

Coming up...

Aquaculture Conference, Nelson

9-10 November 2011.

New AQ legislation

New Aquaculture legislation to create the platform for aquaculture to become a \$1 billion industry by 2025 was enacted on 1 October 2011.

www.aquaculture.govt.nz



Message from the Chair of the RAO

Graeme Coates - Ever since my introduction to the Aquaculture Strategy for the Bay of Plenty (2009) I have been immensely impressed with the enthusiasm and vision of the local community, especially in regards to aquaculture development. Working with the partners involved in Bay of Connections has been a blast of fresh air in what is often an over regulated and litigious industry.

Since commencing the Chair of RAO in 2010 I have been involved in a wide range of activities. The RAO itself is a joy to work with. We have met regularly and developed our own governance rules. The forum continues to gather new and enthusiastic members and a newsletter will continue to send positive messages to aquaculturists in the region.

Over the last two years we have completed a Bay wide audit of aquaculture assets, submitted to the Government's PGP fund, submitted on the Aquaculture Law Reforms, had a range of informative and compelling speakers at our meetings, participated in public meetings throughout the region (including Taupo and the Great Lakes District) and established networks between regional experts and those from other regions such as Nelson and Waikato.

The RAO will continue to grow and encourage aquaculturists in the region. We have got to really understand the potential of offshore shellfish farming, eel farming, coastal and freshwater farming and the interface between industry, tourism, education and science.

I trust you will all enjoy this new publication. Many thanks to our Editor and the composition staff.

Welcome from the Editor

Cheryl MacGregor - This is the first newsletter from the Bay of Plenty Regional Aquaculture Organisation (RAO). It will run quarterly and found at www.bayofconnections.com.

The RAO was established in 2010 and has met seven times. Prior to the RAO, the Aquaculture Advisory Group developed the Bay of Plenty Aquaculture strategy - launched in November 2009. The membership of the RAO is similar to the earlier group. The members' list and the strategy are on Bay of Connection's website.

Graeme Coates (Aquaculture Direct Ltd and CEO of Marine Farmers Assn) helped develop the strategy and now chairs the RAO. His experience, national networks and enthusiasm for the emerging aquaculture industry in the Bay of Plenty is a winning combination. Under his guidance the region has made tangible progress against the action plan of the aquaculture strategy.



From the Coastal Chair

Chris Battershill - The partnership between University of Waikato, Awanuiarangi and the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic will provide tertiary education, training and research opportunities.

Aquaculture research will be a key focus. The first integrated summer school scholarship program will be launched in November with a marine and aquaculture theme. And a joint paper in aquaculture at Bachelors level will be offered in 2012.

There will be a focus around diversity of products and integrated aquaculture. Polyculture of species generating useful materials or other bioproducts amongst mainstream food targets is an attainable prospect. Such balanced multispecies marine or freshwater farming can reduce environmental footprints. Environmental sustainability is central to new research and development work.

A first step will be to examine the biological resources of the region with the aim of selecting local species which are likely to have the best growth attributes for the region and which are not likely to create issues with translocation. Co-development of new bioproducts is implicit in this program and that will be achieved by collaboration with industry partners in the agricultural and health care sectors.

From the Bay of Plenty Polytech

Andrew Morgan - The Polytechnic has developed aquaculture facilities on campus. This will improve our regional capacity and capability in tertiary aquaculture production education, and research and development with commercial potential. A web-based aquaculture course that incorporates the National Certificate in Aquaculture Level 4 has also been developed in partnership with SITO. As part of the Diploma in Marine Studies, two other aquaculture production courses are also run, with a third being developed in partnership with the University of Waikato.

At Ahumoana a Toi Aquaculture Centre much of the work is focused around the development of pilot production projects of various species for transfer to industry. Systems have been used to breed and rear sea cucumbers, and to work with sea urchins, paddle crabs, koura and the broodstock management of finfish. Embryos and larvae of species are also used to investigate the wider implications of global and regional climate events and coastal development on larval life cycle characteristics of commercially important aquaculture species' and other kai moana.

Aquaculture enters a new era

Dan Lees - New Aquaculture legislation that creates the platform for aquaculture to become a \$1 billion industry by 2025 was enacted on 1 October 2011.

"Aquaculture requires only a small fraction of our coastal

space, but it has the potential to be a huge boost to our economy," says Fisheries and Aquaculture Minister Phil Heatley.

"This legislation returns us to a consents-based regime that levels the playing field for aquaculture development. At the same time, the new legislation puts safeguards in place to better manage coastal space and ensure development can only occur within environmental limits," Mr Heatley says.

While primary responsibility for aquaculture planning and consenting remains with local authorities, the legislation also allows central government to take a more active role in supporting sustainable aquaculture.

The Government's principal advisor on aquaculture issues, the MAF Aquaculture Unit will continue to serve as an important resource for local authorities, iwi, environmental interests, the aquaculture industry, and other stakeholders

More information and guidance on the new law can be found at www.aquaculture.govt.nz

Opotiki commercial trial results

A viable aquaculture industry is looking increasingly promising.

The sea anchors and ropes placed at the Opotiki site late in 2010 have grown a spat catch beyond expectations. "These results are way beyond expectations for a La Nina season, and the weather and sea conditions have also been a good test for our infrastructure at the farm site" said Dickie Farrar, GM Whakatohea Maori Trust Board, the majority shareholder of ESL.

Preliminary annual results will be available later this year. In the meantime the Opotiki Council and partners are progressing with planning for the Opotiki Harbour Development which will enable a local processing industry to flourish. Aileen Lawrie, Opotiki District Council Chief Executive reflected that "Late last year we released 38 degrees - the Opotiki Harbour Transformation Project, a publication describing our Iwi and community-led approach and what lies ahead for us. We are delighted in the level of interest this has generated regionally, nationally and internationally."

(See www.opotikiharbour.co.nz; www.whakatohea.co.nz; www.odc.govt.nz).

