

26th March, 2002

Our File Ref: B01388TAGTimKahn

Contact: Tim Wrigley

Acting Assistant Secretary
Environmental Assessments & Approvals Branch
Environment Australia
GPO Box 787
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Attn: Mr Kahn

**RE: GUTHALUNGRA PRAWN FARM DEVELOPMENT
TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP**

You are invited to nominate a staff member to participate in a Technical Advisory Group for the Guthalungra Prawn Farm Development. The proposal is currently at the early stages of an extensive application process and will be assessed as a significant State project under section 29 of the State Development & Public Works Organisation Act; as such, an Environmental Impact Study will be required.

The proponent, Pacific Reef Fisheries Pty Ltd currently operates a 68 hectare farm at Alva Beach near Ayr. The proposed farm site is located at Guthalungra around 20 minutes northwest of Bowen adjacent to the Elliot River and Abbot Bay on Cape Upstart. It is anticipated that the Guthalungra farm will have around 250 hectares of production ponds once fully operational.

Pacific Reef is committed to introducing appropriate technologies, design, operating and management systems to ensure that the objectives of the project are met; in particular, the environmental impact of the farm will be acceptable. In order to achieve the environmental, economic and social objectives of the operation, it has been identified that the project will benefit substantially from the input of individuals and organisations that are recognised as having leading edge technical expertise.

For this reason, the following organisations will be invited to participate in the Guthalungra Prawn Farm Development, Technical Advisory Group:

- Queensland Department of Primary Industries;
- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority;
- Australian Institute of Marine Science;
- CSIRO Marine Research,
- Queensland Environment Protection Agency;
- Environment Australia;
- James Cook University.
- Marine Coastal and Community Network

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The TAG will be chaired by Carl Young of Seafood Farming Services with further input from engineers and environmental managers from Lambert and Rehbein (Dr Tim Wrigley) and Sinclair Knight Merz (Ralph Burch) as well as experienced prawn farm managers from Pacific Reef.

The purpose of the Technical Advisory Group is to provide expertise in the following areas:

- Water Treatment Systems (aquaculture and other industries);
- Marine ecosystems and the environmental impacts from prawn farms;
- Industry operational best practice;
- Recirculation technologies;
- Prawn farm system designs.

It is envisaged that the TAG will meet twice. The first meeting is scheduled for the end of May 2002 by which time the Terms of Reference for the Environmental Impact Study will have been finalised. At the first meeting the TAG will provide input and comment on initial proposals including:

- Design and operation of the production system;
- Water treatment and recirculation options, and
- Mitigation of the environmental impacts of the operation and in particular discharge waters.

Also, at this meeting, it is envisaged that the TAG will assist Pacific Reef to identify research that may be required to improve current industry best practice and introduce innovation in the treatment and re-use of water on the new farm.

The second meeting of the TAG will take place in July/August prior to the finalisation of the EIS. At this stage design proposals and environmental assessments will be nearing completion. At this meeting, the TAG will be called upon to provide input and comment and further refinement of the Guthalungra proposal in light of the data collected through the EIS.

On behalf of the Project Management Team, I really appreciate your input of your organisation to the TAG; it is a new concept for aquaculture development in the state but one that has been used often in other major projects. I am sure that among other things the process will highlight areas in which information is lacking, this may provide an opportunity for ongoing involvement from the research organisations involved in the TAG. It is important to note that we are seeking TAG members that can contribute technical expertise to the Group, not necessarily staff members that may be involved in the assessment of the project.

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It is anticipated that the TAG will meet in Townsville. Where necessary, travel expenses will be provided by Pacific Reef Fisheries.

I look forward to hearing from you. Please respond by 5th April, 2002.

Yours faithfully,

For and on behalf of

LAMBERT AND REHBEIN PTY LTD (R.P.E.U.Q. 2035)

DR T. J. WRIGLEY Ph D, MSc, BSc (Hons)

ASSOCIATE

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES