



## **Australian Government**

Australian Government response to the  
House of Representatives Standing Committee on  
Agriculture and Water resources report:

Supporting a strong future for Australian aquaculture:  
Inquiry into the Australian aquaculture sector

MAY 2024

## Introduction

On Thursday, 1 April 2021, the then Assistant Minister for Fisheries and Forestry, the Hon Jonathon Duniam, asked the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Agriculture and Water Resources (the Committee) to inquire into the Australian aquaculture sector.

In February 2022, the Committee released its report, Supporting a strong future for Australian Aquaculture.

## Response to the recommendations of the report

### Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment work with aquaculture industry representatives to ensure that Australian producers have the assurance that the Department's ongoing reviews of the Import Risk Analysis for imported non-salmonid fish species are appropriately rigorous and up-to-date.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

### Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government and the Fisheries Research Development Corporation strengthen their efforts to support Seafood Industry Australia and the aquaculture industry more broadly to improve community awareness of the ecological sustainability and safety of Australian aquaculture produce.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

### Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government work with the aquaculture industry, training providers and state and relevant Northern Territory government agencies to develop specialised training pathways and profession development programs to strengthen the aquaculture workforce.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

### Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government consider programs and incentives to encourage workers to take up regional aquaculture employment and to support the growth of the industry.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

**Recommendation 5**

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government consider the establishment of an aquaculture industry development fund to provide grants and loans to both established and emerging aquaculture ventures.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

**Recommendation 6**

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government review research and development funding for aquaculture through the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation to ensure that it meets the specific needs of the sector.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

**Recommendation 7**

The Committee recommends that Food Standards Australia New Zealand consider mandating the use of the Australian Fish Names Standard under Food Standards Code Standard 2.2.3 for fish and fish products in Australia.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

**Recommendation 8**

The Committee recommends that the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation work with barramundi industry groups to support an application to assign two standard names for *Lates calcarifer* under the Australian Fish Names Standard: 'barramundi' for fish grown or caught in Australia and 'Asian sea bass' for any imported products.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

**Recommendation 9**

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government, in conjunction with the states and territories, consider changes to the Country of Origin Food Labelling Information Standard 2016 to require labelling of imported seafood products in foodservice settings, such as restaurants, cafes and fish-and-chip shops, in line with current regulatory requirements in the Northern Territory.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

**Recommendation 10**

The Committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, through the Australian Fisheries Management Forum, support state and Northern Territory government agencies to reduce duplication and streamline regulatory approval processes for aquaculture operations through the introduction of 'one-stop-shop' models of regulation management.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

**Recommendation 11**

The Committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment and the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation provide greater assistance to state and Northern Territory governments, in conjunction with industry, to identify and establish further designated aquaculture zones. These zones should be:

- identified using scientific evidence and spatial planning to establish their suitability for aquaculture
- supported by streamlined regulatory approval processes for operators.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

**Recommendation 12**

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government, in conjunction with state and Northern Territory governments, investigate further opportunities for expanding arrangements under the Offshore Constitutional Settlement to allow for aquaculture activities in Commonwealth waters.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

**Recommendation 13**

The Committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority work with the Queensland Government to ensure that the current regulatory framework for industry nutrient and sediment emissions in the Great Barrier Reef catchment area reflects latest evidence about the outputs of aquaculture farms and is not unfairly impeding the aquaculture industry's growth.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

**Recommendation 14**

The Committee recommends that a specialist aquaculture unit is established within the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment to support the ongoing implementation of the National Aquaculture Strategy.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

**Recommendation 15**

The Committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment conduct a review of the priorities of the National Aquaculture Strategy to provide an update on progress in the five years since its implementation and ensure that its aims are being met.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.