

RISK IDENTIFICATION FOR BIVALVE SECTORS: A CALL TO ACTION

Dr. Cristina Lesseur, Dr Alison Turnbull and Natalie Dowsett

Climate events make our world more volatile, uncertain and challenging to our business models: the species, the growing and harvesting of bivalves



Food safety is non-negotiable, but becomes harder to manage with constant changes and new challenges

We have acute scrutiny of the way we operate our business: socially, environmentally and financially

Market access locally and internationally becomes more complex with changing regulations and consumer expectations

The price we could pay for not acting to mitigate our risks is too high

- **OUTBREAKS** which can lead to severe impacts in public health and costly **RECALLS**
- **CLOSING** down production or harvest areas or businesses
- **LOSSES** (products, profits, licence to operate)
- **DELISTING** of products in key markets
- **REPUTATIONAL DAMAGE**, loss of trust in products

But we have the opportunity to make it right

- ✓ **IDENTIFY AND UNDERSTAND** our top risks deeply
- ✓ **DEVELOP NETWORKS AND COLLABORATIONS** around risks common to **GROUPS OR SECTORS**
- ✓ **MOVE INTO ACTION:** Mitigate, adapt, prepare. **DON'T WAIT**
- ✓ **INVEST IN PREPAREDNESS**

SafeFish's actionable risk register program

Developed to support industry's ability to manage and mitigate the top material risks for seafood, raise preparedness and build collaborations, within the framework described below. To date, the top national material risks for the seafood industry have been identified, analysed and evaluated, with some progressing into action plans and collaborations. This two pager summary describes the results for the identification of the highest priority risks for the Bivalves sector.

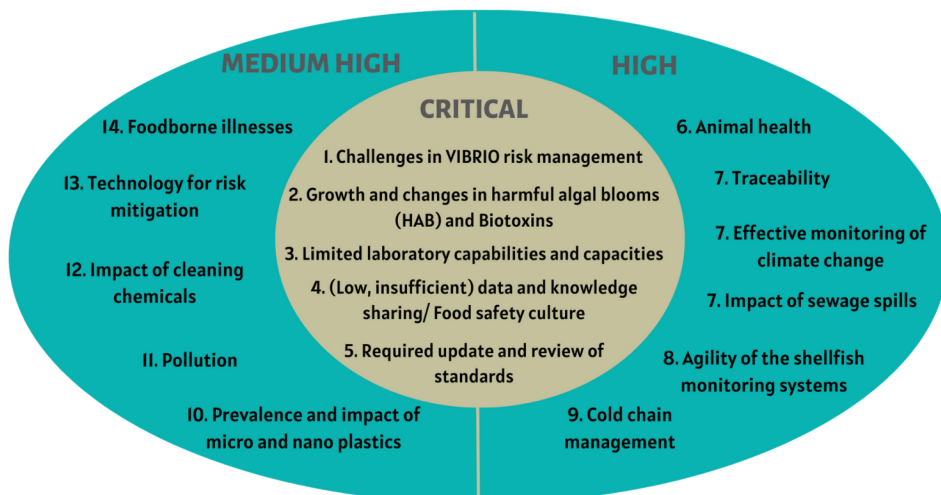


SAFEFISH NATIONAL ACTIONABLE RISK REGISTER



Top Risks identified






Working with industry, government and researchers, we identified the top risks related to food safety and market access for the Australian bivalve sectors, that could impact the industry now and in the near future. This was achieved by gathering insights and knowledge from key stakeholders/experts within the SafeFish network via a mix of email feedback and virtual workshop sessions. The most relevant concerns and challenges for the bivalve industry were identified, prioritised and then explored for potential actionable solutions and future opportunities.



SafeFish: A partner for risk management- Unincorporated partnership between government, regulators, industry and researchers that supports Food Safety and Market access for the Seafood Industry, through technical expertise.

