



The Tasmanian Research Advisory Committee RD&E Plan provides a framework to identify the key strategic research needs of the fisheries and aquaculture sector under its jurisdiction from 2018 – 2023

Tasmanian Research Advisory Committee RD&E Plan

Research, Development and
Extension Plan 2018 – 2023

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1. CONTEXT

1.1 PURPOSE

The [Tasmanian Research Advisory Committee](#) Research, Development and Extension Plan provides a framework to identify the key strategic research needs of the fisheries sector under its jurisdiction for the five year period from 2018 to 2023.

The Research, Development and Extension (RD&E) Plan aims to ensure that the research program meets both jurisdictional and, where appropriate, national strategic RD&E goals and addresses the major challenges facing the Tasmanian seafood industry, including the commercial, aquaculture, recreational and Indigenous sectors.

Where possible, this plan will link with other related strategies to enable efficiency and leverage opportunities; e.g. with other Fisheries Research and Development Corporation ([FRDC](#)) Advisory Groups such as jurisdictional Research Advisory Committees ([RACs](#)), Industry Partnership Agreements ([IPAs](#)), FRDC Subprograms, as well as other funding agencies and opportunities.

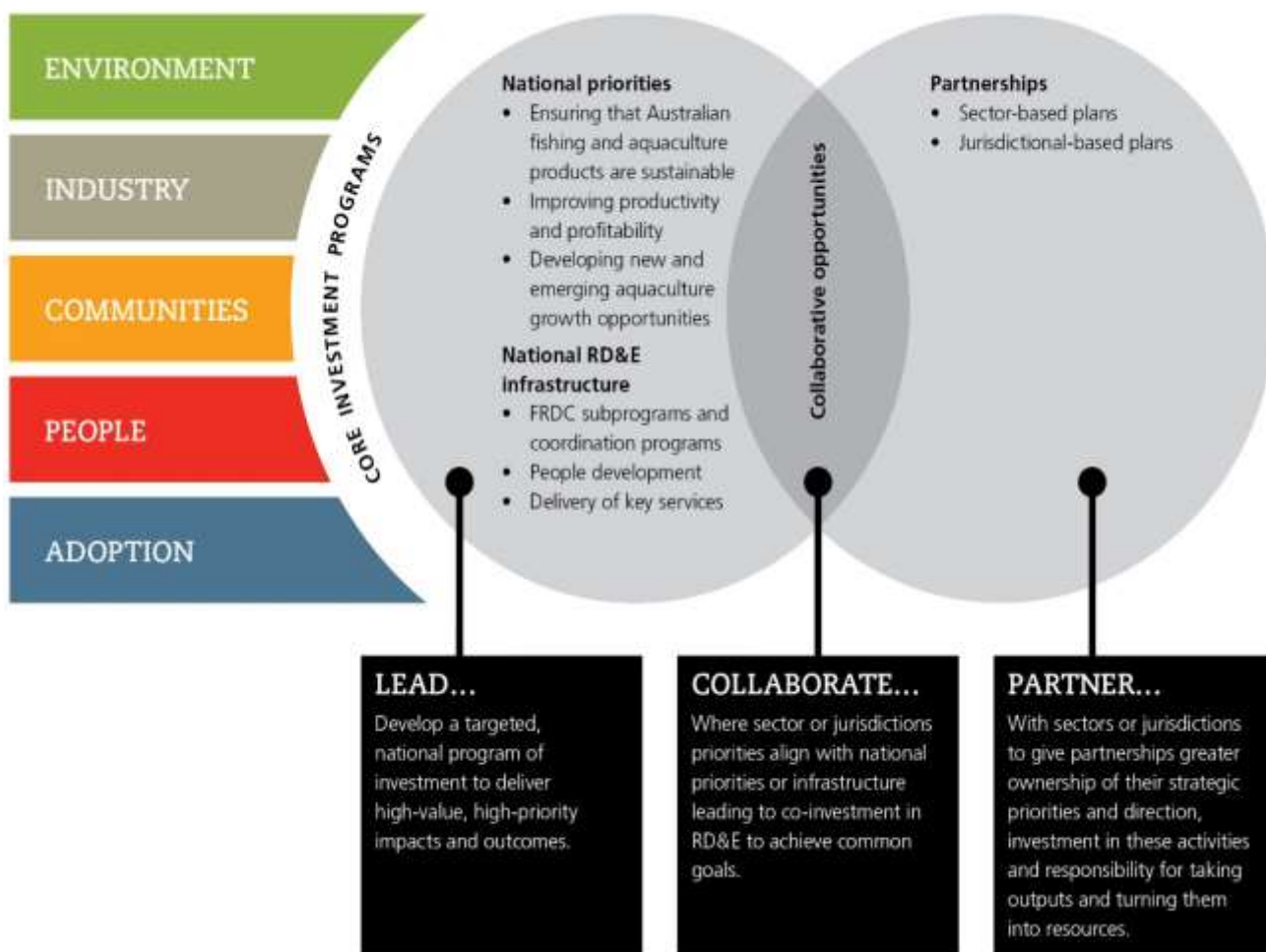
1.2 CO-MANAGEMENT INVESTMENT MODEL

Under the [FRDC's RD&E Plan 2015 – 2020](#), the FRDC provides greater ownership and authority to industry sectors in developing RD&E priorities, through RACs and IPAs. A key component of this investment model is the development of a multi-year RD&E Plan for each IPA and RAC aligned with the FRDCs five year RD&E Plan. This will assist in developing a tailored RD&E program that:

- meets both jurisdictional and national strategic RD&E priorities
- is balanced across FRDC programs (Environment, Industry, Communities, People and Extension)
- focusses on short, medium and longer term RD&E outcomes
- is supported by a consistent RD&E planning framework across all RACs

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The framework for RD&E investment by the FRDC for 2015–20.



1.3 TASMANIAN RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Tasmanian Research Advisory Committee (TASRAC) was formed in 2017. It is one of a number of similar bodies established throughout Australia to assist state ministers responsible for fisheries, the FRDC, other fisheries research, development and extension funding agencies, and research providers. The Committee is composed of representatives from the commercial and recreational capture fisheries, the aquaculture industry, community stakeholders, major research providers and the State Government, and is directed by an independent Chair.

The [role of the TASRAC](#) is:

- to develop a strategic RD&E Plan for Tasmania, which incorporates industry sector and fisheries managers, priorities and is reviewed annually
- to invite RD&E applications to address those priorities
- to identify appropriate funding sources
- to provide advice to the FRDC on the priority and appropriateness of research proposals submitted for funding
- to review projects in progress and completed projects and provide advice on any necessary additional activities

TASRAC also scrutinises research funding applications that come through the FRDC that ascribe a significant flow of benefit to Tasmania and advises the FRDC whether the flow of benefit claimed is appropriate.

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TASRAC Consultation Process

TASRAC research priorities are developed with input from fishing sector-based Tasmanian Research Advisory Groups (RAGs). The six RAGs include:

- Crustacean Commercial Fisheries
- Abalone Commercial Fishery
- Recreational Fisheries
- Finfish Aquaculture
- Shellfish Aquaculture
- Finfish, Scallop and Minor Species Fisheries

Each RAG has strong industry, State Government, and research provider representation. The development of individual sector RAGs enable broad stakeholder representation to identify prioritise issues and establish timeframes that RD&E outcomes are required – this ‘end-user consultation’ is critical to the success of TASRAC.

The RAGs are managed through the Sustainable Marine Research Collaboration Agreement (SMRCA), which is a collaborative agreement between the University of Tasmania and the Crown; namely, the Department of Primary Industry, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE). RAGs also provide annual updates to changing needs/priorities, in the light of research outcomes, where new issues arise, and when feedback is received from end users. TASRAC provides feedback and informs the RAGs of relevant outcomes and decisions through the Chair to the leader of each RAG. This includes input from the Fisheries Advisory Committees (FACs) to the Minister.

Research priorities of relevance to Tasmania may also be identified through national [FRDC Subprograms and Advisory Groups](#). These are:

- Indigenous Reference Group
- Aquatic Animal Health and Biosecurity
- Recfishing Research
- Human Dimensions Research
- People Development
- New and Emerging Aquaculture

TASRAC also works collaboratively with industry groups, such as the Tasmanian Seafood Industry Council (TSIC), Tasmanian Association for Recreational Fishing Inc.(TARFish), Indigenous Reference Group (IRG), conservation groups (NGOs), and individual sectors to identify priorities drawn from their membership and stakeholders. In addition, TASRAC research priorities are identified through a situational scan of the jurisdiction undertaken by the Committee at each meeting to identify any tactical areas of RD&E need that require short-term or immediate action.

1.4 FUNDING

TASRAC receives an annual budget from the FRDC to invest in research and development activities directed at Tasmania. As stipulated in the *Primary Industries Research and Development Act 1989* (PIRD Act), the FRDC's primary revenue source is based on:

- fishers and aquaculturists providing contributions via government
- the Australian Government matches this amount up to a maximum of 0.25 per cent of average gross value of Australian fisheries production (AGVP)
- the Australian Government providing unmatched funds equivalent to 0.50 per cent of AGVP for the current year plus the two preceding years. The Australian Government’s ‘public good’ contribution underpins the stewardship role it exercises in relation to fisheries resources on behalf of the Australian community

2. OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

2.1 OVERVIEW

Tasmanian fisheries are managed to ensure that stocks are harvested at sustainable levels for the benefit of current and future generations. Tasmanian fish resources are very diverse and commercial fisheries are highly regarded for supplying fresh, quality seafood and make a significant economic and social contribution to Tasmania. The Tasmanian seafood industry is the most valuable seafood industry in Australia with a combined beach/farm gate value of \$913 million in 2015/16 (ABARES 2017). The gross volume of production (GVP) for the period was 63,138 tonnes. Exact employment figures for the seafood industry are difficult to obtain; however, it is estimated that at least 3,000 people are directly employed in the Tasmanian seafood industry.

Marine farming accounts for approximately 78% of the value of Tasmanian seafood. This is largely the result of the highly successful salmonid farming industry (\$704 million). Other important Tasmanian farmed seafood includes edible oysters (\$21 million), farmed shellfish such as abalone and mussels (\$5 million).

Wild capture fisheries account for the remaining 22% of GVP. The rock lobster fishery is the largest contributor (\$93 million) followed by the abalone fishery (\$80 million).

South-east Asia, principally China, is the key market for product from Tasmania’s key wild capture fisheries (rock lobster and abalone). Markets for products from the other wild capture fisheries (e.g. finfish, scallops, periwinkles) are sold on the domestic market. The domestic market consumes the majority of farmed Atlantic salmon, Pacific oysters and mussel production.

TASRAC acknowledges that there are different ways of valuing fisheries beyond the GVP, for example market capitalisation (as per the table below).

	Market Value \$M	%
Finfish Aquaculture	\$950	38.4%
Abalone	\$800	32.3%
Crustacean	\$630	25.4%
Scalefish, Scallops & Minor Species	\$28	1.1%
Shellfish Aquaculture	\$69	2.8%
TASMANIAN TOTAL	\$2,477	100%

1) Salmon Industry = \$950 million (based on ASX for Huon and Tassal + \$100 million estimate for Petuna based on market share)

2) Abalone = \$800 million (3500 private units @ \$217.5K median value + extra 5% for public owned shares represented by royalty payment)

3) Rock Lobster = \$630 million (10507 units @ \$60K current value)

4) Scalefish, scallops and minor species = \$28 million (estimated based on 5 x GVP. Market cap of abalone and rock lobster are 7.5x and 9.4x GVP, respectively, but much higher unit price and profitability)

5) Shellfish aquaculture = \$69 million (estimated on 2.62 x GVP as per salmon)

Note: market valuation estimates based on data from the 2016/17 financial year

Other community values are harder to quantify – such as social, cultural and well-being – therefore, there is limited data on the broader contributions of the fishing and aquaculture industries to Tasmania. For example, Indigenous commercial and cultural fisheries are yet to be characterised for their economic, social and environmental contributions they make to Tasmania. This is a priority for future research.

Where available, the use of these indicators to value fisheries and aquaculture are likely to be increasingly used over the life of the plan.

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Recreational fishing is a very popular pastime in Tasmania, with proportionally more Tasmanians fishing each year than in most other parts of Australia. Recreational fishing provides significant social, health and economic benefits as well as providing a source of food for many people. Recreational fisheries are valued in a different way to commercial fisheries and include the social and welfare benefits to participants. Currently there are an estimated 115,000 recreational fishers and over 30,000 registered recreational boats with a fishable coast line that exceeds 3000 kilometres. The East/South East Coasts are by far the most popular fishing areas and account for around 60% of total fishing effort and catches.

All fisheries are managed to ensure that they are ecologically sustainable. Annual stock assessments for the abalone, rock lobster and the scalefish fishery are conducted by the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies, a standalone institute within the University of Tasmania, on behalf of the management agency the Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment.

