

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE
ON AGRICULTURE, RESOURCES, FISHERIES AND FORESTRY**

Inquiry into the role of science for fisheries and aquaculture

*Chair: The Hon Dick Adams MP
Deputy Chair: Mr Alby Schultz MP*

New inquiry into fisheries and aquaculture science

The House of Representatives Agriculture, Resources, Fisheries and Forestry Committee will conduct an inquiry into the role of science for fisheries and aquaculture. The inquiry will focus on scientific aspects of fisheries and aquaculture including species knowledge, fisheries management, biosecurity, and research and development.

The inquiry comes at a time when exceptional pressure is being placed on global fish stocks. According to the Food and Agricultural Organisation's 2010 report on the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture, wild fisheries production has reached a plateau that will not increase until the world's fish stocks are more effectively managed. Meanwhile, aquaculture is fulfilling demand in place of wild fisheries.

Committee Chair Dick Adams said: "Aquaculture has a considerable potential for growth, and will rely on continued research and development. Changes to the marine environment, especially through climate change, have the potential to cause a mixture of known and unknown impacts in relation to fish stocks and habitats. These factors will also pose uncertainty for the fishing industry and coastal communities that have traditionally relied upon productivity derived from the oceans."

"Given such changes, the inquiry will provide a timely opportunity to consider how our scientific knowledge can be applied to ensure seafood productivity can be assured into the future," Mr Adams said.

Terms of reference for the inquiry can be found below.

Submissions are due by **3 May 2012** although the committee would appreciate that submissions be sent as early as possible. The committee would prefer submissions to be sent electronically to arff.reps@aph.gov.au. Submitters are encouraged to read the information on preparing a submission available on the committee website before lodging their submission.

The House of Representatives Fisheries Committee will inquire into and report upon:

- the relationship between scientific knowledge of fish species, ecosystems, biodiversity and fish stock sustainability;
- fishery management and biosecurity, including but not limited to:
 - the calculation and monitoring of stock size, sustainable yield and bycatch, as well as related data collection
 - the effects of climate change, especially relating to species dispersion, stock levels and impacts on fishing communities
 - pest and disease management and mitigation
 - minimising risks to the natural environment and human health
 - cooperation among Australian governments on the above;
- research, development and applied science of aquaculture, including:
 - transitioning from wild fisheries to aquaculture in individual species
 - improving sustainability and lifecycle management practices and outcomes
 - pest and disease management and mitigation;
- governance arrangements relating to fisheries and aquaculture, including the implications for sustainability and industry development;
- current initiatives and responses to the above matters by state, territory and Australian governments; and
- any other related matter.

For media comment: please contact the Acting Committee Chair, Mr Alby Schultz MP, on (02) 4822 2277 or email Alby.Schultz.MP@aph.gov.au.

Further information: contact the Inquiry Secretary (02) 6277 4500, email arff.reps@aph.gov.au or visit the Committee's webpage at <http://www.aph.gov.au/arff>