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Deep dive into risks

	 CHALLENGES IN VIBRIO RISK MANAGEMENT	 GROWTH OF HARMFUL ALGAE BLOOMS & BIOTOXINS	 LIMITED LABORATORY CAPABILITIES	 LOW KNOWLEDGE & DATA SHARING	 UPDATE OF STANDARDS
RISK TRANSLATED	<i>Vibrio</i> is a big challenge (unpredictable nature, evolutionary fitness, constant changes). Its impact grows with climate change events. The knowledge gaps are many and some need urgent attention.	Distribution of HABs is changing (freshwater flows, ocean currents and warmer waters. Data collecting and knowledge of impact to bivalve species will allow to anticipate and manage risk.	Laboratory capability and capacity is limited in Australia, becoming a challenge to industry and its trading partners. New & rapid methods are needed to manage risk on-site.	Low awareness, culture and capabilities within industry around existing and emerging risks and understanding of existing standards. Industry's needs and data need to align with research priorities.	Need to harmonise and update the status quo in regulations and guidelines for <i>Vibrio</i> including biosecurity requirements, consistency of closures, and better support for industry.
ACTIONS IN PLACE	<i>Vibrio</i> Risk mitigation Plan (SafeFish)/ Australian Shellfish Quality Assurance advisory committee (ASQAAC) on <i>Vibrio</i> guidance/ Research collaboration for De-risking <i>Vibrio</i> / Building capability-bivalves food safety (UTAS)/ Research surveys (NSW, Tas and NT)/ Outbreak retrospective SA	State shellfish monitoring programs in place for bivalves/ Universities have PhD projects in some states/SafeFish scans Codex/SPS notifications for emerging regulations related to toxins/ Laboratories report some emerging toxins	SafeFish's non technical summary on <i>Vibrio</i> test methodologies aimed at the shellfish industry and regulators to improve knowledge on fit for purpose methods/ Estimation of commercial <i>Vibrio</i> testing required in Australia, presence detection and quantitative.	Refer to <i>Vibrio</i> and HAB columns for details ALL RISKS: Building capability in food safety in bivalve shellfish program supported by SafeFish and UTAS Risk Register development at a sector level (SafeFish)	ASQAAC developing <i>Vibrio</i> guidance/ Guidance in NSW and Tasmania for wet storage and depuration/SafeFish biotoxin harmonisation proposal/ Work being developed on <i>Vibrio</i> risk management is collecting data that will support future regulations
OPPORTUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase industry preparedness and awareness of risks and incidents Improvement of reporting structures, data capture and sharing Actions in Cold chain management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Novel techniques and better knowledge of ecology to supplement biotoxin data and improve risk management Research into emerging toxins in Australia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a need for a National <i>Vibrio</i> reference laboratory? Rapid test kits provide an opportunity for point of care testing but require good validation prior to use. 	National sharing of data with proper permissions attached (FRDC)/ SafeFish developing: Training resource tool for <i>Listeria</i> in ready to eat seafood/ Recall workshop/ Socialising the risk register	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FSANZ may consider the update of these standards, and through ASQAAC the current guidelines for Shellfish and <i>Vibrio</i> are being reviewed

Next steps: Focus areas to improve preparedness and resilience to top risks

The sentiment among the experts was clear regarding the need for better preparedness, new tools to detect and manage existing risks, as well as data and knowledge sharing efforts between various stakeholders. The key element of focus for the future where described as: investing in research to fill the gaps of the unknowns, understand the impact of sewage spills to guide infrastructure changes, introduction of real time monitoring systems to inform decisions, and a holistic regulatory approach with a national view, as this would enable better collaboration and a more efficient and proactive industry.



Knowledge sharing and communication



Research



Real time monitoring tools



National, consistent guidance



Infrastructure for flooding

The Bivalve industry should review the steps they will take to translate these results into actions. The knowledge provided here can inform potential pathways and strategies. SafeFish can assist in developing these plans, but they need to be led by industry. If you want more information on the Bivalves sector risk identification, a full report is available on the SafeFish website: <https://www.safefish.com.au/>



Cristina Lesseur Advisory