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Oyster industry leader awarded OAM

Mr Robert (Bob) Drake will be invested with an Order of Australia Medal at Government House in Sydney in September this year. The award recognises his dedicated service to the oyster industry and reflects the regard in which Bob is held by oyster industry colleagues.

A fourth generation oyster farmer, Bob left school to work in the Georges River oyster industry at 14 years of age. Bob provided dedicated service to the NSW Oyster Farmers Association undertaking executive roles culminating in Life Membership in 1992. He ran his business with his brothers from Neverfail Bay and Woollooware Bay close to Shark Park, a site often used as a film set, notably for "The Oyster Farmer".

During the outbreak of QX oyster disease in the Georges River in the mid 1990's, Bob worked tirelessly on behalf of the members of the local oyster industry. Later on he worked with the department on a rehabilitation project to remove derelict oyster leases in the Georges River which enabled these areas to be returned to public use and enjoyment. Unfortunately the advent of Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome in 2010 was another set back to the Georges River oyster industry.

The Drakes were the first oyster farmers in NSW to farm QX resistant Sydney rock oysters and the first approved to grow triploid Pacific oysters. Departmental research staff are particularly appreciative of the assistance Bob provided to oyster research activities. This included the development of disease resistant breeding lines of Sydney rock oysters and the more recent Pacific oyster disease resistance investigations.

Congratulations to Bob on his nomination for this award and best wishes as he makes moves to retire from the oyster farming industry.



Mr Robert Drake OAM

Harmonisation of disease testing

Victoria, NSW and Queensland are finalising a MOU to mutually recognise the QDPI Fish Health Certification Program (or an equivalent) as a disease screening standard between the three States. For hatcheries that decide not to be accredited under this program, but intend to trade native fish fingerlings between NSW and Qld, a batch testing protocol will be introduced to standardise disease screening, (barramundi fingerlings are already covered under an existing translocation protocol).

Members of the Land Based Aquaculture Consultative Group have lobbied for a number of years to ensure only disease free stock enter NSW and that screening arrangements are equitable between States. Consultation with other States is underway to look at harmonising disease screening across Australia. A recommendation to review and update the National *Translocation Policy for Live*



Department of
Primary Industries

Aquatic Organisms 1999 is being progressed with the Commonwealth government.

Contact: Ian Lyall NSW DPI 4916 3856

Reducing Red-Tape

Improved aquaculture administrative processes provide a continuing reduction in turn around time for lease and permit transactions. This improvement is highlighted by the time taken to process the transfer of aquaculture leases.

	Av. Process Days	No. transferred
2006/2007	96 days	125
2007/2008	66 days	141
2008/2009	24 days	146
2009/2010	24 days	84
2010/2011	22 days	99
2011/2012	15 days	84

Environmental Management System EMS Project
OceanWatch will continue to work with oyster farmers until early 2013 implementing the NSW Oyster EMS Project.

Significant achievements of the project include:

- \$490,000 devoted to environmental improvement projects;
- \$1.75 million in co-contributions received from the oyster industry, landholders and community groups (a ratio over 3:1);
- seven new estuary wide EMS initiated;
- two estuary-wide EMS reviews and updates have taken place;
- two Ministerial EMS launches facilitated.

Ocean Watch has been busy managing over 80 contracts for on-ground works and is looking to refocus on facilitation of the EMS in the next few months. A reminder that many grants for environmental improvements are tied to an EMS, and these documents need to be developed to improve your chances of receiving funding in the future.

Contact: Andy Myers OceanWatch 0488 656 366

Aquaculture Research Advisory Committee

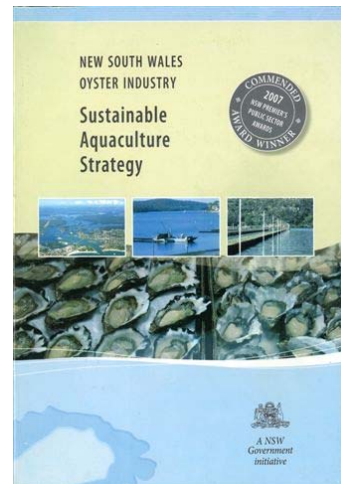
In early June, a copy of the ARAC RD&E Strategic Plan 2012-2017 was posted to all aquaculture permit holders. The plan provides a five year RD&E strategy for guiding the development and implementation of research in support of the NSW aquaculture industry. Thank you again to industry for taking the time to send in your submissions. Terms of membership for all ARAC positions are due to expire in September of this year. In April of this year, expressions of interest were mailed to all aquaculture permit holders seeking nomination for membership to ARAC. A positive response from industry members was received and the Minister's decision on membership is pending. See:

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/aquaculture/committees

Contact: Jo Pickles NSW DPI 4916 3901

OISAS Review Progress

Thank you to all those oyster farmers who attended the OISAS five year review consultation meetings held in late May and early June 2012.



