

**ACA/FRDC/CRC/PIC/MPI  
abalone/Paua research Workshop**

Summary Outcomes

# Workshop Objectives

- Understand the previous contribution of research to meeting the objectives of industry and management research plans (last 10-15y).
- Examine current research priorities, determine if they remain relevant and identify gaps.
- Identify and prioritise research questions for the next 3-5 years.

# Setting the scene

- Considerable investment in abalone research by the FRDC and CRC (\$17 in the last 15 years) + NZ
- Observation made that research has got ahead of management for some areas of 'wet' research and review/consolidation is very timely.
- Market R and D via Seafood CRC generally very successful with more to do.
- Fundamental requirement for future projects should be a clear pathway to adoption including identification of 'champions'/supporters.
- A range of presentations from key abalone researchers from NZ and Australia were provided.

# Session 2 – Workshop discussion

- The workshop assessed how well R and D programmes had supported the strategic objectives of the ACA and PIC.
- **Done well:** marketing/branding/product development; spatial management; industry engagement; ACA leadership; response to biotoxins.
- **Not so well:** harvest strategies (with logger data); understanding recruitment/growth/age; economic analysis of management alternatives; illegal fishing(?)

# Session 3 – Future Directions

- FRDC research priorities and 2014 EOIs
- Consideration of state and NZ research priorities – see next slide

# Common interests in research

- Validate spatial performance indices; use GPS logger data (**ACA, NZ, Tas, SA, NSW, WA, Vic**)
- Biologically-appropriate minimum legal lengths (**NSW, TAS, NZ, SA**)
- Index of sub-legal (Juvenile) abundance (**NSW, TAS, WA, SA, ??**)
- Implement/test/review harvest strategy including performance indicators (spatial) and reference points for TACC setting (**SA, WA, TAS, Vic, NSW**)

Research Priorities going  
forward

# 1. Product development and markets

- Continue, and where appropriate, expand current marketing/quality/food safety initiatives including pursuit of China market access via a FTA – marketing levy to be pursued (NB remember greenlip)
- New product formats/packaging, markets/incorporating strong (AWA) branding
- Improve matching of the biological characteristics (size/condition) to optimise value through harvest strategies and targeted marketing



## 2. Harvest optimisation

- Robust and defensible harvest strategies that meet legislative, community and industry expectations.
- Examination of the potential role of divers providing data to inform stock assessment (e.g. diver information, video surveys using GoPro; structured fishing **etc**)
- Better understanding of LML/TAC trade-offs
- Strategies to access stunted/slow growing stocks

# 3. Sustainability and the environment

- Formalise logger data in the assessment and management process.
- Improved process for abalone aging
- More accurate estimation of the recreational catch.

# 4. Running the business

- Bioeconomic modelling to provide economic projections of various management options (e.g. decisions on LML/TAC limits).
- Demonstration of the value to industry of research using cost-benefit analysis.
- Establishment of a 'clearing house' for projects to create awareness of projects completed, underway and being developed, to avoid duplication and obtain better value for money.

# 5. Human capacity and communication

- Develop social license, establishing the abalone wild harvest sector as a well-managed, sustainable industry that creates regional jobs, export trade etc.
- Incorporation of NZ into industry leadership programmes
- Training for quota owners and divers, particularly in the use and application of data loggers and spatial management.
- Develop a media-ready industry, able to address emerging public reputation issues

## 6. Access

- Reduction of illegal fishing, particularly through improved product tracking
- Establishment of resource sharing principles, including between commercial, recreational, indigenous, conservation (marine parks)

# Conclusion

Valuable exercise – many commonalities across states and with NZ and multiple opportunities for exchange and mutual benefit.

Three major areas of research priority:

- I. Incorporate logger data in harvest strategies and extend to management decision making
- II. Formalising industry information to enhance assessment processes
- III. Abalone aging

Finally, there is a need to talk and share more; in the past there have been multiple projects to address single research questions – this is not good value for money for FRDC or industry