

The background of the entire page is an aerial photograph of the ocean. The water is a deep, dark teal color, and it is covered in a dense, intricate pattern of white foam and bubbles, suggesting a very rough and turbulent sea. The foam appears as bright, irregular shapes against the darker water, creating a high-contrast, textured background.

Aquaculture Advisory Committee Action Plan

Final Report | V1.0

December 10, 2021

Action Plan Overview

Developed through desktop research, interviews, a survey, and a committee workshop, this Action Plan defines a future vision for the Australian aquaculture industry. The development of this Action Plan spanned 3 weeks and allowed the Committee to rapidly identify specific member / sub-sector / species needs, and develop an understanding of where these overlap. The majority of this Action Plan details how the Australian Aquaculture Committee (AAC) will deliver an industry vision, and the 8 priority areas the AAC will seek to address. Short to long-term actions have been identified for each priority area, as well as immediate next steps / recommendations to ensure the AAC is effective as soon as possible. This Action Plan is the first of many steps in supporting a stronger Australian aquaculture industry.

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COMMITTEE WORKSHOP

AAC Committee Members

Committee members engaged in the development of this Action Plan are featured below. These members will play a critical role in ensuring the Committee will deliver and support truly impactful work for the industry through a united national voice.



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Section One

AAC Vision

Summary & New Direction

The information below is an overview of the industry and the motivating factors for the development of this action plan. From this description of the current state, research, and engagement with the industry, a new direction for Australian aquaculture and the AAC was developed which focuses on clear, mutually beneficial priorities for the industry (on right).

The Industry

The Australian aquaculture industry is experiencing rapid growth, with its share of seafood production value set to rise from 44% to 50% by 2024-25. This growth requires a strategic and collaborative effort to support future objectives and sustainable growth of the aquaculture industry.

There is currently a diverse range of priorities across the industry, with stakeholders possessing different needs depending on location, systems, species and business models. The aquaculture industry therefore has numerous voices advocating for different solutions to many of the same challenges, making it difficult to communicate a cohesive future vision of the industry.

With the recent formation of the Aquaculture Advisory Committee (AAC) there is an opportunity to align industry needs, set a strategic direction, and formulate an action plan to begin moving the industry forward.

Drivers for change

- 1 | Previous industry-wide action initiatives failed to deliver tangible impact.
- 2 | There is a lack of consensus across the aquaculture industry as to whole of industry challenges and how to address them.
- 3 | There is a need for swift and strategic actions to current and future industry challenges.
- 4 | From a global perspective, the Australian aquaculture industry is small, and emerging international innovations and solutions aren't yet utilised.
- 5 | Change has been slow, and there is a need to identify low-hanging fruit which could support immediate impact.

Aquaculture Vision

Australian aquaculture is **prosperous, sustainable** and **respected**



AAC Mission

Support **collaboration to refresh** Australia's aquaculture **narrative** by addressing industry's **most relevant** challenges and opportunities



Priorities





Section Two

AAC Priorities and Actions

Refining AAC Priorities

Through the research and interviews, 11 potential priority areas were identified (left). These were refined into 8 priority areas during the workshop, with three immediately actionable priorities identified. 'Strengthen Communication and External Engagement' was identified as the most pressing priority and one that will be ongoing, as it supports all of the other priority areas. Priorities 2 and 3 are more specific and immediately actionable, with work already taking place in a number of areas. While priorities 4 to 8 will be crucial items for the AAC to address, the specific actions to be taken need to be further refined as the AAC progresses.

Draft Priorities

1	Biosecurity & Aquatic Animal Health
2	Developing & Attracting Technical Expertise
3	Consistent Access to Labour
4	Resilience to Economic Trends
5	Labelling Integrity
6	Communication and External Engagement
7	Recycling Waste / Waste to Worth
8	Collaborative & Impact Focussed R&D
9	Regulatory Consistency
10	New Market Opportunities
11	Environmental Sustainability



AAC Priorities - The AAC will...

