



JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON NORTHERN AUSTRALIA

The Development of Northern Australia

MEDIA RELEASE

Issued: 2 June 2015

Chair: Hon Warren Entsch MP

Deputy Chair: Hon Alannah MacTiernan MP

Seeking Pearls of Wisdom— **Northern Australia Committee returns to Broome**

Opportunities to expand the aquaculture industry in Northern Australia will be investigated as part of an inquiry by Parliament's Northern Australia Committee, which has been tasked to examine ways to develop the region.

Aquaculture is the farming of captive-bred stock or the grow-out of naturally occurring juveniles of wild caught stocks and it is Australia's fastest growing primary industry, accounting for 34 per cent of the total gross value of seafood production.

The inquiry follows findings and recommendations in the committee's Pivot North Report that the Government facilitate the development of the aquaculture industry in Northern Australia.

Committee Chair, the Hon Warren Entsch MP, said that the Western Australian Government has recently announced the creation of the Kimberley Aquaculture Development Zone.

"This initiative has the potential to boost aquaculture in the north west of Australia, and improve employment opportunities in the Kimberley region," Mr Entsch said.

Pearl farmers, local shires and the Kimberley Training Institute's Aquaculture Centre will all give evidence at the hearings in Broome on 9 and 10 June.

"Expanding the aquaculture industry in the Kimberley by developing new product and launching new projects will assist in diversifying the local economy, which is traditionally reliant on the resources industry. Increased involvement of the local workforce in aquaculture will also ensure financial benefits are retained in the region," Mr Entsch said.

On Thursday, 11 June the committee will be in Perth to hear evidence from several companies and organisations with an interest in the Kimberley Aquaculture Development Zone.

Hearing programs are available at: 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 4088 or 0427 585 668.

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