The meetings, which were held at Ballina, Port Macquarie, Port Stephens, Nowra, Batemans Bay and Merimbula attracted 144 participants. The OISAS document is currently being amended in light of the comments received during the consultation meetings and during the submissions process finalised earlier in the year. It is hoped that the draft OISAS document will be ready for public comment shortly with a view to having it completed by the end of 2012 (depending upon the current NSW planning legislation review).

Contact: Steve McOrrie NSW DPI 4916 3921, or Tim Gippel NSW DPI 4916 3823.

Marine Aquaculture Research Lease

The draft EIS and draft Environmental Management Plans for a 20 hectare marine finfish research lease off Port Stephens have been submitted to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure. If assessed as adequate the documents will go on public exhibition in late September of this year. The key objective of the proposed marine aquaculture research lease is to contribute to the development of sustainable marine aquaculture in NSW and to the future food security needs of the State.

Contact: Ian Lyall NSW DPI 4916 3856

Aquaculture consultative committees

Following a review of consultative arrangements with the NSW seafood industry, the Peak Oyster Advisory Group will be merged with the NSW Shellfish Committee. NSW DPI is working with the NSW Food Authority and the NSW Farmers Association to consolidate this merger. Advice is pending on the status of the Land Based Aquaculture Consultative Group and for the interim it will continue to operate as a departmental consultative group.

Contact: Ian Lyall NSW DPI 4916 3856

Oyster Information Portal

The Oyster Information Portal collates and translates existing environmental, industry, catchment and climate related data into a user-friendly, online, map-based portal.

The Australian oyster industry and natural resource managers collect a great deal of environmental data which is rarely collated or accessed by industry. By accessing this data and viewing the information and trends, industry will eventually be able to align oyster performance with short term changes in the catchment and longer term trends related to climate change.

The project has a website that contains the prototype data portal, useful links to oyster-related topics and the latest results of an Oyster Monitoring Program that is aligning oyster performance with lease areas and management practices. This project has initially focused on four oyster-growing areas in NSW (Camden Haven, Hawkesbury, Shoalhaven and Pambula) with the intent that the concept can be expanded across other oyster farming areas in Australia in the future. The next series of industry workshops to demonstrate and get feedback on the Portal prototype will take place in late July at the Hawkesbury River and Pambula Lake.

Funding bodies include: FRDC, Bega Valley Shire Council and Northern and Southern Rivers CMA

Contact: Ana Rubio arubio@uow.edu.au.

www.oysterinformationportal.net.au



Portal Workshop with Shoalhaven oyster growers

Risk-based Pacific oyster management

NSW DPI, with input from the Biosecurity Industry Consultation Group, has drafted a new risk-based Pacific oyster management option which is proposed to replace the existing Section 8 Pacific oyster closure. This closure expires on 4 December 2013.

The S.8 Pacific oyster closure review is being informed by data collected in 2010 during an extensive survey of the abundance of Pacific oysters in 31 NSW oyster producing estuaries, the past six years of oyster shipment logbook data, and industry feedback during the current consultation phase.

The proposed new risk-based option aims to modernise and simplify management rules, reflect current levels of risk and oyster cultivation techniques. Aquatic Biosecurity presented the draft proposal to oyster farmers during the OISAS workshops during May and June 2012.

Contact: Ben Rampano NSW DPI 4916 3907 See survey: <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/pests-diseases/marine-pests/nsw/pacific-oyster>

ICMSS Sydney approaches

The International Conference on Molluscan Shellfish Safety (ICMSS) is coming to Sydney in March 2013. The conference is expected to draw in industry, regulators and researchers from around 30 countries to discuss seafood safety.

