

Translocation Working Group

Farmed Oyster Sector

AQUAPLAN

AQUAPLAN is Australia's national strategic plan for aquatic animal health which is coordinated by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry in Canberra (DAFF).

It sets out national priorities for collaborative actions to strengthen Australia's aquatic animal health management systems.

These systems are critically important to improve the productivity and profitability of aquatic animal industries (including aquaculture, fisheries and ornamental fish sectors) and to protect Australia's unique aquatic environments from the threat of disease.



AQUAPLAN 2022-2027













Importantly, AQUAPLAN is developed and implemented through extensive collaboration between industry and governments to improve Australia's aquatic animal health system. The Plan addresses seven key objectives:

1. Border biosecurity and trade
2. Enterprise and regional biosecurity
3. Surveillance
4. Diagnostic capability
5. Emergency preparedness
6. Veterinary medicines
7. Research and Innovation









Each of these objectives is pursued through a number of defined activities. In total the plan has 28 activities across its seven objectives.

[AQUAPLAN – Australia's National Strategic Plan for Aquatic Animal Health - DAFF \(agriculture.gov.au\)](https://www.aquaplan.gov.au)

<p>Objective 1: Border biosecurity and trade.</p> <p>Industry-government collaboration and communication on Australia's border biosecurity risk management system are strengthened and technical market access barriers are addressed strategically.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  1.1 Two-way engagement on import policy and decision-making processes.  1.2 R&D strategic priorities for aquatic risk analyses and import policies.  1.3 Strategic approach to meet technical requirements and support market access. 	<p>Objective 2: Enterprise and regional biosecurity.</p> <p>Integrated enterprise and regional biosecurity programs are strengthened to support the productivity and sustainability of aquaculture and fisheries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  2.1 Enterprise biosecurity plan writing workshops.  2.2 Enterprise biosecurity plan implementation support program.  2.3 Evaluating and improving enterprise biosecurity plans.  2.4 Translocation of broodstock and genetic material.  2.5 Review current approaches for managing ornamental fish in Australia.  2.6 National ornamental fish communication campaign. 	<p>Objective 3: Surveillance.</p> <p>Government and industry investment in the national surveillance system is optimised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  3.1 National surveillance strategy.  3.2 Sector-specific surveillance plans.  3.3 Sensitivity of the passive surveillance system.
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<p>Objective 4: Diagnostic capability.</p> <p>Australia's national diagnostic network for aquatic animal diseases provides reliable testing capability for known and emerging diseases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  4.1 Assess the future needs of Australia's diagnostic system.  4.2 Technical guidelines for validation of aquatic animal disease diagnostic tests.  4.3 Diagnostic accuracy studies for priority aquatic animal diseases.  4.4 Novel and emerging diagnostic methods.  4.5 Improve Neptune and its database. 	<p>Objective 5: Emergency preparedness.</p> <p>Industries and governments enhance their capacity and capability, and understand their roles and responsibilities in mounting rapid, appropriate, and collaborative emergency responses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  5.1 National priority aquatic animal disease list.  5.2 Biosecurity action plans for priority aquatic animal diseases.  5.3 Sector-specific simulation exercises. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  5.4 New or revised contingency planning arrangements.  5.5 Practical disease investigation guidelines for new and emerging diseases.
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<p>Objective 6: Veterinary medicines.</p> <p>Improved access to veterinary medicines, chemicals and vaccines strengthens management of aquatic animal health and welfare and supports prudent use of antimicrobials and therapeutics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  6.1 Understand existing veterinary medicine use.  6.2 Aquatic animal minor use permit applications.  6.3 Establish antimicrobial resistance baselines for aquaculture sectors. 	<p>Objective 7: Research and Innovation.</p> <p>Research priorities are driven by industry and government needs and new knowledge is created, made accessible and extended to industry to improve aquatic animal health and welfare.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  7.1 Research priority setting, engagement, and communication.  7.2 Extension and adoption of aquatic animal health research.  7.3 AQUAPLAN webinar series.
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AQUAPLAN activity 2.4 “Translocation of broodstock and genetic material”

- Activity 2.4 is being led by the Subcommittee of Aquatic Animal Health (SCAAH).
- The aim is to clarify opportunities and barriers to translocation of high-value animals and genetic material, and to identify options for developing a national approach to domestic translocation.
- Three Working Groups: farmed abalone, farmed prawns and farmed oysters.
- Each Working Group will include key stakeholders from industry and government.
- SP’s role is to facilitate the activities of the WG – It is up to WG members to decide what the priorities are for the oyster industry and the actions needed to address those priorities.
- SP funded by FRDC

Why has this project been identified as a high priority in AQUAPLAN?