2.2 DRIVERS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

This strategic plan considers how research investment directed by the TASRAC may aid all Tasmanian fishing sectors, the aquaculture industry, and the aquatic environments that they operate in for changes that will occur in the short- and long-term. As such, research priorities need to be responsive to opportunities and drivers of change – including:

- The internationalisation of seafood – demonstrating food quality and safety to meet changing market demands and expectations
- Responding to consumer preferences and subsequent changes as growth in supply outstrips growth in demand
- Managing fisheries to ensure that stocks are harvested sustainably, while allowing for flexibility/resilience to changes in fleet distribution, technological advances, and socioeconomic trends
- Adapting to complex natural challenges such as climate change or disease
- Gaining commercial value from traits such as provenance, quality, safety and sustainability of Tasmanian seafood
- Balancing social, economic and environmental issues to enhance community acceptance of aquaculture and wild catch fisheries
- Developing technology – improving efficiency of fisheries management and reducing seafood production costs
- Anthropogenic impacts to aquatic ecosystems
- Rising recreational catch – understanding shifts in effort, target species and socioeconomic values
- The converging of wild catch fisheries and aquaculture
- Changing values and demographics in the community affect usage of marine resources
- Changing socio-political environments in regards to Indigenous rights to marine resources

It is important to note that not all opportunities and drivers of change apply to all fisheries equally and some identified here are primarily applicable to maintaining ecosystem services.

3. TASRAC RD&E PLAN 2018 – 2023

3.1 TASMANIAN RD&E PRIORITY AREAS

An important function of the TASRAC RD&E Plan is to prioritise research that addresses the challenges faced by the Tasmanian fisheries and aquaculture sector, at both the State and national level. In doing so, TASRAC will prioritise RD&E investment to complement the FRDC's national RD&E goals as well as those of the SMRCA and DPIPWE.

The national goals of the FRDC include:

- fishing and aquaculture will continue to have improved performance in environmental sustainability, and are acknowledged to be so
- fishing and aquaculture will be more resilient to social, environmental and economic change
- fishing and aquaculture businesses will be more productive and profitable
- recreational fishers will have improved opportunities for better fishing experiences and will play a greater role in the stewardship of fisheries resources
- more Indigenous people will derive benefit from fishing and aquaculture activities and will play a greater role in the stewardship of fisheries resources; and
- information about the science and management of the sustainability of fishing and aquaculture will be more accessible to the consumer and meet consumer's needs

Activities in the SMRCA advance the aims of DPIPWE:

- cultivate prosperity and ensure sustainability in Tasmania's primary industries
- strike the right balance between social, economic and environmental values; and
- help people value, use and enjoy Tasmania's social, economic and environmental resources

TASRAC's strategic direction is also guided by other State, national and international policies as well as best practices in marine and fisheries activities. This ensures that Tasmania remains both national and world leaders in research and development in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors.

In accordance with the national and State context and the above outcomes, TASRAC's strategic planning process identified a number of RD&E priority areas that address the FRDC's [five RD&E investment programs](#). These programs directly align with its governing legislation, the PIRD Act. TASRAC's priority areas under each program include:

Program 1. Environment RD&E that supports natural resource sustainability in managing fishing and aquaculture activities in Commonwealth, state and territory waters. Many components of FRDC-funded RD&E focus on improving the sustainable use of Australia's aquatic resources.

TASRAC Priority Areas:

- Sustainable marine resources
- Effects of fishing on the environment
- Effects of the environment on fishing

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Program 2. Industry RD&E that assists the production and value of seafood. It could be in the form of business profitability, international competitiveness, opportunities for productivity increases, resource access, and experience or wellbeing benefits. This program aims to help all sectors improve their overall performance.

TASRAC Priority Areas:

- Growth
- Reducing costs of production
- Improving price
- Stability and resilience

Program 3. Communities RD&E that maintains the long-term sustainability of the commercial sector by understanding the interactions and co-dependence between fishing and aquaculture, and the wider community. It is enhanced by knowledge about the social and economic importance of fisheries to indirect community activities.

TASRAC Priority Areas:

- Good governance
- Biosecurity
- Beneficiaries and trade-offs

Program 4. People RD&E that is needed to attract and advance people who will lead fishing and aquaculture towards a sustainable and profitable future. The FRDC has taken a strong role in this area, from employing and developing young researchers, through to facilitating access to leadership development for all sectors of the fishing and aquaculture industry.