The conference is regarded globally as the premier conference on shellfish safety matters. World class speakers include Dr Frankić, who will speak on remediation of shellfish beds; and Helen Smale, who will address quality assurance programs as a commercial opportunity.

Anyone involved in seafood quality assurance, the shellfish industry or related fields such as catchment management should attend. For more information see www.icmss2013.com

Contact: Raquel Robson ICE P/L 9368 1200 or Anthony Zammit NSWFA 9749 4749



The 9th International Conference on Molluscan Shellfish Safety will be held in Sydney, Australia in March 2013.

Sydney rock oyster breeding update

The second of three field trials for evaluation of marketability traits in Sydney rock oyster families has just been completed. This experiment is part of our CRC project "Incorporation of selection for reproductive condition, marketability and survival into a breeding strategy for Sydney rock oysters and Pacific oysters - CRC 2009 743" involving CSIRO, Australian Seafood Industries (ASI), SOCo and NSW DPI. The primary question that we are attempting to answer is: Can industry exploit genetic differences in oyster meat condition for an improved product?

The three lease sites used for evaluations are in Wallis Lake, Port Stephens and the Clyde River. Sixty oyster families from single pairs of parents have been created especially for this project as more genetic information can be obtained from families

compared with mass selected lines. We have just completed the field evaluation component for the group of families created in January 2010.

Oysters are brought back to the laboratory at Port Stephens Fisheries Institute for processing. Oyster shell shape, weight, condition index and biochemical composition (lipid, carbohydrate, protein and moisture content) of the tissues are measured each month over a 6 month period. This information will be compiled into a database to track each family's performance. We are planning to send the families created in early 2011 to field sites in October 2012. Results so far have been encouraging as we have observed differences between the 2010 families collected from each site.

Contact: Mike Dove NSW DPI 4916 3807 or Wayne O'Connor NSW DPI 4916 3906

Keep tilapia out of NSW

Mozambique tilapia is a freshwater pest fish currently known to occur in southern Qld. Tilapia originate from southern Africa. They are very adaptable fish with a successful breeding strategy (mouth brooding) which make them a significant threat to NSW waterways. Tilapia has the potential to out-compete native species, disturb aquatic habitats and water quality and reduce the social, economic and environmental value of a waterway. Tilapia is dark silver to grey in colour and can be distinguished by their long continuous dorsal fin, which ends in a point. Please report suspected tilapia sightings to Aquatic Biosecurity NSW DPI 02 4916 3877



Mouth brooding female Mozambique tilapia. Pic. QDPI

Polluter fined – Oyster industry watchdogs

The NSW Environment Protection Authority prosecuted a Wollongong building company for polluting the waters of Forsters Bay near Narooma, which forms part of the Wagonga Inlet and is located within Batemans Marine Park. The Company was ordered to pay more than \$24,000 in fines and costs.

New Declared Disease

The virus responsible for the Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome event in the Georges River and Sydney Harbour (OsHV-1 μ var) has been listed as a declared disease in Schedule 6B of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*. I&I NSW must be notified if a

declared disease is suspected in any fish and there are offences for selling infected animals or depositing them in any waters.

Caulerpa taxifolia update

Recent surveys undertaken by NSW DPI in six south coast estuaries (St Georges Basin, Durras Lake, Burrill Lake, Lake Conjola, Batemans Bay and Narrawallee Inlet) have found that the abundance of *Caulerpa taxifolia* (Caulerpa) has been declining. This recent decline in Caulerpa may be a result of decreased salinity as a result of major rainfall events. Aquatic Biosecurity staff encourage local waterway users to be vigilant to help minimise the spread of Caulerpa by avoiding affected areas and by inspecting all fishing and boating gear and removing and disposing of fragments by placing them in a plastic bag and into general waste. After removing all visible fragments, Aquatic Biosecurity recommends washing anchors, chains and other gear using freshwater before moving to another estuary.

Contact: Aquatic Biosecurity NSW DPI 4916 3877

Public Liability Insurance Audit

Oyster farmers are reminded that it is a condition of their Aquaculture Permit that they maintain adequate public liability insurance covering all oyster leases held under their permit. In the coming months, NSW DPI will be commencing an estuary by estuary audit of all Class A Aquaculture Permits to ensure that the permit holders have current public liability insurance. The audit will require permit holders to provide NSW DPI with evidence of their current public liability insurance policy covering their leases.

