

COMMUNIQUE

SafeFish held its quarterly meeting at the Holiday Inn, Melbourne on Wednesday 14th November 2018, chaired by Dr. Anne Astin. The meeting included participants from Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAWR), Food Standards Australia New Zealand, FRDC, representatives from various seafood industry sectors (wholesale, processing, import and export fields), and SARDI.

An overview of the topics that were discussed can be found below:

1. Food Agility Cooperative Research Centre (CRC)

Dr. Anne Astin delivered a presentation overviewing the current research that is being undertaken through the Food Agility CRC, detailing new digital technology and services for the Australian Agrifood industry. The CRC consists of a \$150 million dollar innovation hub, which aims to lead a digital revolution in food production and supply, and to promote innovative methods that improve collaboration between researchers and industry to deliver greater impacts. A number of successful technologies have already been developed such as a salinity tracker to assist oyster farmers with food safety, and a moisture sensor for lettuce farmers to determine the optimal time to harvest. The Sydney Fish Market is also in the early stages of a developing an electronic nose for use on the sales floor in its new facility that is currently being built. More information can be found at the [Food Agility CRC website](#).

2. Proposed Plan for a Commercial Tropical Rock Oyster Industry in Northern Territory

Mr. Matthew Osborne from the Department of Primary Industry and Resources (NT DPIR) gave an overview of the potential of a commercial tropical rock oyster industry being developed in the Northern Territory. The aim is to develop a hatchery production facility and grow out program, and provide a sustainable economic opportunity for Aboriginal communities. The NT Government is currently scoping the work and identifying the various challenges that need to be overcome, including food safety from a legal, regulatory and public health perspective. SafeFish will be assisting with this process and will provide further updates as they become available.

3. Ciguatera Workshop to be held in April 2019

In 2019, SafeFish will facilitate a workshop to develop national strategies for ciguatera capability development (providing research and public health outcomes) The aim of the workshop will be to bring together algal and food safety researchers, seafood regulators, health officials and fishers to identify the Australian priorities for ciguatera research and develop strategies to address these. The workshop will be held in Brisbane, QLD over two days in early April 2019 with sessions themes to include ecology, toxin analysis and epidemiology. A draft agenda will be circulated by mid-December to potential attendees, however if you have an interest in attending, please contact the working group leader, [Dr. Andreas Seger](#).

4. Proposed Food Regulation Multi-media Tool

In 2019, SafeFish will develop a multi-media tool on food regulation in Australia to provide assistance to industry in navigating the food safety system in Australia. The aim is to demystify the regulatory system by detailing roles and responsibilities across the supply chain, where to find information, how the Government can assist industry and how industry can assist Government.

5. Drafting of Application to FRDC for the Development of the Seafood Incident Response Plan (SIRP)

At the last SafeFish Prioritisation process, the development of a Seafood Incident Response Plan (SIRP) was identified as the highest priority, however due to the broad scope of the work (including issues outside food safety), the scale of work required and the limited resources that were available it was referred to the FRDC stakeholder forum for broader discussion. Following this meeting, FRDC has asked SIA and SafeFish to draft an application to scope and identify the cost for developing an up to date plan for the seafood industry. This process is currently underway and will be submitted to FRDC for consideration in early 2019.

6. Succession planning for SafeFish

As this was the first meeting of the partners under the new three-year project, the topic of succession planning for the current members was discussed. This is to ensure that the group is sustainable and appropriately represented for the tasks that it undertakes. To evaluate this, the secretariat will develop a skills map of the current representative pool to determine any current shortfalls. Each partner member has also been asked to discuss with their organisation about nominating a deputy member to be involved when required. In addition to this, all partner meetings are now freely open to observers and the secretariat has the authority to engage appropriate stakeholders and invite them to attend meetings based on their relevance and expertise to input into the topics under discussion.

The next SafeFish meeting will be held in Canberra in March 2019.

The partner meetings are open to observers, and interested parties are invited to contact the SafeFish secretariat to register their attendance.

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Visit the SafeFish Website for further information

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