

### ***NAC moves the Action Agenda Forward.***

The Honorable Senator Ian Macdonald, Minister for Fisheries, Forestry and Conservation, chaired a meeting in Hobart on 29 June 2004 to progress the Aquaculture Industry Action Agenda. The action agenda implementation committee met for their fifth time, to consider a series of consultancy reports crucial to achieving the main objective of the action agenda – \$2.5 billion in sales for Australian aquaculture by the year 2010.

Over the last three years the Australian government and industry have been developing the action agenda. This is a national initiative to help the aquaculture industry successfully meet challenges facing the industry, and to capitalise on its competitive advantages and growth opportunities.

The action agenda consists of 10 key strategic initiatives:

- ? Making a National Aquaculture Policy Statement
- ? Promoting a regulatory and business environment that supports aquaculture
- ? Implementing an industry-driven action agenda
- ? Growing the industry within an ecologically sustainable framework
- ? Enhancing aquatic animal health and biosecurity
- ? Investing for growth
- ? Promoting aquaculture products in Australia and globally
- ? Tackling the research and innovation challenges
- ? Making the most of education, training and workplace opportunities
- ? Creating an industry for all Australians

During the early stages, it was considered vital that the industry has input in development and implementation of the action agenda. This led to the formulation of the aquaculture's peak industry body – the National Aquaculture Council (NAC).

The NAC set up office in Canberra through appointment of Chief Executive Officer, Mr Simon Bennison in November 2003. He has recently been joined by communications officer, Alexandra Bagnara. The NAC has already a strong membership base including state and regional aquaculture councils, sector representative bodies, government agencies and departments at all levels, as well as private companies.

With assistance from the commonwealth government and industry membership, the NAC has made a substantial investment in the action agenda process, providing \$2.5 million last financial year and a further \$1 million funding for 2004/05.

A range of membership options are provided by the NAC to ensure that all stakeholders with an interest in the development of aquaculture in Australia have an opportunity for involvement. Because NAC is working with the federal government to progress the action agenda, our members have strong representation on the implementation committee.

Members of the implementation committee include industry representatives from the major aquaculture sectors, representatives for newer and emerging sectors, as well as federal and state government representatives from various departments. The process provides an opportunity for greater cooperation between government at a federal, state and local level and considers issues from trade development to environment and heritage protection.

A wide range of consultancy reports were presented to the committee at the meeting in Hobart. The reports focussed on investment opportunities, education and training, research and development and ecological sustainable development.

A major initiative underpinning the action agenda will focus on marketing and promotion of Australian aquaculture products both within Australia and overseas.

A key task of the NAC is to consider the findings of the various consultancies to form an action plan that will help the industry realise its vision. This will be presented at the Australasian Aquaculture Conference, held in Sydney during September.

The action agenda consultancy reports will be distributed to all members of the NAC and will also be showcased at the conference.

For further information on the action agenda, or to become a member of the NAC, visit the Australian Aquaculture Portal ([www.australian-aquacultureportal.com](http://www.australian-aquacultureportal.com)) or contact the NAC (phone: 02 6281 0383, email: [nac@asic.org.au](mailto:nac@asic.org.au))



**Meeting 5 of the Aquaculture Industry Action Agenda Committee – Hobart, June 2004**

**Back Row (L-R):** Col Dyke (Tasmanian Aquaculture Council), Bruce Zippel (South Australian Oyster Grower's Association), Martin Breen (Australian Prawn Farmers Association), Owen Carrington-Smith (Tasmanian Salmonid Growers Association), Ian Nightingale (Aquaculture Committee Chair), Bob Seamark (Flinders Medical Research Institute), John Jenkin (National Aquaculture Council Chair), Rodney Dillon (Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Commission).

**Front Row (L-R):** John Talbot (Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry), Margaret Moore (World Wide Fund for Nature), Ian Macdonald (Minister for Fisheries, Forestry and Conservation – Chair of the Aquaculture Industry Action Agenda Implementation Committee), Serena Zipf (Rocky Point Prawn Farm)

**Not pictured:** Brian Jeffriess (Tuna Boat Owners' Association), Glenn Hurry (Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry), Bob Lister (Tasmanian Fishing Industry Council)