TASRAC Priority Areas:

- Capacity building
- Sector / industry development
- General skillsets

Program 5. Adoption how project outputs are delivered so they can be easily adopted and support stakeholder decision making and practices. The FRDC continually works with researchers and end users to determine and implement the best way of extending these results. In addition, the FRDC is continuing to develop its systems to ensure its 'knowledge bank' is widely accessible.

TASRAC Priority Areas:

- Best practices
- Barriers to adoption

3.2 STRATEGIC RD&E INVESTMENT PRIORITY AREAS

The strategic priorities areas highlighted in Section 3.1 are designed to be high level and will guide flexible annual decision making on key RD&E priorities in Tasmania. It is important to note that some of these priorities areas overlap multiple investment programs.

RD&E Program 1. Environment

Priority Area. Sustainable Marine Resources

Outcomes:

- Target and by-product species managed effectively using harvest strategies
- Ecosystem integrity and productivity maintained, and where appropriate improved (East Coast)
- Robust and contemporary resource assessment and environmental monitoring systems

Priority Area. Effects of Fishing on the Environment

Outcomes:

- Marine farm environmental interactions understood and managed
- High quality management of bycatch, protected species, habitat and ecosystems
- Well planned marine farming, supported by the community and with acceptable long term impacts

Priority Area. Effects of Environment on Fishing

Outcomes:

- Resilience of marine resources to shocks, environmental change, disease and invasive species
- Management of terrestrial impacts

RD&E Program 2. Industry

Priority Area. Growth

Outcomes:

- Increased performance and yield from aquaculture
- Wild harvest strategies tailored to target species life histories and markets
- Developmental fisheries opportunities identified and realised
- Fisheries production increased using novel approaches, including stock enhancement and ranching

Priority Area. Reducing Costs of Production

Outcomes:

- Efficient management, regulation and governance
- Efficient fleets, and utilisation of resources supply chains, production methods, and logistics
- Improved survival, performance metrics, and improved efficiencies for aquaculture industries

Priority Area. Improving Price

Outcomes:

- Improved post-harvest practices and supply chains
- Traceability and environmental accreditation
- Food safety and quality recognised by markets
- Market and value-adding opportunities identified and developed

Priority Area. Stability & Resilience

Outcomes:

- Effective fish health and biosecurity monitoring and responses, including diagnostic tools and vaccines
- Transparent decision processes
- Harvest strategies that recognise trade-offs by balancing social and economic benefits

RD&E Program 3. Communities

Priority Area. Good Governance

Outcomes:

- Recreational and Indigenous benefits integrated in governance systems
- Resource sharing informed by evidence not politics
- Greater use of online communications and electronic data collection and monitoring
- Community benefits delivered through transparent harvest strategies and resource sharing
- Marine resource industries are not vulnerable to animal welfare issues and protected species interactions

Priority Area. Biosecurity

Outcomes:

- Disease risks managed through diagnostic capability and pathology expertise
- Reduced risk of disease outbreaks through appropriate regulation and codes of conduct

Priority Area. Beneficiaries & Trade-offs

Outcomes:

- Importance of contributions to regional communities recognised in resource management decisions
- Long-term access to the marine resource based on sound marine planning
- Resource planning and sharing based on meaningful metrics of community benefit
- Community and stakeholder confidence in R&D outcomes

RD&E Program 4. People

Priority Area. Capacity Building

Outcomes:

- Informed Indigenous and migrant communities engaging in management and assessment processes
- Aquaculture and wild catch fisheries supported by well qualified and highly informed staff
- Culture of well-being, resulting in improved physical and mental health

Priority Area. Sector / Industry Development

Outcomes:

- New generation of industry leaders
- Enhanced opportunities for Indigenous development of fisheries
- Communication strategies tailored to community values and perceptions

Priority Area. General Skillsets

Outcomes:

- Fisheries stakeholders communicating effectively to the public and between and within sectors
- Well run and accountable industry organisations

RD&E Program 5. Adoption

Priority Area. Best Practices

Outcomes:

- International and national standards and guidelines driving the adoption of R&D outcomes
- Knowledge transfer through communication within and among sectors, and international experts
- Research is commercialised where relevant

Priority Area. Barriers to Adoption

Outcomes:

- Anticipated research outcomes that are realistic under current legislation
- Policies that are flexible to enable adoption of research outcomes
- Well informed stakeholders and community through effective communication
- Research providers are perceived to be credible and independent