1	Strengthen Communication and External Engagement
2	Improve Access to Labour and Technical Expertise
3	Enhance Environmental Sustainability and Circularity
4	Grow New Market Opportunities
5	Collaborate on Impact Focussed R&D
6	Ensure Labelling Integrity
7	Enhance Biosecurity & Aquatic Animal Health
8	Advocate for Effective and Consistent Regulation

Cross-Cutting Activities

This section of the Action Plan details specific actions that can be taken for each of the eight priorities. Across each of these priorities however, there is a set of immediate, cross-cutting activities that can be initiated to support the desired outcomes of the AAC priorities. These six activities are described below:

1 Pro-active Policy Positions

For the relevant priorities, SIA to work with industry to develop AAC policy positions that support advocacy and discussions with government bodies and external stakeholders. Policy positions will be prioritised and reviewed by the AAC to ensure alignment with needs. The policy positions will be an important input in all collaboration and engagement activities and be informed by Industry / Landscape Mapping (2) - see right.

2 Industry / Landscape Mapping

Conduct a mapping exercise that develops a clear picture of the industry and government councils, committees, panels etc. for different species, agricultural issues and the Action Plan priorities. Understand their value to aquaculture, and identify the most important stakeholders for the AAC and industry to engage with. The communication and intention of these engagements will be informed by Activity 1 (left).

3 Communicate Priorities

Leveraging Activity 1 and 2, communication efforts should be conducted with key industry partners. These activities will demonstrate the value of industry and its priorities, facilitate support, and develop opportunities for collaboration with critical aquaculture partners in the future. Communicating priorities is both an ongoing, cross-cutting activity and a component of AAC Priority 1 - Strengthen Communication & External Engagement.

4 Development of AAC KPIs

For each of the 8 priorities, KPIs for their actions should be established to measure progress and impact. In addition to the KPIs for the 8 priorities, a set of AAC-specific KPIs should be formulated. These KPIs can use the challenges identified from the NAC stakeholder consultation report (2020) as a starting point for indicators of effective performance. Both sets of KPIs will provide the foundation for the Industry Survey (5) and Dashboard (6) - see right.

5 Industry Survey

Develop a living stakeholder survey to test AAC assumptions, understand current needs and opportunities across the supply chain (grower, employees, retailers etc), and future trends to ensure a proactive approach is taken. This survey will also validate the relevance of the priorities both within and outside of industry, and develop a baseline for communicating the success of the AAC efforts in the future.

6 Dashboard Measuring Impact

After establishing AAC and priority KPIs, pilot an AAC dashboard to understand the current progress of the priorities, and measure the impact of the committee. The results of the Industry Survey (5) can serve as a baseline for the dashboard and a useful tool to measure progress. This dashboard can also act as the basis for identifying pivots, additional resources required, and as a valuable communication tool to demonstrate progress.

1

PRIORITY OVERVIEW

Strengthen Communication and External Engagement

The aquaculture industry has difficulty clearly communicating its value to external stakeholders, with a lack of awareness on industry priorities, its contribution to society, and effective structures to support knowledge sharing.

In the future... the Australian aquaculture industry is equipped to effectively communicate their purpose and contribution to the goals of government, consumers, and the wider community.

One of the challenges faced by the industry is a lack of awareness and knowledge amongst key decision makers in Australia on the nature of the aquaculture industry. Previous attempts to bring together industry were unsuccessful in their ability to clearly communicate their activities and purpose. Underlying all of the priorities is a need to collectively communicate their purpose in a way that resonates, or results in a change of behaviour or outlook with key stakeholders.

This lack of awareness and/or understanding of the aquaculture industry is very much apparent among the public and consumers, with outdated ideas influencing perceptions. This is particularly disappointing, as the industry has made major strides in a number of areas, particularly sustainability. Therefore, work is required within the industry to better define what external stakeholders need to understand about the industry.

Understanding the needs of external stakeholders will support the development and delivery of robust communication and engagement activities, delivering key messages and supporting the industry's impact. This will be critical in regards consumer and public sentiment, with communications playing a major role in shaping and continually maintaining social licence.

“

“It’s great for industries to combine and have a stronger voice, there’s so much more we can do as an industry to make it more inviting or attractive to externals.”

“Generally speaking aquaculture farms are...significant contributors to the local communities in which we work.”

“We should entrust the consumer to make a decision and the only way to do so is to be more transparent.”

“It goes back to - what is passive and what is aggressive pursuit of social licence. So can you lobby for social licence? Or do you become so good at your job, so well at communicating the innovations and the technologies and the approaches that we become more respected.”

