Keep in contact with journalists, develop trust, build the links and keep them informed*
- *Developing the positive stories*
 - Every ocean industry has a good news story to sell (e.g. healthy, high-quality protein and food provided by fisheries and aquaculture that is increasingly need to feed the growing population)
- *Dealing with the bad news*
 - Respond quickly and efficiently to get the full story out and work to turn the situation around
- *Using internal resources and opportunities*
 - *Employees are a great source of communication and story inspiration*
 - *Good operations should underpin the company*

Further information on this Panel Session available for the Summit Report which is available through the WOC website <http://www.oceancouncil.org/site/summit/>

Visit 2: Irish Sea Fisheries Board (BIM)

At BIM I was fortunate to visit Dominic Rihan - Marine Technical Executive, Catherine Barrett and Frank Flemming from the Marine Technical Section of BIM.

One of the reasons I was interested in visiting BIM was to find out about the Seafood EMS (SEMS), as OWA has been charged by DAFF to promote the uptake in Fisheries and Aquaculture operations as part of the SeaNet Program's core work, and to communicate this work to the Australian community.

The SEMS in Ireland is delivered at the business level, rather than at fishery or estuary - as has become common in Australia. The key to the BIM's SEMS strategy is to develop an Irish fish brand, with buy-in from industry. Concern within industry is on developing branded Irish fish, as research show that consumers assume all fish purchased in Ireland is Irish landed – which is not the case. Currently the focus is to have 100 vessels over multi-sectors developing a SEMS, in parallel with the development of a Standard with assistance from the Global Trust (eco-labelling scheme). In addition, consideration for country of origin labelling is also happening. To help distinguish seafood produced under the approved schemes, BIM plans that these products will shortly carry a symbol in the Irish market, and for European, UK and US markets. Eco-certification, alongside quality certification provides an opportunity to distinguish the Irish product on the global market, while positively managing the local environment that sustains the sector. So far there are eco standards for Irish Quality Eco-Salmon and Irish Quality Eco-Mussels. During my visit, BIM was working to finalising standards for wild caught seafood and also reviewing the SEMS. Success of the SEMS, in terms of providing market leverage and access to fishing grounds has yet to be proven, though the team is very optimistic.

During my visit, staff at BIM were very helpful, with frank and insightful comments.

Visit 3: Seafish

Whilst in the UK for the SOS, I was able to organise a visit to the Grimsby HQ, to meet with I was fortunate to meet with Phill McMullen, Head of Environment at Seafish and Simon Potten, Training and Accreditation Manager and briefly with John Rutherford, CEO. This was despite the court case against Seafish, which has placed a black cloud over its continued operations.

Briefly to explain, in 2008, a number of companies from the British Seafood Group, started multi-million pound proceedings against Seafish to challenge the legality of the sea fish levy in its application to imports. In July 2009, the court decided in favour of Seafish and the claims were defeated. However as of March 2010 the Court of Appeal overturned that decision. In July 2010, Seafish were given leave to appeal to the Supreme Court, An appeal against the Court of Appeal's decision, led by DEFRA, can now take place. Seafish have been granted permission to intervene in support of DEFRA's arguments.

Despite the recent distractions of the court case, and the difficulty of planning for the future, the team at SeaFish have made significant contributions in developing profile and promoting the industry environmental credentials in the UK through their work – in particular, the Responsible Fishing Scheme and the Common Language Group.

Responsible Fishing Scheme

Developed by Seafish in collaboration with the British Standards Institution (BSi), the Responsible Fishing Scheme (RFS) is an independent, audited assessment of best practice by a vessel skipper and crew in their fishing operations. This Scheme was developed to

raise the bar in the catching sector in order to demonstrate that vessels are operating to industry good practice guidelines. The scheme provides evidence and a practical demonstration of vessels operator's commitment to the responsible sourcing of seafood. Sold to the consumer as an assurance the fish landed by that vessel has been caught responsibly, whilst gives the vessel/operator a tool to allow them to positively position themselves in the market.

