

MILESTONE PROGRESS REPORT



FRDC PROJECT NUMBER:

2021-036: Management & delivery of the Oysters Australia RD&E Plan 2020-2025

DATE DUE: 31/05/2022

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Andy Myers

OVERALL PROJECT PROGRESS: On schedule

Milestone Status

Has this milestone been achieved (Yes/No)	Yes
Will the project be completed according to the current milestone schedule (Yes/No)	Yes

PROJECT PROGRESS AGAINST PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Objective 1) By June, commission and manage a portfolio of RD&E projects which address the strategic outcomes outlined in the Oysters Australia Strategic Plan

Since the launch of the Oysters Australia Strategic Plan 2020-2025, ten projects have been approved for funding through the oysters IPA and have progressed to contract with the FRDC. The value of these investments is ~\$2.42m.

Objective 2) Maintain a functional, cohesive Oysters Australia RD&E Group to build knowledge & guide strategic investment

OA maintains an RD&E Committee which has met 7 times since launch of the Strategic Plan. The RD&E Committee operate under a Terms of Reference. We have also established a technical forum to help share knowledge and engage a wider audience in RD&E discussions.

Objective 3) By June 2026, ensure that all new R&D funded through the Oysters IPA is extended to industry, encompassing all development and maintenance of a hub of project resources and communication material on the Oysters Australia website

OA provides regular updates to state industry associations and research committees. It also maintains a website which includes details of projects and outputs. OA staff work with project proponents during the planning and delivery phase to ensure that outcomes are extended to end users in an appropriate manner.

Objective 4) Over the life of the project, provide coordination and leadership on matters of national importance to the oyster industry

Oysters Australia has provided coordination and leadership on numerous matters of national importance. This includes matters relating to the Aquatic Deed, Aquaplan (National Strategic Plan for Aquatic Animal Health) and a National Surveillance Strategy.

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1. ORIGINAL MILESTONE DATE AND DETAIL:

31-05-2022 Management and delivery of Oysters Australia’s Strategic plan 2022-2023

2. PROGRESS AGAINST MILESTONE DETAIL (Achieved):

Objective 1) By June, commission and manage a portfolio of RD&E projects which address the strategic outcomes outlined in the Oysters Australia Strategic Plan

Since the launch of the Oysters Australia Strategic Plan 2020-2025, ten projects have been approved for funding through the oysters IPA and have progressed to contract with the FRDC. The value of these investments is ~\$2.42m.

These projects broadly deliver on the five strategic areas identified for investment in the Oysters Australia RD&E Plan.

Table1. Strategic themes the Oysters Australia RD&E Plan & the desired outcome

Program theme	Desired Outcome
1. Production & Innovation	Increase the sustainable, efficient production of oysters and their management on farm
2. Risk Management	Minimise the impact of disease, waterway contamination, climate change and other risks
3. People & Knowledge	Knowledge, skills & networks are developed, increasing the industry’s human & data resources
4. Port Harvest & Market Development	Build consumer demand for oysters and increase profitability through the supply chain
5. Industry Profile & Regulation	The oyster industry is recognised as a legitimate and responsible user of public resources, and operates under constructive regulation

Given the run of disasters faced by the industry in recent years, investment has been weighted towards risk mitigation and people / knowledge, with less focus on market development.

Table 2. Project alignment with OA Strategic Themes

Project	Alignment with OA Strategic Themes				
	Prg. 1.	Prg. 2.	Prg. 3.	Prg. 4.	Prg. 5.
2021-122: Assessment of the utility of genomics for Sydney rocks oyster breeding (~\$620k)	X	X	X		
2021-083: Developing the tools and articulating the value proposition for genomic selection in Pacific Oyster selective breeding (~\$371k)	X	X	X		
2021-075: Understanding water quality risk for the sustainable and efficient production of Pacific and Sydney rock oysters (~\$86k)		X	X		

2021-097: Environmental risk factors that may contribute to vibrio outbreaks – A South Australian case study (~\$59k)		X	X	X	
2021-053: Building capability in food safety in Australian shellfish (~\$316k)		X	X	X	
2021-036: Management and delivery of the Oysters Australia RD&E Plan 2020-2025 (~\$332k)	X	X	X	X	X
2021-032: Provision of strategic advice to Oysters Australia – identifying opportunities and associated value for the Australian oyster industry in carbon neutral accreditation and Environmental Accounts (~\$17k)	X		X	X	X
2021-018: SafeFish 2021 – 2025 (~\$111k)		X	X		
2020-096: National Pacific Oyster breeding Program: Completing POMS resistance in spat and transition to selection for traditional commercial traits (~\$178k)	X	X			
2020-064: South Australian Pacific oyster mortality trials (~\$332k)	X	X	X		

Objective 2) Maintain a functional, cohesive Oysters Australia RD&E Group to build knowledge & guide strategic investment

Since the launch of the OA Strategic Plan in late 2020, Oysters Australia has convened seven RD&E meetings. These meetings are held every quarter, usually by Zoom, however we were able to hold an in-person meeting of the Committee in May 2022 in Batemans Bay (NSW). Dates of meetings were 18th Nov. 2020; 11th March 2021; 15th June 2021; 9th Sept. 2021; 11th Nov. 2021; 4th March 2022; 17th May 2022.