”

1 *ACTION ITEMS* Strengthen Communication and External Engagement

Below is an overview of the current state of this priority and the agreed upon action items in the short, medium and long-term. These actions, especially those within the medium to long term, will be further refined and developed as the Committee addresses the priority area, and further understands and validates the long-term action required.

What are we doing now?	Short (0-1 yrs)	Medium (1-3 yrs)	Long-term (3-5+ yrs)
Siloed Communication Plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sub-sectors or species have individual communication plans, especially larger players, including detailed message banks. Smaller players have limited to no C&E plans due to limited resources and the need for a national body to take on this role. Localised Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Some players focus on communicating credentials with the community and/or regions they are working in. 	1. Share vision and action plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Share an external version with key stakeholders, to communicate AAC priorities and focus. 2. Mapping the engagement landscape <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understanding how aquaculture sectors are communicating with stakeholders currently, and who needs to be engaged - including a detailed stakeholder map. 3. AAC message bank and message pipeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developed through committee member collaboration, identifying key agreed upon messages to promote and position the industry. 	4. AAC Communication & Engagement Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developing a strategic approach to engaging with external stakeholders, ensuring critical aspects of AAC and industry work are communicated. 5. Desktop research understanding emerging issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Forecasting issues to ensure the preparation of communication strategies, as well as the identification of action items in other priority areas. 	6. Delivery of C&E Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Which is agile and adapts to the changing consumer and supply chain landscapes . 7. Ongoing engagement measurement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To understand the effectiveness of communications, adapt approaches, and continuously measure consumer & community sentiment.

2 PRIORITY OVERVIEW Improve Access to Labour and Technical Expertise

Participation and interest in aquaculture specialisation has fallen, and combined with global disruptions impacting labour access, the industry is facing immediate and future labour shortages and skills gaps.

In the future... the aquaculture industry will have access to a reliable and skilled workforce, and amplify clear value propositions and pathways to position the industry as a career of choice.

There are a range of opportunities and challenges within the aquaculture workforce, as the industry relies on a broad spectrum of skills and expertise. With a drop-off in participation and study opportunities in aquaculture specialties over the last few years, there is a need to demonstrate career opportunities, offer study options, and attract more interest in the sector. Furthermore, the aquaculture industry is facing a major challenge as a result of Covid-19, with limited access to seasonal labour usually provided by backpackers. As with the need for skilled labour, the aquaculture industry is competing with other industries, and itself, for workers. These workforce challenges are further compounded by the nature of aquaculture work, which often relies on a regional workforce.

Active industry and government collaboration can and should help alleviate the unskilled labour shortage in the short-term (expedited working visas). However, there is a need for long-term collaboration and strategies, such as national educational opportunities, and regional development and infrastructure improvements to ensure consistent access to talent. If the industry is to position itself as a career of choice, substantial effort must go into benchmarking employment offerings against other industries, and identifying and amplifying value propositions to attract and maintain a robust workforce.

“

“In our sub-sector there’s not alot of seasonal work, it’s regular, regional based, usually relying on local communities, but there’s not alot of people coming through for fish...how do you attract them, how do you keep them?”

“I think more work needs to be done with some of the education providers to increase awareness of the industry and the opportunities...the unique things I find about aquaculture is, it’s not just the number of jobs that we we have, it’s the breadth.”

“It’s the biggest challenge, we rely on backpackers in our harvesting or fishing operations... it’s been difficult to attract new staff...All industries are looking to develop and introduce new staff and increase employment”

“Because we’re regional, how do you attract people to regions... just getting basic labour at the moment is hard. You are effectively competing with the mining industries””

ACTION ITEMS

2 Improve Access to Labour and Technical Expertise

Below is an overview of the current state of this priority, and the agreed upon action items in the short, medium and long-term. These actions, especially those within the medium to long term, will be further refined and developed as the Committee addresses the priority area, and further understands and validates the long-term action required.