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3.3 TASRACs FORECAST INVESTMENT ACROSS STRATEGIC RD&E PRIORITIES

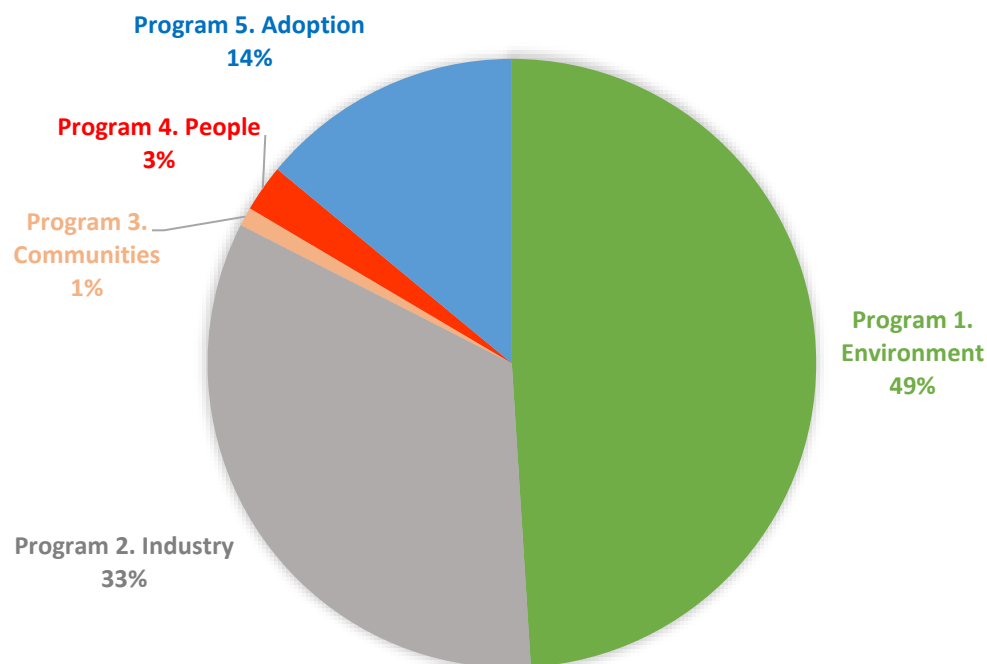
The primary role of the TASRAC is to prioritise, plan and invest in fisheries RD&E activities in Tasmania. TASRAC will adhere to the [FRDC's investment policy](#). The primary area of balance for TASRAC will be across FRDCs five program areas. TASRAC expects to allocate RD&E investment over the life of this plan consistent with the average of the previous five years.

TASRAC will also seek to achieve a balanced portfolio by investing in projects addressing issues of Tasmanian and national importance for all stakeholders. TASRAC will aim to achieve an overall balance of:

- Short- and long-term projects
- Low- and high-risk projects
- Strategic and adaptive research needs
- Regional variations and needs
- Jurisdictional, national, and sector-focused projects

This investment strategy will also take into consideration the level of industry contribution and public good funds available as well as identifying opportunities for collaboration (refer to [Section 4.1](#)).

ESTIMATED ALLOCATION OF FUNDING ACROSS PROGRAM AREAS 2018 - 2023



4. RD&E PLAN GUIDELINES

4.1 INVESTMENT COLLABORATION

TASRAC is to be mindful of collaborative opportunities with external funding sources (other than the FRDC) as well as collaboration between the jurisdictional [RACs, IPAs and FRDC Subprograms](#). Collaboration occurs through the sharing of RD&E Plans as well as the results of priority planning processes. Collaboration provides the opportunity to share investment across common areas of interest and promote RD&E execution efficiency. The annual [FRDC Stakeholder Planning Workshop](#) provides a forum for the sharing of these priorities to promote collaboration.