Contact: Sheree Wiseman NSW DPI 4916 3808, or Raelene Trenaman NSW DPI 4916 3843

Environmental Conditions and Oyster Production

Peggy Schrobback from the University of Queensland is looking for volunteers to participate in an investigation of the current economic performance of the NSW oyster industry. In particular Peggy will be examining the link between environmental conditions and the productive capacity of oyster farms. The study is supported by the QLD University of Technology, CSIRO and the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation. See attached "Flyer". Contact: Peggy Schrobback (07) 3138 6675, or email: p.schrobback@qut.edu.au

Australian Bass production PSFI

A bumper season is predicted for Australian Bass production from the southern genetic region stock. An early start to the breeding season coupled with an improved spawning/incubation system and rotifer recirculation system has given positive results. Impoundment stocking is scheduled for September.

Contact: Luke Cheviot NSW DPI 4916 3956



Aquaculture Judging

The Sydney Royal Aquaculture Competition Show showcases Australia's finest produce, awarding the best of the best with a coveted Sydney Royal Gold Medal. This is a great opportunity to submit your best produce and be acknowledged with an esteemed industry award. Entries are now open for classes of Pacific Oysters, Ostrea Angasi, Barramundi and Fresh Fish.

Judging Date: Tuesday 11 September

http://www.rasnsw.com.au/edm/SpringShow/EntriesOpen_2012SpringShow_June.htm

Aquatic Animal Health Survey – Charles Sturt Uni

Renee Jensen from the School of Animal and Veterinary Science, Charles Sturt University Wagga Wagga is seeking support from land based fish farmers for her research project: *Improving the Health of NSW Farmed Fish: A Parasite Survey*. A project outline, survey form and reply paid envelope are provided. Please assist with this important work. Contact: Renee Jensen 0431 815 091

Fisheries Management (Aquaculture) Regulation

Thank you to all who made inquires or commented on the draft *Fisheries Management (Aquaculture) Regulation 2012* and the Regulatory Impact Statement recently placed on public exhibition. The new regulation is scheduled to take affect 1 September 2012.

Contact: Tim Gippel NSW DPI 4916 3823

Jervis Bay shellfish aquaculture leases

NSW DPI will revisit the Jervis Bay project to establish shellfish (Blue Mussel, Scallop, Pearl) leases. Starting in August 2012, meetings will be held to pick up on previous constraint mapping and environmental and socio-economic assessment work to develop an EIS for several lease areas. If approved, leases will be tendered to investors.

Contact: Ian Lyall NSW DPI 4916 3856

OceanWatch oyster newsletter

See: http://www.oceanwatch.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/2012_06_oyster_newsletter.pdf

Oyster shipment reports by phone

NSW DPI is finalising an interactive voice recognition system (similar to phone banking/bill payment systems) to record oyster shipments. Trials have been ongoing and it is at a stage to trial in an estuary before further rollout.

Contact: Steve McOrrie NSW DPI 4916 3921

Don't forget to renew your oyster leases

NSW DPI would like to remind all oyster farmers if they fail to lodge an oyster lease renewal by the due date the lease can only be recovered via a competitive tender process.

A notable increase in leases offered for tender in 2011/12 are a result of farmers forgetting to renew their leases.

Credit card charges

NSW DPI will implement a 0.4% surcharge for credit card transactions in the near future.

Polluter fined – Oyster industry watchdogs

A company that farmed on the north shore of Port Stephens has been fined \$67,000 in the Land and Environment Court for polluting waters. In April 2000, oyster farmers reported dirty sediment-laden water flowing through oyster leases into North Arm Cove.

Oyster - seagrass interaction research

With a significant proportion of oyster leases in Marine Parks and Aquatic Reserves, more information is required on the nature of the interaction between new oyster cultivation techniques and seagrasses. Negotiations are underway with the University of Newcastle to jointly investigate the potential for impact from factors such as: cultivation type; alignment; and lease depth. This will promote a better understanding of the interactions with seagrass and inform industry best practice within the NSW Oyster Industry Sustainable Aquaculture Strategy.

Contact: Wayne O'Connor NSW DPI 4916 3906

- To utilise the web or email links in the newsletter visit the website listed below -

Aquaculture News is a newsletter for the aquaculture industry in NSW.