What are we doing now?	Short (0-1 yrs)	Medium (1-3 yrs)	Long-term (3-5+ yrs)
<p>Sub-sector / species responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● For example, Tuna just developed a subcommittee to look at workforce, exploring opportunities to position it's sector as a career of choice. <p>Agriculture programs/ initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrating engagement initiatives in the agriculture sector, such as Agtester, Ag Worker Visa, AgATTRACT, PLS. 	<p>1. Aquaculture workforce mapping & survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mapping of available professions and career pathways. Nuanced through a survey identifying employee satisfaction and opportunities for industry wide improvement. This will support the development of the industry value proposition (3). <p>2. Desktop research employer best practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Desktop research into employment best practice. Understand barriers and opportunities for aquaculture as career of choice, and future workforce demands <p>3. Industry value proposition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a unique value proposition for aquaculture labour (incorporating mobility of workforce, interchangeable skills with other industries, younger generation demands) 	<p>4. Build relationships with education providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensuring education sector support and buy-in for the delivery of future aquaculture course offerings. <p>5. Government collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To support regional development and advocate for labour visa schemes, and more specifically greater representation in the Pacific Labour Scheme. <p>6. Training delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support the development and delivery of training opportunities for the aquaculture sector, from a range of angles (eg. TAFE, Highschool, HE). 	<p>7. Aquaculture labour platform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To engage and retain access to labour, and amplify linkages of labour proposition to industry commitments. The platform could potentially also include wild catch.

3

PRIORITY OVERVIEW

Enhance Environmental Sustainability and Circularity

Consumer awareness about the many facets of environmental impact is growing, and aquaculture is facing increasing scrutiny. Furthermore, the industry's future relies on the proper management and health of the natural environment.

In the future... the Australian public understands the environmental contribution of aquaculture, and the industry is pro-actively pursuing sustainable practices and systems suited to their businesses needs.

The environmental benefits of aquaculture practises are significant, especially compared to other protein industries. Aquaculture is in a good position to promote the benefits of its production techniques to consumers. However, the goal posts are continuously changing, and existing sustainable practises must therefore be further developed and future challenges identified to ensure the industry remains competitive.

Plastic waste is a major area of concern within the broader issues of sustainability. Given the often remote location of many aquaculture facilities and the use of plastics in the production process to maintain sanitation and food safety, waste without financially viable or sustainable alternatives represents not just a sustainability challenge, but a business one as well. Tackling waste as a priority for industry is seen as a common challenge, and one in which the industry can be seen as getting 'ahead of the curve'.

With significant investment in other sectors addressing these challenges, aquaculture R&D and applying global innovations and methods will be essential in shifting to circular systems and adapting to changing climates and environments. There will also be a need to engage the public and government through advocacy and education, to draw attention to the shared responsibility of natural environmental challenges, such as water pollution.

“



“What are the expectations for responsible production...we want to be seen as ahead of the curve on plastic and landfill waste”

“There’s growing potential risk in terms of plastic for oyster, but (we) don’t have mechanisms to re-purpose - every aquaculture sector would have those issues.”

“What’s been missing is that bottom up approach, really engaging with the issues...I think that area of recycling and waste to worth, it’s really timely, these things are happening now.”

“Many sub-sectors are looking for advice around carbon accounting and neutral accreditation”

“For example, in the peninsula they want to introduce a desalination plant, and that also affects king fish and mussel industry, so for tuna that’s something we can collaborate on...we need the plant but inside the bay is not an ideal location””

ACTION ITEMS

3 Enhance Environmental Sustainability and Circularity

Below is an overview of the current state of this priority, and the agreed upon action items in the short, medium and long-term. These actions, especially those within the medium to long term, will be further refined and developed as the Committee addresses the priority area, and further understands and validates the long-term action required.

What are we doing now?	Short (0-1 yrs)	Medium (1-3 yrs)	Long-term (3-5+ yrs)
University partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Research projects, such as the circular economy project with UTS. Sub-sector reporting and action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● For example, Tassal undertakes sustainability reporting as part of their annual and quarterly disclosure. ● Establishing third party endorsed certifications. 	1. AAC representation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish representation of AAC and aquaculture with key environmental committees and organisations. 2. Delivery of aquaculture sustainability event <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An online summit and/or webinar, articulating existing sustainable practices, research projects, and exploring future opportunities for the industry. 3. Market research into future landscape <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To be continuously reviewed, ensuring the industry is aware of upcoming issues, and can develop timely responses and actions. 	4. Explore global innovations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explore existing research and identify applicable solutions (within and outside aquaculture). Develop partnerships to action low-hanging fruits. 5. Stakeholder guidance and ‘how-tos’ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supporting different levels within the industry to navigate the sustainability landscape (eg. accreditation support, improving on-farm environmental practises). 6. Stakeholder reporting capabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Map feasibility of stakeholder sustainable reporting and capabilities, specifically small scale growers. 	7. ESG/ Sustainability Roadmap <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Defining specific agreed upon industry actions, and a realistic pathway forward. Including a strategy to address single use plastics. 8. Industry-wide sustainability report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Providing an opportunity to share goals and progress with stakeholders, and be proactive in industry transparency. Also providing an opportunity to launch yearly sustainability awards.

