



Growing Investment, Value and Innovation for Australian Seafood

Report:

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Report prepared by Fish 2.0 for



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Overview and observations

The Fish 2.0 Australia track is on track as originally planned and has surpassed our original goals. We have been able to work with even more entrepreneurs than originally expected, have already had benefits emerge for several entrepreneurs from our Australia events, and have been able to introduce all Australian participants to a broad range of partners that are assisting them in their growth.

The major Australia-based activities, including events in Melbourne and Brisbane have been successfully completed, some companies have already qualified under the online process and a second group of companies is currently undertaking the online Readiness Assessment that occurs between May and August of this year. The outcome of that process will be a selection of the top scoring Australian innovators to attend and pitch at the Fish 2.0 Global Innovators Forum, to be held in Stanford in November 2019.

The Australian events to date have already highlighted several things about the opportunity for growing the Australian seafood sector.

- **There is a strong contingent of innovative companies, both in aquaculture and wild fisheries that can benefit and grow if well connected with private investment.** The very well developed grant programs in Australia have prepared this pipeline well, but scaling will require private investment. The underlying innovations are strong and in general, the quality of the entrepreneurs is very high. However most companies need assistance in communicating effectively to overseas investors to break out of the grant mentality. In this regard, the Fish 2.0 process has been very helpful to them – as participants have mentioned themselves to us in their evaluations and comments.
- **Collaboration among seafood companies can be supported through these seafood-specific events.** The Fish 2.0 events not only connected investors with companies, but built true peer-to-peer connections. We heard multiple instances of companies speaking together for the first time, despite having known about each other for many years. This has, in turn, led to a much higher degree of cooperation and information sharing, which is helping all of the companies involved to grow.
- **Many are well positioned for premium seafood markets.** The attention to quality and handling makes many of the companies we have seen able to access premium markets in Asia. Australian producers benefit from a well-developed domestic market and appreciation for high quality seafood, including an apparent interest by chefs and producers for diversifying into new species.
- **The collaboration on the Pacific Islands track also yielded new opportunities.** Several of the Australian companies mentioned that they learned a lot from meeting the Pacific Islands entrepreneurs and understanding the challenges faced in the region, and also the products that are available there. We expect a couple of good Pacific Islands- Australian collaborations to emerge from the Fish 2.0 work this year.
- **Even fast growing companies in Australia need connections.** We were surprised that even several fast growing Australian seafood companies have entered the Fish 2.0 online process – as it is costly in terms of both time and money for them to make connections with investors, experts and regulators overseas. We hope that bridging this gap will accelerate value growth for Australian sustainable seafood even more than we originally expected.

Key activities for the Australia track

The Fish 2.0 Australia track has progressed as planned since the Melbourne event in October 2018:

1. **Planning and holding 3 Fish 2.0 Events** to drive Australian participation- in addition to the Melbourne events.
 - **Brisbane Workshop** (April 2, 2019). This one-day workshop was focused on helping advance Australian and Pacific Island entrepreneurs. This event is detailed below.
 - **Regional Innovators Forum.** (April 3, 2019). This full day event for innovators, investors, industry experts and government leaders included pitches from entrepreneurs, expert panels on topics relating to Australia/ US and Pacific Island seafood trade and investment partnership opportunities. A major focus was on networking to drive innovation and trade in the region. The event is detailed below.
 - **Special Seafood Dinner.** (April 2, 2019) Fish 2.0 put on a unique event to further raise awareness of seafood sector opportunities and underutilized seafood species. The special dinner included 12 dishes prepared using under-utilized or poorly known species from around Australia. (This event was a paid event by participants and did not rely on Sponsor funding.) Details are provided below.
2. **Conducting the online *Investment Readiness*.** We have opened the online assessment and investor feedback Fish 2.0 process to all Australian entrepreneurs since the Melbourne workshop. To date, 6 companies have passed through the 2 step process to be Qualified, and an additional 8 are ongoing. We expect several more before the May 19th deadline and have an outreach effort to encourage participation. All qualified businesses were invited to also pitch at the Regional Innovators Forum, and are automatically invited to the Global Forum at Stanford. By late August 2019, we will know who are the top scoring Australian business who can pitch at that event.
3. **Building partnerships.** In putting together the Australia track, we built several partnerships that provided leverage to the goals of FRDC:
 - **U.S. State Department.** The US State department, as the leader of the Pacific Islands track, was co-sponsor for the Brisbane workshop and forum, and has also provided introductions to important partners and helped with communications efforts. The presence of the Consul-General at the events is indicative of the importance the State department places on building Australia-Pacific trade in the seafood sector
 - **Accelerating Impact Program of the Australian.** AC is a program of the Australian government's Department of Science, Industry and Innovation – and offers early to mid-stage grants into for-private sector startups with protectable innovations that are ready to scale. They are one of the main drivers and funders of the seafood innovators in Australia in these early stages. Fish 2.0 was able to get AC to join the track as an event sponsor, and also send its top principles to participate in the workshops as mentors, and in the Forum as expert panelists. These mentors offered valuable advice and connections to many of the Australian businesses. At least one of the Melbourne participants also received AC funding as a result of the meeting.

- **Austrade.** Austrade participated in the Forum, with panelist Anne Maree Weston providing insights on the import/export opportunities between Australia and the Pacific Islands.
 - **Chefs and seafood suppliers.** The seafood dinner was a unique opportunity to engage seafood suppliers, and the Chef from Blackbird Bar and Grill, in raising awareness of some of the under-utilized seafood species from Australia.
4. **Outreach to entrepreneurs.** To attract Australian entrepreneurs to the Brisbane workshops and Regional Innovators Forum, we used all of our direct contacts, partners in the region and both traditional and social media channels.
 5. **Communications & media campaign.** Working with our communications partners through both traditional media and social media, we raised awareness of seafood value and opportunities in the region, and the events that the entrepreneurs were eligible for.
 6. **Investor Education.** The Fish 2.0 team created several highly popular Investor Insights 1-page briefing documents, providing background and highlight key investor opportunities.
 - Over 5,200 copies of these documents have been downloaded to date
 - 17 papers were written, spanning all major segments of the sector. A paper focused on Australian opportunities has also been published and released on the site.
 7. **Engaging investors.** Using both the events and the publications of investor materials, Fish 2.0 invited interested investors and experts from the region to engage in the opportunities that exist for growing Australian seafood, and to attend the Regional Forum.
 8. **Preparing “Fish 2.0 Connect”.** We continue to develop and prepare the online system that will launch in June 2019, to allow qualified Fish 2.0 members to connect with each other in a secure, online platform.



The Fish 2.0 principals with sponsors from FRDC, the US State Dept, and Accelerating Commercialisation.

The Fish 2.0 Workshop – Brisbane, April 2, 2019

This first day was a workshop format, held at Brisbane’s modern facilities at the State Library of Queensland. It brought together 28 entrepreneurs (listed at the end of this document) together with the Fish 2.0 team and some highly experienced mentors to prepare the companies to pitch the following day. The event included:

- **21 Australian seafood entrepreneurs**, spanning a range of aquaculture, wild fisheries and technology innovations.
- **7 Pacific Islander participants**, representing 5 businesses from Fiji, Vanuatu, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea and the Marshall Islands.
- **6 Mentors**, including 3 principles from Accelerating Impact, the primary Australian Government early stage grant ‘investor’ in this sector, a leading Australian impact investor, Peter Horvat from FRDC, and Jenny Morrell from U.S. State Department.
- **Fish 2.0’s team of 5**, delivering the full-day curriculum on how to communicate with investors, developing your own value proposition and a clear ‘ask’, and learning to pitch.
- A discussion panel with investors on what makes a business compelling, and key pitfalls to avoid.

