Southern Rocklobster LIMITED

Strategic Research, Development & Extension PLAN 2029

Foreword

Southern rock lobsters *(Jasus edwardsii)* are sustainably harvested from the cool, clean waters of the Southern Ocean. They are considered to be amongst the finest seafood in the world and hold a premium market position, especially in China where they are extremely highly valued as a luxury product and ingrained in Cantonese culture for their symbolism.

Underpinning this revered status is a world class fishery managed by robust scientific data and research that industry participants design, contribute to and carry out.

Southern Rocklobster Limited has maintained a long standing partnership with the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) to conduct research, development and extension activities for the sector. Commercial Southern rock lobster fishing licence holders contribute 0.25% of their gross value of production to a research fund. These contributions are matched by the FRDC and the fund is administered by Southern Rocklobster Limited's Board of Directors and Research, Development and Extension Committee which is comprised of industry participants, fishery scientists and fishery managers from each of the lobster harvesting jurisdictions - South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania.

This document - the SRL Strategy 2029 - underpins the recently renewed Industry Partnership Agreement with the FRDC and provides the context, themes, priorities and actions for research, development and extension activities over the next four years.

This Plan will ensure that the industry is able to capitalise on the growing market for safe, sustainably sourced and premium seafood products, locally and overseas, thereby maintaining its position as a significant contributor to the local economies of South Australia, Tasmania and Victoria.

Hon Iain Evans
Chairman, Southern Rocklobster Limited

Research Framework

Southern rock lobster fisheries contribute over $200 million in landed seafood value to the Australian economy each year.

Professional fishing businesses across South Australia, Tasmania and Victoria operate licenses, vessels, pots and harvest infrastructure with an estimated capital value of $2.5 billion. The sector lands approximately 2,900 tonnes of premium lobster annually and is subject to strictly observed harvest strategies which are underpinned by science and have the sustainability of the stock at their core.

Through the payment of their licence fees to their fisheries regulatory authorities, these businesses contribute to a common research, development and extension fund. The fund enables all stakeholders to achieve far more together than would independently. With an Industry Partnership Agreement (IPA) with the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC), the industry is able to leverage their contributions and to access a national network of scientists, professionals and other service providers to deliver on the strategic goals outlined in this Plan.

This Plan aims to position the sector to take best advantage of its options and choices over the next four years. It draws strategic themes, priorities and actions together in a document that Southern Rocklobster Limited will implement on behalf of its Members.

The Plan's Purpose

The purpose of the Plan is to set out a structured approach to research, development and extension investments that will lead to increased economic contribution to industry and value for the Australian Southern rock lobster fisheries.

Advanced planning for these investments allows a greater opportunity for leveraging other funds and collaboration with co-investors and project partners.

The Plan will support the promotion, through targeted research development and extension of Australian Southern rock lobster products to consumers, customers, trade partners and communities.

The Plan is designed to engage and lead stakeholders through the already valued elements of the industry's research portfolio - integration with completed projects and current knowledge, innovation in fishing practices and sustainability of the stock.

Research Development & Extension Plan

The Research Development & Extension Plan has five pillars:

Productivity of a robust stock

Security of access

Biosecurity & resilience

Industry profitability

People & community

Detailed Targeted Investments

Southern Rock Lobster Limited's member organisations have identified the following projects for investment and focus areas for research. The SRL Strategy 2029 will also adapt to opportunities and issues that arise throughout its duration.

Research, Development & Extension concepts	
➤ Improvements to data collection and analysis for future harvest strategies	➤ Building robust biosecurity protocols and response plans for known and emerging diseases and threats
➤ Restorative aquaculture opportunities including puerulus harvesting & ranching and artificial reefs	➤ Facilitation of harmonising management across SRL fishery jurisdictions with a stock first approach
➤ Increasing the accuracy and precision of recreational lobster catch data	➤ Analysis of opportunities to increase industry profitability
➤ Using onboard traceability systems to measure and potentially identify lobster	➤ Leadership programs and opportunities for succession of personnel in the SRL industry
➤ Assessing the effectiveness of alternative and synthetic baits	➤ Opportunities from emerging technologies including epigenetics and close kin mark recapture
➤ Continuous improvement in pot design	➤ Modernising our understanding of the environmental impact of pot fishing
➤ Extension programs of completed projects	➤ Understanding the anthropogenic impacts of off-shore windfarms on *Jasus edwardsii*
➤ Evaluating the impacts of a warmer ocean on *Jasus Edwardsii* including foresighting and scenario planning	➤ Facilitating a best practice and fit-for-purpose National Residue Survey
➤ Leveraging the use of Vessel Monitoring Systems data	➤ Identifying changes in population dynamics and distributional impacts of rebuilding stocks
➤ Increasing the value and survivability of deep water lobsters	➤ Understanding underutilised fishing areas and their impact on stock assessments

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