

MILESTONE PROGRESS REPORT



FRDC PROJECT NUMBER:

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

DATE DUE: 26/05/2023

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 2026, 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, eleven projects have been approved for funding through the oysters IPA and have progressed to contract with the FRDC. The value of these investments is ~\$2.62m.

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 twelve times since launch of the Strategic Plan (five times in the 2022-23 FY). In the last year, the RD&E Committee has taken numerous opportunities to invite thematic experts and project leads into meetings, to help build the knowledge of Committee members.

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 continued to provide coordination & leadership on numerous matters of national importance. This includes matters relating to the Aquaplan (National Disease Prioritisation List), Biosecurity Protection Levy, National Surveillance Strategy, aquaculture literacy and circular economy projects.

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1. ORIGINAL MILESTONE DATE AND DETAIL:

26-05-2023 Management and delivery of Oysters Australia's Strategic plan 2023-2024

2. PROGRESS AGAINST MILESTONE DETAIL (Achieved):

Objective 1) By June 2026, 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, eleven projects have been approved for funding through the oysters IPA and have progressed to contract with the FRDC. The value of these investments is ~\$2.62m.

There are an additional four projects currently being developed and negotiated with OA and the FRDC, with a likely investment of a further \$670k.

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. Post 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	
2022-023: Reduction of oyster waste: Establishing best practices for controlling wild spat under commercial production	X		X			
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			
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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 twelve RD&E meetings, five of which have occurred in the 2022-23 FY. Dates of meetings this year: 8th Aug. 2022; 30th Aug. 2022, 11th Nov. 2022, 23rd Feb. 2023, 19th May 2023.

The RD&E Committee operate under a Terms of Reference, and observers are very welcome.

In the last year, the Committee has taken numerous opportunities to invite thematic experts and project leads into meetings, to help build the knowledge of members. Guest presenters have included:

- Tomer Abramov: Discussing the impact of TCAP hormone on stress levels in oysters.
- Peter Kube: Discussing the potential benefits of genomic selection in breeding programs.
- Cheryl Jenkins: Updating on NSW DPI response to Qx, and current RD&E on this topic.
- Lewa Pertl: Incorporating SA survival into the breeding program, and field trial results.

The FRDC has been present at all RD&E Committee meetings, and OA has been encouraging a greater involvement from WA and QLD, who currently don't contribute to the Oysters IPA.

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The RD&E Committee also held a face-to-face meeting in February 2023 in Port Lincoln (SA), prior to the South Australia Oyster Growers Association Annual Seminar. Committee members were encouraged to participate in the seminar, and also had an opportunity to get out on farm and learn more about the South Australia industry, their issues and opportunities.



In November 2022, Oysters Australia also convened a Qx Seminar & Prioritisation Workshop. This provided an opportunity to:

- Bring researchers & industry together to exchange knowledge and insights.

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- Help prioritise knowledge gaps & identify projects that deliver the greatest benefit to growers.

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>
- Production figures: <https://www.oystersaustralia.org/productionhistory>
- Export & Import: <https://www.oystersaustralia.org/exportimport>

The website is currently being updated and streamlined, so that all projects involving OA are consolidated into a single list regardless of funding source (eg. Oyster IPA, CRC-P). Individual project pages are being hyperlinked from this list.

It's been recognised that project outputs are not easily accessible through the Oysters Australia website, or from the FRDC website. Meetings are scheduled to be held with the FRDC to improve the identification of these useable assets, and to ensure that these are extended in an appropriate way to the end user.

Oysters Australia take opportunities to update the industry on the progress of RD&E investments. Examples of these include:

- Written updates via the NSW Oysters Newsletter
- Written & verbal updates to the NSW Shellfish Committee
- Written updates via the SAOGA newsletter
- Presentation at the South Australian Oyster Growers Association Seminar



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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: (new matters during the 22-23 FY highlighted in red).

- ABARES commodity forecasts and accurate IPA contributions
- 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
- Participation in FRDC Stakeholder Workshop (Nov. 2022)
- Participation at Seafood Directions (Sept. 2022)
- AgVet Chemical Usage – Minor Use Permits.
- National Seafood Safety Project (SIA)
- Chemical & pesticide contamination
- Aquaculture Literacy Project (SIA)
- National disease prioritisation list (AquaPlan – DAFF)
- Biosecurity Protection Levy
- Participation in Tropical Rock Oyster Workshop

PUBLICATIONS/PRODUCTS

- Progress & final reports available from projects funded through the IPA.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

1. Acknowledgement – Projects are required to acknowledge the FRDC under their individual project agreements with the FRDC. Oysters Australia made one acknowledgement of the FRDC, when presenting at the SAOGA seminar in Feb. 2023.

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Opening & closing slides from OA presentation at SAOGA seminar

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.
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 that the FRDC will review the effectiveness of the project based upon the level of commitment of IPA funds to undertake R&D priorities – Due to the slippage of a couple of projects, our current RD&E project portfolio will result in IPA surplus of \$592,000 at the end of the 23/24 FY. We do however have 4-5 project proposals in development which if they progress as expected, will see this surplus reduce to \$232,000. Due to the multi-year nature of project investments, the IPA balance at the end of the 24-25 FY, will be \$73,000.
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 the 2021/22 FY, 2022/23 FY as well as the 2023/24 FY.

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.

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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

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