The RD&E Committee operate under a Terms of Reference (available on request).

Recognising the exceptional bank of knowledge that resides in the Australian oyster R&D community, OA has also established a technical forum for those with an interest in oyster RD&E to come together. This technical forum will be convened online every three months, and will run for about 2 hrs. The forums may be focused on a topical theme, a geographic region, or the work of a particular university or institute. It may also be used as an information gathering exercise, to gauge the thoughts of the RD&E community. Details of upcoming forums are circulated to those on the newly established Oysters Australia mailing list. More information about the technical forum can be found here: <https://www.oystersaustralia.org/technicalforum>

The first technical forum was held in Batemans Bay on the 17th May 2022, with ~25 people in attendance.

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Objective 3) By June 2026, ensure that all new R&D funded through the Oysters IPA is extended to industry, encompassing all development and maintenance of a hub of project resources and communication material on the Oysters Australia website

Oysters Australia maintain a hub of project information and resources on the Oysters Australia website. This includes the latest information about:

- Vibrio <https://www.oystersaustralia.org/vibrio>
- Covid-19 impacts: <https://www.oystersaustralia.org/covid19>
- Production figures: <https://www.oystersaustralia.org/productionhistory>
- Export & Import: <https://www.oystersaustralia.org/exportimport>

Project details are also available from the website. It is recognised however that project outputs are not easily accessible and this will be focus of work in early 2022/23.

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Oysters Australia are keen to see project outputs extended to industry to a format that is easily accessible. Recent examples include a carbon webinar & succinct handouts related to project 2021-032.

Objective 4) Over the life of the project, provide coordination and leadership on matters of national importance to the oyster industry

Over the course of the project, Oysters Australia has provided national coordination and leadership on a number of important matters including:

- ABARES commodity forecasts
- Anti-microbial usage (CSIRO project)
- Plastics audits
- Review of NAC
- Centre of Excellence for Aquaculture Futures
- Biosecurity preparedness & response (DAWE project)
- Circular Economy (FRDC funded project)
- Market Transparency workshops
- Aquaplan
- SafeFish
- Fish Names Committee (change to Pacific oysters)
- Provenance (ANSTO workshops)
- National Surveillance Strategy
- SIA’s Aquaculture Advisory Committee

PUBLICATIONS/PRODUCTS

- RD&E Committee – Terms of Reference
- Launch of RD&E Technical Forum – Mailout (<https://mailchi.mp/9f1ec843c955/oysters-australia-launch-rde-technical-forum?e=b37488049d>)
- Webinar invite – Opportunities in carbon neutral certification and environmental accounts for oyster farmers in Australia
- Progress reports are also available from projects funded through the IPA.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

1. Acknowledgement – Oysters Australia haven’t made public announcements regarding this project. Projects are required to acknowledge the FRDC under their individual project agreements with the FRDC.
2. Minimum requirements for Research Provider Publications - Oysters Australia haven’t made public announcements regarding this project. Projects are required to acknowledge the FRDC under their individual project agreements with the FRDC.
3. Notify FRDC immediately if you consider that there is potential for the project to result in the production of intellectual property – Individual projects sign agreements with the FRDC and are required to report this directly.

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5. Media - Oysters Australia haven't made public announcements regarding this project
6. PI provide updates of R&D portfolio development and progress at OA Executive & RD&E Committee meetings – The PI (also the Executive Officer of Oysters Australia) provides updates at every Directors meeting, and also at every RD&E Committee meeting
7. Acknowledge the FRDC will review the effectiveness of the project based upon the level of commitment of IPA funds to undertake R&D priorities – Funds are almost fully expended. As at 27th May 2022, the Oysters IPA is projected to have a balance of \$189k at the end of the 2023/24 financial year.
8. OA Review their strategic plan and provide annual advice to FRDC on research priorities for the coming year – Oysters Australia has provided advise to FRDC on industry RD&E priorities for both the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ISSUES ARISING:

N/A

CONTACT WITH BENEFICIARIES:

N/A

PROGRESS AGAINST COMMUNICATION & EXTENSION PLAN:

Communication about oyster R&D projects and outputs has been very good over the last few years. The RD&E Committee meet every quarter and includes representatives from OA member organisations in SA, Tasmania & New South Wales. The Committee has also extended an invitation to WA and QLD to participate in discussions, and this invite has been accepted on a number of occasions.

OA has also initiated a Technical Forum to encourage the sharing of R&D outputs and build knowledge.

OA also takes an active role in planning projects and reviewing applications to ensure that extension and communication is appropriate to the end users. The use of webinars and video summaries are encouraged and have been taken up by several project PI's.

VARIATIONS TO PROJECT:

N/A

Original due date	Original Detail	Original Cost	Status	Requested due date	Requested Detail	Requested new Cost