Similar to the Melbourne workshop, but compressed into 1 day, the Brisbane workshop aimed at maximizing the value for the innovators, with a specific focus on delivering a clear pitch.

1. **Peer-to-peer learning.** We created groups so peer-to-peer interaction could develop, allowing them to share their knowledge and experience, providing incremental value for all.
2. **Pitch-practice.** Even among the seasoned businesses, very few had pitched to a large audience. We spent much of the day preparing for the pitch the following day.
3. **A clear Value Proposition.** Our focus was on developing a crystal-clear value proposition and learning to pitch it. We held a variety of sessions on different elements of a successful pitch, and gave everyone a chance for a full, dress-rehearsal run through. This improved the quality of pitches significantly over previous events.
4. **Their “Ask”** - Many participants have a lot of experience with grant programs, so were eager to better understand the basics of finance, and whether to seek debt or equity as part of their ask.
5. **Social and Environmental impacts:** We helped innovators highlight their impacts, which for many is the “Why” that drives them.



Entrepreneurs ‘think like investors’

The entrepreneurs are extremely varied, but as in the Melbourne event, there are commonalities:

1. **A large number of the businesses have received grants to help build their business to date.** We highlight how a shift to a high growth trajectory, fueled by private investment, is possible. They need help improving their communications and understanding of investors and their needs.
2. **The group has limited direct experience with equity investors.** Although we were not able to delve deep into finance at this workshop, the entrepreneurs had to understand the basics to be able to get a basic debt vs equity their ask.
3. **Mentor support was critical.** In addition to the entrepreneurs, the mentors from *Accelerating Commercialisation* and *FRDC* and the impact investor provided extremely valuable insights into the local market and practices, supporting and re-affirming the comments made by the Fish2.0 team on what investors look for. They generally confirmed the existence of capital, and the increasing flexibility around terms that impact investors in general are able to bring to the table.



Practicing a pitch with clear value proposition

By the end of the first day, the entrepreneurs had built significant trust among each other and had received basic training on how to deliver a compelling pitch the following day, at the Regional Innovators Forum.



Investors give candid guidance to the participants

The Regional Innovators Forum, Brisbane, April 3, 2019

The second day of this two-day event was a full day, conference format event, with 90 businesses, investors and industry experts meeting to learn and network. The day included the following:

- **The event was opened by FRDC's Patrick Hone**, followed by welcome remarks from U.S. Consul General Hudson-Dean and a keynote from Monica Jain of Fish 2.0.
- **20 Australian and 5 Pacific Island businesses pitched to the room**
- **Investor Panel:** Value Investing and Investing to Grow Value in Food and Seafood
 - Dan Fitzgerald – Small Giants
 - Larry Lopez– Accelerating Commercialisation
 - Monica Jain- moderator
- **Innovation Panel:** Scaling Game-Changing Innovations in Seafood.
 - Patrick Hone – FRDC
 - Boris Musa – Mainstream Aquaculture
 - Keith Steele – Accelerating Commercialisation
 - Pia Winberg – Phyco
 - Serena Zipf - Moderator
- **Pacific Panel:** Expanding Pacific Islands and Australian Seafood Value, Trade and Community Impacts.
 - Maurice Brownjohn – PNA (Majuro)
 - Anne Maree Weston – Austrade
 - Veniana Qalo – Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (absent due to sickness)
 - Jana Hennig - Moderator
- **Networking time.** The day's agenda left plenty of time during meals, breaks and at the final reception to facilitate networking among the participants.



FRDC's Patrick Hone welcomes the Fish 2.0 Regional Innovators Forum participants



Lisa Elliot of Australian Crayfish Hatchery pitches to the Forum



Panel discussion on Scaling Game-Changing Innovations in Seafood

Special Seafood Dinner – to highlight Underutilized Species

To help raise awareness, Fish 2.0 worked with “The Fish Girl” company to organize a seafood dinner focus entirely on under-utilized species. Working with the chef at Blackbird Bar and Grill, a premier seafood restaurant in Brisbane, we developed a menu that helps highlight the delicious, under-appreciated seafood that is available. The dinner was a paid event (separate from the sponsorship of the track), but provided additional value to people who had travelled to the Regional Forum from out of town.