4 Grow New Market Opportunities

The identification of new trade and market pathways occurs at a sub-sector level, and this reduces the potential growth opportunities for the aquaculture sector as a whole.

In the future...businesses and sub-sectors share learnings and market insights, developing opportunities for accessing Australian and global markets

Across the aquaculture industry there is significant diversity, especially when it comes to domestic and export markets and product type (fresh vs frozen). With domestic demand initially dropping due to COVID-19, a number of key players had to adjust their product offerings and supply chains. The innovations and business models that resulted from this should be further utilised and built upon, with opportunities beyond domestic borders further realised and leveraged.

New market opportunities is an area with alot of common ground across the aquaculture industry, and collaboration on this priority could allow for the identification and addressing of roadblocks felt amongst sub-sectors/ species. The sharing of opportunities would be mutually beneficial, with more visibility and awareness of growth opportunities.

Our Actions:

H1

0-1 YEAR

- Map shared aquaculture barriers, opportunities, and red tape
- Assess appetite for further aquaculture export market promotion

H2

1-3 YEARS

- Define principles of whole of industry collaboration in this space

H3

3-5+ YEARS

- Detail TBD

“We would like to strengthen exports and markets, but domestic demand has never been higher...Most product is domestic, but in the future we will probably want to go down the export track”

“What can we do that's focussed on trading new value and opening up new markets together. That's where I'd like to see more work done.”

5 Collaborate on Impact Focussed R&D

R&D activities which focus primarily on research outputs fail to address major cross-industry priorities and business challenges.

In the future... research areas are pulled from the desired impacts of industry and global innovations, and stakeholders work together to tackle issues faced industry wide.

R&D activities are typically linear in process, whereby researchers identify an issue, and growers / industry are presented with a variety of potential opportunities for implementation in their practises. There needs to be a shift away from this model, which is perpetuated across agriculture industries, to a model that pulls research focus areas from the most pressing needs of stakeholders, and measures impact by revenue and cost savings, rather than research publications. This shift should also extend to include a global view, where learnings could be pulled from parallel industries and R&D at an international level.

Aquaculture R&D projects have limited resources to action major activities, and therefore research is often species/sub-sector specific. Furthermore, projects that could be highly impactful, but lack a strong research component, are often unsuccessful through current funding mechanisms. Funding opportunities could therefore be critical in addressing industry wide challenges.

Our Actions:

H1

0-1 YEAR

- Identification of cross-industry goals and research themes
- Industry collaboration to support more relevant research from the FRDC
- Representation on FRDC RACs

H2

1-3 YEARS

- Provision of grant/funding opportunities for industry wide research needs (including small grants for rapid concept development/ trials)

H3

3-5+ YEARS

- Explore the feasibility of a strong, bespoke R&D mechanism sitting alongside AAC (seperate from wild-catch)

"We have a narrow view of R&D, in the FRDC system...any form of industry development isn't covered...so is there an opportunity for rapid small scale innovation funding?"

"We ran an R&D workshop to identify commonalities across Aus, learnings and pinch points you can apply wherever. Some issues identified are similar in prawn and abalone farms, and this means there's an opportunity to bring hatcheries together across aquaculture"

6 Ensure Labelling Integrity

Without consistent country of origin labelling across the supply chain, the integrity and business position of Australian aquaculture is threatened.

In the future... product integrity is maintained throughout the supply chain, and clearly differentiated from competing foreign products.

While a number of aquaculture sub-sectors have country of origin labelling reasonably guaranteed (abalone, mussels), it is essential that all players can maintain integrity throughout the supply chain, and ensure the competitive advantage of Australian product's reputation is leveraged. Ensuring authenticity and consumer access to knowledge is essential, and this needs to be available in any situation, especially in the food service sector. Currently, advocacy is limited to specific sub-sectors, through lobbying at national and state levels, and marketing and promotions raising consumer awareness and support.

Labelling will also become more critical as sectors and companies invest in sustainable practices, produce higher quality products, and demand higher prices. Maintaining this differentiation will be integral to industry profitability, through the promotion of high quality, sustainable Australian brand products.

Our Actions:

H1 0-1 YEAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Representation and advocacy with key decision makers in government
H2 1-3 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supply chain analysis identifying traceability challenges/ breaks in consumer information - Interventions collaboratively developed with other industries
H3 3-5+ YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Details TBD

"We don't want any sort of passing off or counterfeit activity. If we are producing at a very high quality sustainable level that comes at a cost and therefore we need to protect the traceability of that."

"We have to reach economies of scale, but lose a lot of feasibility through the value chain - packaging etc, it's hard to ensure a brand label...its important to have the capability to prove where fish are coming from"

7 Enhance Biosecurity & Aquatic Animal Health

With an increasingly complex biosecurity landscape, outbreaks can have major impacts sector wide, jeopardising the productivity and profitability of the aquaculture industry.

In the future... learnings are shared across the industry, and areas of biosecurity and animal health are collaboratively addressed and continuously developed.

Biosecurity within the aquaculture space is complex, from multiple sub-sectors relying on imported fish, to biosecurity risk mitigation differing between businesses, and a reliance on public waterways for production. There is effective and well-managed awareness and monitoring across the industry, and responses to outbreaks are often swift. However, surveillance and response measures must be continuously reviewed and developed.

To ensure industry collaboration is proactive rather than primarily reactive, there is an opportunity to identify and develop solutions to biosecurity and animal health challenges felt across the industry (such as consistency of on-farm biosecurity measures and definitions of animal sentience). Furthermore, research and identification of technologies to support surveillance and traceability across the supply chain could support the reduction of industry-wide risk.

Our Actions:

H1

0-1 YEAR

- Consolidation of participation and approach in industry and government committees
- Review of sector/grower biosecurity strategies/ approaches

H2

1-3 YEARS

- Chain of custody mapping
- Identification and consensus on priority biosecurity threats
- Explore global opportunities and best practise for biosecurity

H3

3-5+ YEARS

- Grower and public education activities
- Support and implement cross-industry research activities and technologies
- Details TBD

“So if there was a pan-aquaculture opportunity to try and close some of those relationships to the point that you can say here’s “how we can remove some nutrient out of the system and prevent algae or seagrass degradation”, that could enhance the biosecurity situation.”

“Biosecurity issues, there are two aspects; On farm biosecurity plans...and on the flipside a huge biosecurity risk is the use of public waterways.”

8 Advocate for Effective and Consistent Regulation

Differences in regulations at a state level create confusion across sub-sectors and businesses, and can create hesitancy towards growth opportunities.

In the future...regulations and policies are consolidated at a national level, with businesses empowered to pursue opportunities across state borders.

Many regulations focussed on aquaculture are developed at a state level, and while this is beneficial in catering for the unique needs and environments of these areas, it also creates inconsistencies that can be difficult to navigate. This can hinder business decisions and growth, especially around translocation and the ability for businesses to prepare risk mitigation strategies. There is also a lack of clear communication around the reasoning for government decisions, such as rules around the use of veterinary chemicals.

While there are positive experiences and examples of industry and state governments working together, there is a need for engagement at a national level to reduce inconsistencies. This collaboration with government will also be important for communicating industry needs, and clarifying its role (eg. as separate from sewage).

Our Actions:

H1

0-1 YEAR

- Engage and build relationships with state and national governments
- Aquaculture specific events in Canberra

H2

1-3 YEARS

- Map aquaculture regulations and policies at a state and national level, identifying opportunities and blockers for consolidation/ consistency

H3

3-5+ YEARS

- Collaboratively develop and provide evidence for the review of regulations
- Details TBD

"If I want to take abalone from Victoria to South Australia, I can't. If I want to take abalone from South Australia to Victoria, I can...so my risk management programme is compromised, because if I have an event in one state, am I going to be able to quickly respond and transfer stock to to maintain production."







"It would be great to have industry wide vet chemicals approved, and all capture data on effectiveness, as well as access at reasonable prices."

An aerial photograph of a beach with white, foamy waves crashing onto the shore. The water is a deep teal color, and the sand is a light tan. A small, dark object, possibly a person or a boat, is visible in the water on the left side.