The RFS covers five key areas, namely: environmental issues, fishing practices, crew competence, vessel criteria and record maintenance. Ultimately it is designed to promote and recognise good practice. As of March 2009 the scheme boasts 585 vessels in various stages of assessment with over 300 certified. The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries is the 'lynchpin' upon which the whole ethos of responsible fishing hangs. FAO clearly states that 'the right to fish carries with it the obligation to do so in a responsible manner so as to ensure effective conservation and management of the living aquatic resources.'

The Common Language Group

Seafish convened the Common Language Group role in mediating a common approach to responsible sourcing issues between industry, government and non-government organisations such as the green groups, as well as providing factual information that is both accessible and understandable to the public. The Seafish Common Language Group (CLG) was convened with representatives from the whole seafood supply chain to provide credible, objective, common ground information on the key issues affecting the seafood sector. The group has been successful in breaking down the traditional barriers between the conservation sector and the fishing industry by instigating discussion, creating transparency and sharing knowledge.

Results/Discussion

The main findings of the bursary were as follows;

1. *Fishing industry falling behind in **telling the story***

All marine industry sectors globally (including seafood) are ineffective in telling the global community about what they do and how they do it, preferring to react to negativity rather than proactively promote. The fishing industry's reputation needs to be defended and enhanced by industry and the governments which regulate them through licensing and governance arrangements. Other marine users need to be mindful they operate in our global ocean 'kitchens', which are vast, productive and need to remain so – to contribute to future food security.

The Media session enabled me to reflect on how OWA report on our work with industry, and to developed strategies to better '*tell the story*' about ocean usages and the stewardship of the marine environment by responsible fishermen.

Throughout the SOS, the candid, open attitude of all participants was helpful for problem sharing and tackling difficult issues. In particular discussions with Anna Roslund, Sustainability Development Manager at the Findus Group about ideas for telling the story of SeaNet, was very helpful. Better understanding of the Global Trust accreditation scheme was insightful from Dave Garforth, the Seafood Director, Global Trust. Understanding the link between community and fishing was the discussion with Imogen Ingram, of the Island Sustainability Alliance, and Carleen Lyden-Kluss, a US force of nature, was great at assisting in generating and publishing good news stories.

2. *Irish and UK fishermen know they need to be engaged, to play an active role and be part of the movement to manage ocean resources*

From my visits it is evident that fishermen from the UK and Ireland are well versed in understanding that they have to be a part of the movement to manage marine resources better. It is understood that it is vital that they act responsibly, demonstrate that responsibility and communicate it to the community where they operate/ who buy their product/ who are concerned about the environment. Partnerships such as the Common Language Group is useful for demystifying methods, better communication to stakeholders and for partnership building amongst diverse groups.

For the Australian seafood sector, the "license to operate" given by the community for fishing activities is by far the most important take-home message from the SOS. In the future, especially with competition for access, it is likely that any fishery seen as untrustworthy will not be allowed to do business in the ocean. Strengthening the links between fishermen and the communities (and community structures) in which they operate is vital. As identified in the SOS report (<http://www.oceancouncil.org/site/pdfs/SOS%202010%20Report-FINAL.pdf>), "*Each industry must understand its impacts and do what is necessary to find acceptable solutions to reduce or eliminate them in order to have the license to operate.*"

The global reality is that initiatives to protect and manage the oceans are increasingly driven by wealthy green groups acting on their understanding of the public interest. Obtaining and

maintaining this “social license” is becoming the most important aspect of doing business in the marine environment.

3. Irish and UK fishermen understand that quantifying and demonstrating responsible fishing methods is a prerequisite to market access

The seafood buyers and seafood consuming public of the UK and Ireland not only demand that the seafood industry conduct its business in an environmentally responsible manner, but that they can further prove this by demonstrating their environmental credentials, through independent third party organisations, as the prerequisite to continue to maintain access to key markets.

Independent, third party validation of fishing operations/vessels as seen in through the RFS or the SEMS is considered an important step in this process. Independent eco-certification schemes are becoming increasingly important to the seafood industry, although globally the sheer number and range, is not giving clarity to consumers the questions of sustainability. The overwhelming view of the two organisations visited is that certification, for their markets, will become a condition of supply with major retailers announcing intention to source all seafood from independently accredited resources.