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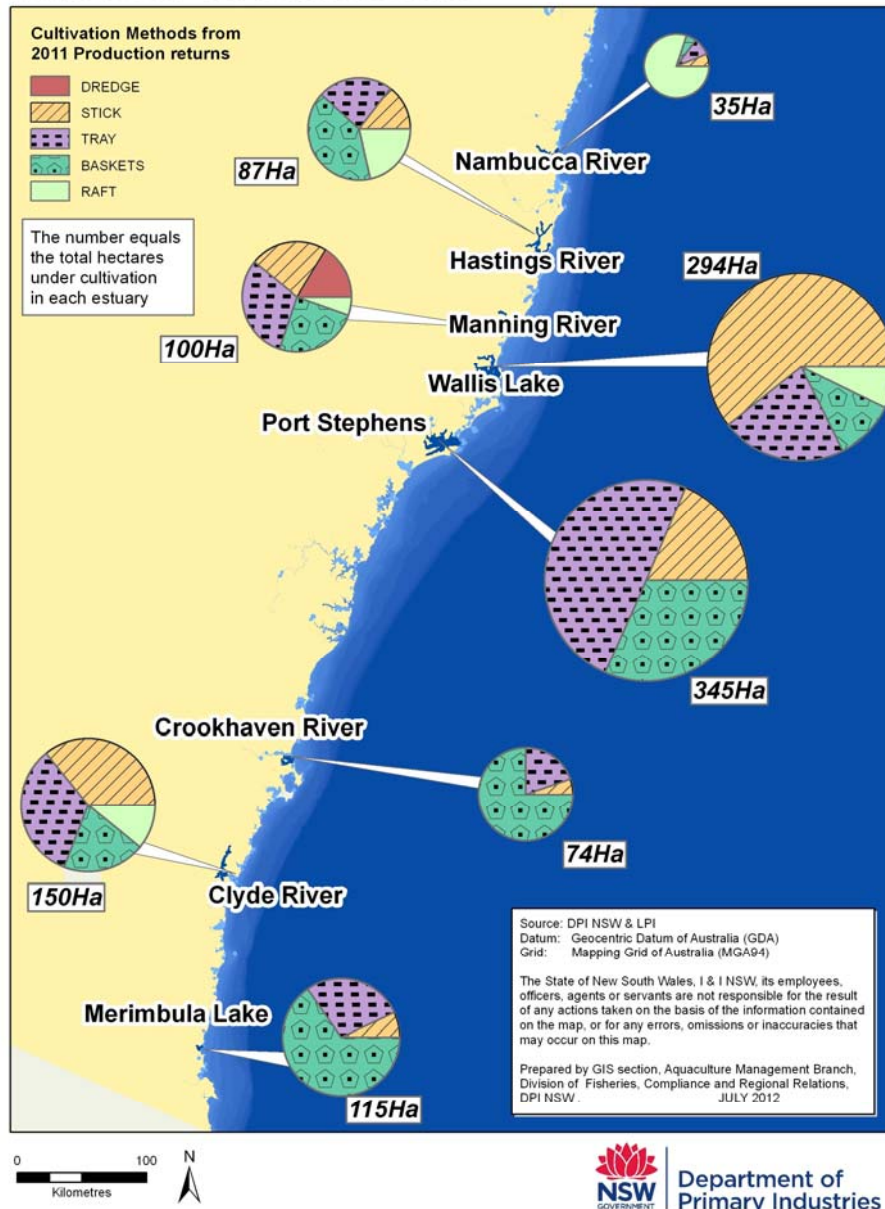
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Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (July 2012). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of Industry & Investment NSW or the user's independent adviser.

Summary of Cultivation Methods for a few estuaries from 2011 Production returns



Why is accurate Annual Production Return data important?

Each year production data supplied by permit holders on their Annual Production Return is used to: meet the State Government's reporting responsibilities to the Federal Government; assist with management decisions regarding the NSW aquaculture industry; assist in planning the direction of research; provide information regarding the economic benefit to the State and the National economy of the industry; and in the case of lease based farming industry, justify and demonstrate the sustainable use of public lands held by leaseholders. If you think there are ways that the collection or accuracy of the data can be improved please contact NSW DPI. For reports since 1999 see <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/aquaculture/faqs/aquaculture-production-reports>

Contact: Steve McOrrie NSW DPI 4916 3921