Another challenge is that some Tasmanian fishing sectors comprise an Industry Partnership Agreement (IPA) with the FRDC and as such may contribute some or none of their funds to the TASRAC budget (values shown in the parentheses indicate percentage of funds retained within the IPA):

- Abalone Council of Australia IPA (100%)
- Australian Abalone Growers Association IPA (100%)
- Oysters Australia IPA (100%)
- Southern Rock Lobster IPA (100%)
- Tasmanian Salmonid Growers Association IPA (100%)

In addition, there are a number of FRDC Subprograms and Advisory Groups that are provided annual budgets by the FRDC; these include:

- Indigenous Reference Group
- Recfishing Research
- Human Dimensions Research
- Aquatic Animal Health and Biosecurity
- New and Emerging Aquaculture
- People Development

As such, TASRAC is mindful of:

- Applications for RD&E funds that are relevant to the sector-based IPA and not the RAC
- Opportunities to co-fund with relevant IPAs (as well as FRDC Subprograms and external funding sources)
- When engaging in co-funding RD&E with IPAs, investment is in proportion to the relative (perceived) industry versus public good benefits

In addition to the FRDC, TASRAC has a mandate to leverage maximum benefit of RD&E funding for fisheries and aquaculture through a number of other sources.

The FRDC encourages collaboration to promote alignment of priorities and investment efficiency by leveraging incentives for cooperation and collaboration. Hence, the FRDC has made funds available to incentivise collaboration. The following rules outline how the FRDC will manage the collaboration fund:

- Collaboration must be two or more partners (RACs, IPAs, Subprograms);
- To obtain funds the priority must align with identified national priorities or the collaborative priorities identified at the FRDC Annual Planning workshop;
- For every two dollars brought by the collaboration, the FRDC will provide one dollar. Therefore, if there are two partners they put a dollar in each and the FRDC will provide a dollar.

4.2 EXTENSION

Extension processes should be embedded in all FRDC-funded RD&E. Therefore, the extension and adoption of anticipated project outcomes to the relevant end-users should be considered in the design of the project application, as such, it is a FRDC requirement that an [Extension and Adoption Plan](#) is developed and submitted for each project. TASRAC and the FRDC acknowledges that the extension of research outcomes continues throughout a project's duration through to the final published report and beyond.

The FRDC has adopted the key principles of the [National Strategy for Fishing and Aquaculture Research, Development and Extension](#) that establishes the future direction to improve the focus, efficiency and effectiveness of RD&E to support Australia's fishing and aquaculture industry. They are:

- Principle 1: All stakeholders to value extension and adoption activities in the same way as research activities
- Principle 2: Extension will be a key focus in research project development
- Principle 3: Project knowledge and outputs are actively managed
- Principle 4: Effectiveness and impact of project extension activities are evaluated
- Principle 5: Extension and adoption capacity is maximised and built upon.

4.3 EVALUATION OF PROJECTS

The FRDC has adopted the Commonwealth input, output, outcome reporting framework policy. The Department of Finance and Deregulation has determined that the FRDCs planned outcome is *Increased knowledge that fosters sustainable economic, environmental and social benefits for the Australian fishing industry; including Indigenous, recreational, commercial and aquaculture sectors, and the community; through investing in research, development and adoption*. The FRDCs performance is measured against its ability to deliver this outcome.

The success of TASRAC's planning, investment, management and adoption of research and development activities is measured by an evaluation framework that is based on adaptive management. The structure of the evaluation framework is as follows:

- A planning process that ensures investment is made against priorities where research can contribute to a significant improvement.
- An annual report evaluating the performance of individual projects against the targets in the RD&E Plan.

The FRDC has implemented the Rural RD&E Corporation Evaluation Framework methodology to achieve the total portfolio evaluation assessment. This is based on a rolling series of [cost benefit analysis of project](#) clusters (based on previous 5-years investment). The results of the project cluster assessments links to the agreed key performance indicators (KPIs) that are relevant to that cluster. This process ensures that the investment decisions are continually being adjusted to ensure optimal investment performance. In this ongoing evaluation, the FRDC will measure the performance of TASRAC's investments after the life of its RD&E Plan.

During the life of the RD&E Plan, TASRAC will self-evaluate its performance against its identified Priority Areas as well as monitoring investment to ensure balance in investment across the FRDCs five programs. This is to be aligned with the prioritisation and RD&E Plan review processes undertaken in the September/October RAC meeting.

4.4 REVIEW OF THE TASRAC RD&E PLAN

Annually, TASRAC will review their RD&E Plan. This will occur at the September/October TASRAC meeting. The Plan will be reviewed to:

- assess performance against the identified Priority Areas of the Plan
- identify gaps against the Priority Areas of the plan
- determine priority areas for investment against these gaps

The TASRAC annual plan will be circulated to all FRDC Advisory Groups.