The public expectation is that responsible fishermen demonstrate that they harvest fish responsibly in order to continue fishing, equally, fishery management agencies should be expected to demonstrate that they manage their fisheries sustainably and be publicly accountable for this role.

Benefits and Adoption

The bursary, from a personal development perspective, has been very stimulating. To have an opportunity to spend time with individuals attending the SOS, who are their industry's positive drivers for change, has been insightful and very rewarding. Working for an environmental charity working with the seafood sector can be very frustrating – particularly when funding is short, industry capabilities are stretched and willingness to cooperate in a competitive space is limited. Having had the opportunity to discuss and share problem has been enriching for my current role at OWA, and helped me gain a better perspective of the space in which we operate.

The SOS confirmed to me that ocean industries' sustainability and healthy oceans is increasing in their importance to communities, government and people everywhere. Ocean industries are now in the public eye like never before, e.g. the BP oil spill. Unfortunately, ocean businesses, and the seafood industry in particular, do have an image problem - public perception is not favourable. The seafood industry in Australia has attempted to improve this issue of public perception, through regional initiatives, but to mixed success. To work against the tide of negativity about the seafood industry emerging from the northern hemisphere will require a whole of industry approach. SOS highlighted that making the connection between the public and the role ocean industries play in their life and lifestyle can be very beneficial for industry. The majority of people don't make the link between the industry and its activities – for example the role of the seafood industry in providing the prawns in the bbq they enjoy.

The bursary, from the point of view of OWA, has allowed me to bring back and share knowledge on the current international perspective on ocean governance, best practice industry partnerships, EMS for the wildcatch sector in the UK and Republic of Ireland. One

of the activities to be undertaken is an alignment of the SSA's Green Chooser to the FAO Guidelines.

National Community Perception of Seafood Industry – Improvement Plan

The main benefits of the bursary outcomes - a better ability of the OWA team to engage the community in *telling the story of industry's good environmental performance*, will be evident through the work of OWA in the SeaNet, Tide to Table and SIPS programs. To improve the way OWA is telling the story of our work with industry is vital for the future operation of OWA and could assist the community to understand and engage industry through such activities as the Adopt a Fishing Boat/Fish Farm, Marine Debris clean –up activities such as the East coast *Fishing for Litter*, and community connectivity tours to link the Seafood industry downstream with upstream land managers. To be able to feed into a National Community Perception of Seafood Industry – Improvement Plan would also be on my future agenda – if such an improvement plan were to be instigated, as OWA recognises the importance of one consistent voice/message.

SeaNet works cross-sectorally with industry, Australia-wide, and with both state and commonwealth endorsed fishermen, as well as with the aquaculture sector nationally. An improvement in the industry's ability to demystify its activities, methods and culture will, improve the industry's reputation within the communities in which they operate. The adoption of better practices by fishermen and aquaculturalists, by multiple sectors of the industry may be measured by requests to participate, be associated with these programs and through instigation of similar projects.

Further Development

- Promote the membership of the World Ocean Council to seafood and wider marine businesses in Australia
- Assist Sydney Fish Market with the FRDC International Visiting Bursary awarded to Phil McMullen of Seafish, scheduled to occur in early 2011 – with the aim of encouraging the development of the Australian Common Language Group
- Develop a Fishing for Litter initiative for east coast possibly through the Caring for our Country grant in Queensland and other OWA initiatives in NSW
- Encourage staff to follow through with *telling the story initiatives* through the SeaNet program
- Aim to improve the promotion of the fishing industry's activities through OceanWatch Australia's Seafood Industry Partnership in Schools program, the SeaNet program and the Tide to Table programs in NSW and Queensland at events, conferences and festivals around Australia and abroad in conjunction with the FRDC, Sydney Fish Market and the Marine Discovery Centres.
- Fish article about the bursary



Australian Government

Fisheries Research and Development Corporation