- Breeding programs are an essential part of all modern agriculture and aquaculture industries.
- These programs can incorporate new tools such as genomics to accelerate genetic gains but are expensive to establish and maintain.
- Breeding programs are key for increasing productivity through desirable traits such as disease resistance, improved growth or environmental tolerance.
- They also provide opportunities to strengthen biosecurity by producing animals of a known health status, such as specific pathogen-free stock.
- **However**, for breeding programs to reach their full potential, the biosecurity risks associated with the movement of live aquatic animals must be managed effectively, so that translocations can occur safely.
- Translocation across jurisdictions needs to be possible to give investment confidence which will support the long-term growth and productivity of the aquaculture industry.

Farmed Abalone as a stark example!

- China's Abalone Industry - 200,000T - has 1 breeding program.
- Korea's Abalone Industry - 30,000T - has 1 breeding program.
- Tasmanian salmon industry – 80,000T (\$1 billion) – has 1 breeding program
- Australia's Abalone Industry - 1,500T (\$60 million) – needs to be able to develop and access stock from breeding programs cost-effectively



Annually one cup of larvae or eggs, (c.2.5 million) is sufficient to stock a large abalone farm.



Genetics and breeding research centre. National Fisheries Research and Development Institute, (NFRDI), Korea 2004. Photo courtesy Dr. Choulji Park.

- The Prawn and Abalone Working Groups are more advanced in their activities than for oysters.
- These Working Groups are up to a second meeting where we will be discussing feedback on Agreed Actions stemming from the first meeting.
- Many of the Government representatives on the Oyster Group are also on one, or both, of the other Groups so already have some insight.
- The first meeting of the Oyster Working Group is on 1st Oct 2024.
- Therefore, I am not able to present anything today about outcomes or achievements for the Oyster Group but thought it worth making sure everyone is aware of the project.
- If you aren't on the Working Group and you want to have input, please feel free to contact me or liaise with one of your nominated representatives.

Expected Project Outcomes

- Opportunities and barriers to domestic translocation of high-value animals and genetic material in the farmed oyster sector will have been clarified, and options for developing a national approach to domestic translocation will have been identified.
- Relationships and trust between industry and government for the oyster farming sector will be improved.
- Industry strategies involving translocation, breeding programs and stock improvement will be facilitated to support the long-term growth and productivity of the oyster farming industry without compromising biosecurity.

NOTE: Any recommendations or suggestions made by the working group will need to be reviewed and approved (if deemed appropriate) by State/Territory CVOs. The working group is not able to implement any recommendations directly.

A few key issues identified in a survey of Working Group members

- A set of science-based recommendations for translocation that are implementable and unlock potential value to the industry.
- Harmonisation between jurisdictions.
- Development of standardised protocols to streamline the process of translocating stock around Australia from bio-secure hatcheries (currently very different protocols in different states).
- Review and standardisation of testing protocols.
- A productive and common-sense approach to interstate translocation.
- Achieve consistency between states and minimise bureaucracy.

Key principles of the Working Group

- Identify the key priorities and stay focussed!
- Don't try to do everything and end up achieving nothing!
- Important to undertake actions with a renewed approach as some of these issues have been around for a long time without much progress. Important not to go round in the same cycle!
- It is important that industry and government engage in the process. Together, we need to find solutions not just identify the problems which is the easy part!
- The activities of the Prawn and Abalone WGs has been encouraging to date.

FIRST MEETING OF THE FARMED OYSTER
TRANSLOCATION WORKING GROUP IS
TUESDAY 1st OCTOBER

Thank you