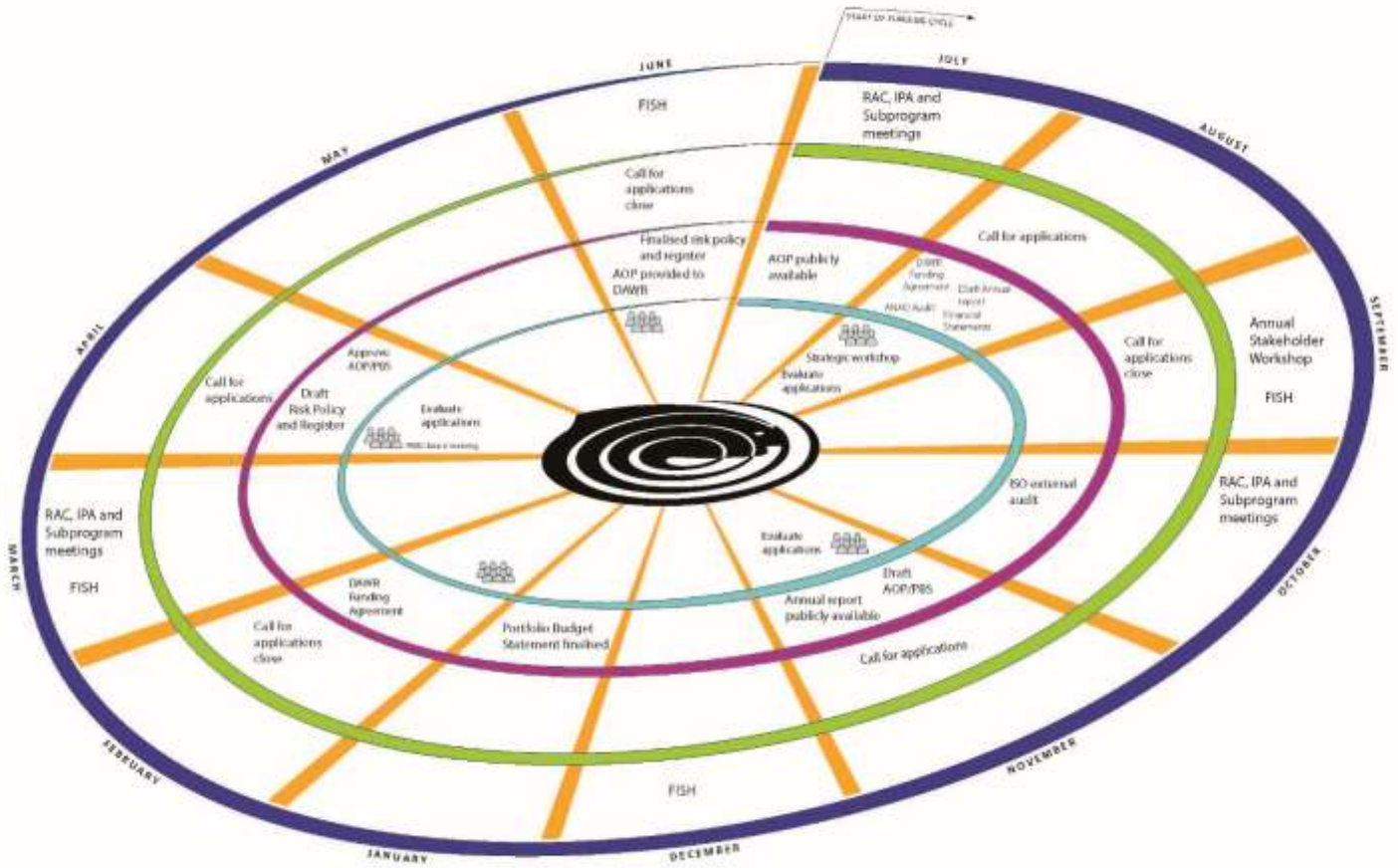
At the end of August each year, the FRDC will hold an annual planning workshop for all RACs, IPAs, Subprograms and National Initiatives to provide updates on priority areas for investment and identify any potential overlap and collaborative opportunities for the coming financial year.


Finally, at each meeting TASRAC will undertake a situational scan of the jurisdiction to identify any tactical or immediate areas of RD&E need that require short term or immediate remediation.

Tasmanian Research Advisory Committee RD&E Plan (2018 – 2023)

ATTACHMENT ONE: TASRAC ANNUAL TIMELINE

FRDC's intra-annual approach to priority setting and developing calls for application timelines.



Board	
Compliance	
Operations	
Planning	