



## JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON NORTHERN AUSTRALIA

The Development of Northern Australia

**MEDIA RELEASE**

Issued: 14 September 2015

Chair: Hon Warren Entsch MP

Deputy Chair: Hon Alannah MacTiernan MP

# Opportunities for Expanding the Aquaculture Industry in Northern Australia: Canberra Hearing

The Northern Australia Committee will hold a public hearing in Canberra on Tuesday, 15 September as part of its inquiry into opportunities to expand the aquaculture industry in Northern Australia.

The CSIRO has identified 1.5 million hectares of land in Australia which is suitable for aquaculture—with almost 0.5 million hectares being in Queensland—and has commented that much of tropical Australia is suited to meeting the major requirements for aquaculture development: clean seawater and an abundance of suitable coastal land.

Committee Chair, the Hon Warren Entsch MP, said: 'The CSIRO has a strong history of supporting aquaculture through developing feedstocks and researching the environmental impacts of aquaculture farm discharges. For example, this has resulted in the introduction of discharge treatment systems and compliance with strict discharge water quality standards that have enabled the Australian prawn industry to operate for 20 years with no adverse impacts on adjacent ecosystems.

'The CSIRO has also suggested the development of a spatial planning framework which would provide a rigorous basis for establishing aquaculture zones along the Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australian coast similar to those operating in Tasmania and South Australia.

'The Committee will examine how new aquaculture projects can coexist in areas of environmental significance, such as the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, when the Department of the Environment appears at the public hearing,' Mr Entsch said.

The Department of the Environment is responsible for administering the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* which is triggered when developments are proposed which could impact on the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

**Where: Committee Room 2R2, Parliament House, Canberra**

**When: Tuesday, 15 September 2015, 6.00 pm–9.00 pm**

### PROGRAM

6.00 pm	Department of Agriculture
6.40 pm	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
7.40 pm	Department of the Environment
8.20 pm	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation

Hearing programs are available at: [www.aph.gov.au/jscna](http://www.aph.gov.au/jscna)

**For media comment:** Please contact Heather Beck, Media Adviser to the Committee Chair, Hon Warren Entsch MP, on (02) 6277 4803 or 0427 585 668.

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