The event was an opportunity to further extend the networking opportunities for the Australian and Pacific Island entrepreneurs, and the overall awareness of sustainable seafood sector and the Fish 2.0 effort to grow it.

Overall, 20 different species were served, each accompanied by a short presentation on the species by Fish 2.0 team, and words from the suppliers.



The U.S Consul General Hudson-Dean, Monica Jain (Fish 2.0) and Patrick Hone (FRDC) at the Underutilized Species Dinner

One of the outcomes of the event is that the Blackbird Restaurant now features a permanent “Under-Utilized Seafood Special of the Day” on its menu, to continue to raise awareness among consumers of alternative sustainable seafood options. This is a direct result of the chefs working with the underutilized species and realizing the potential of doing this work to both create impact and also a point of differentiation for diners.



Blackbird Bar and Grill chefs Jake Nicolson describes working with these new species

Participants in the Fish 2.0 Brisbane Workshop

Australian Entrepreneurs



Aglive
Val Zanotto
(Geelong, Australia)



Ocean Grown Abalone
Romolo Santoro
(Fremantle, Australia)



Aquaculture Supplements
Michael O'Shea
(Brisbane, Australia)



Ocean Grown Abalone PL
Brad Adams
(Augusta, Australia)



Aquaculture Supplements
Glendon Young
(Brisbane, Australia)



PhycoHealth
Pia Winberg
(Narrawallee, Australia)



Australian Crayfish Hatchery
Lisa Elliott
(Townsville, Australia)



Provectus Algae
Nusqe Spanton
(Coolooloa Cove, Australia)



Climate Foundation
Samuel Harrington
(Brisbane, Australia)



Signature Oysters
Ewan McAsh
(Bateman's Bay, Australia)



Ecomarine
Chris Cook
(Noosaville, Australia)



Smokey Cape Oysters
Glenn Maxwell
(South West Rocks, Australia)



Fiomarine Industries
John Fiotakis
(Glenorchy, Australia)



Smokey Cape Oysters
Lindsay Maxwell
(South West Rocks, Australia)



Gemelle Ristorante
Petar Delic
(Sydney, Australia)



The Fish Girl
Umar Nguyen
(Brisbane, Australia)



Invention Pathways
Angelo Coco
(Townsville, Australia)



TomKat Line Fish
Kath Long
(Kurrimine Beach, Australia)










Jadelaw
Michael Harman
(Malvern, Australia)









Jadelaw
Bart Goedegebuur
(Anakie, Australia)

Pacific Island Entrepreneurs

	ALFA Fishing Alfred Kalontas (Port Vila, Vanuatu)		Pacific Fishing Company PTE Ltd Bhan Singh (Suva, Fiji)
	Pacific Green Technologies & Eco-Solution Ltd Warilea Lamo (PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea)		Pacific International Inc. Jerry Kramer (Majuro, Marshall Islands)
	Central Pacific Producer Ltd (CPPL) Taamwaa Batoromaio (Betio, Kiribati)		Pacific International Inc. Joseph Kramer (Majuro, Marshall Islands)
	Central Pacific Producer Ltd (CPPL) Temarewe Teaiwa (Betio, Kiribati)		

Mentors

	Irina McCreadie Kilara Capital		Ron Mack Accelerating Commercialization
	Jenny Morell U.S. State Department		Steve Davis Accelerating Commercialization
	Peter Horvat FRDC		Stuart Hazell Accelerating Commercialization

Fish 2.0 Team



Monica Jain



Remy Garderet



Cole Mellino



Nick Gunn



Jana Hennig