Section Three

Action Plan One-Pager

AAC Action Plan

Vision		Australian aquaculture is prosperous, sustainable and respected							
Mission		Support collaboration to refresh Australia's aquaculture narrative by addressing industry's most relevant challenges and opportunities							
Priorities		1 Strengthen Communication and External Engagement	2 Improve Access to Labour and Technical Expertise	3 Enhance Environmental Sustainability and Circularity	4 Grow New Market Opportunities	5 Collaborate on Impact Focussed R&D	6 Ensure Labelling Integrity	7 Enhance Biosecurity & Aquatic Animal Health	8 Advocate for Effective and Consistent Regulation
Short (0-1 yrs)		● Share AAC vision and action plan ● Mapping engagement landscape ● AAC message bank	● Workforce mapping & survey ● Employment best practice research ● Value proposition	● AAC representation ● Aquaculture sustainability event ● Market research into future landscape	● Map barriers & opportunities ● Export market promotion appetite	● Identify common research themes ● Collaboration on projects and FRDC representation	● Representation and advocacy	● Industry and government committee approach ● Review biosecurity strategies	● Build relationships with governments ● Aquaculture Canberra event
	Medium (1-3 yrs)	● AAC C&E Plan ● Desktop research on emerging issues	● Relationships with education providers ● Government collaboration ● Training delivery	● Explore global innovations ● Stakeholder 'how-tos' ● Stakeholder reporting capabilities	● Define industry collaboration principles	● Provision of grant/funding opportunities	● Supply chain analysis ● Collaboratively developed interventions	● Chain of custody mapping ● Prioritisation of biosecurity threats ● Global opportunities	● Map regulations and policies
	Long (3-5+ yrs)	● Delivery of C&E Plan ● Ongoing engagement measurement	● Aquaculture labour platform	● ESG/sustainability roadmap ● Sustainability report	● TBD	● Feasibility assessment of AAC R&D mechanism	● TBD	● Education activities ● Cross-industry research activities	● Collaboratively provide evidence for regulation review
Outcome		The industry is equipped to effectively communicate their purpose and contribution to the goals of government, consumers, and the wider community.	The aquaculture industry will have access to a reliable and skilled workforce, and amplify clear value propositions and pathways to position the industry as a career of choice.	The public understands the environmental contribution of aquaculture, and the industry is pro-actively pursuing sustainable practices and systems.	Businesses and sub-sectors share learnings and market insights, developing opportunities for accessing Australian and global markets	Research areas are pulled from desired impacts of industry and global innovations, and stakeholders work together to tackle issues faced industry wide.	Product integrity is maintained throughout the supply chain, and clearly differentiated from competing foreign products.	Learnings are shared across the industry, and areas of biosecurity concern are collaboratively addressed and continuously developed.	Regulations and policies are consolidated at a national level, or are consistent at a state level, with businesses empowered to pursue opportunities across state borders.
Cross Cutting		 Pro-active Policy Positions	 Industry / Landscape Mapping	 Communicate Priorities		 Development of AAC KPIs		 Industry Survey	 Dashboard Measuring Impact



Section Four

AAC Recommendations

AAC Recommendations

Beyond the 8 priorities, timelines of activities, and cross-cutting actions for the AAC to support the aquaculture industry, there are a number of supporting decisions and recommendations that the AAC can undertake to support its own effectiveness.

1. AAC members should look to conduct regular interviews, focus groups, and/or town halls with key industry and external stakeholders in government and the supply chain. To support this activity, consistent lines of enquiry need to be defined to track and compare responses over time. These engagements can help ensure the AAC is across activities and initiatives that align with priority activities, help test assumptions, and provide an opportunity for knowledge sharing.
2. Define clear roles and responsibilities of the AAC committee members on the delivery of specific action items and activities. These roles and responsibilities should be flexible to ensure members of the committee are empowered to drive priorities of particular interest to their sub-sector / stakeholders.
3. While this action plan represents a start, the challenge of the previous NAC was the inability to communicate its purpose to the industry and implement activities that delivered impact. If required, the AAC should prioritise short, sharp training activities for the committee on topics that address these challenges such as human-centred design, communication skills, and agile practices.
4. This Action Plan is a basis for further work, and should be formalised to effectively deliver on the recommendations. Additional detail should be included in future iterations, including governance and reporting structures on priority areas, and resourcing needs and opportunities (including funding streams for specific activities).

