

# FRDC Project No. 2007/304: Empowering stakeholders to initiate and advance R&D projects in the seafood industry

Anecdotal reports from Industry indicated that their lack of capacity and/or resources to develop and submit R&D projects was hindering their involvement in, and commitment to R&D. As a result, industry initiated R&D projects tended to be poorly represented, with the bulk developed by Government agencies and universities, which may not have been aligned to or focused on Industry priorities. The 'Empowering Industry' project was intended as a one year trial to investigate this issue.

The project sought to provide a process that allowed industry R&D ideas to be captured and developed into project proposals that could become part of the standard R&D funding process. Industry members were encouraged to be investigators on the developed projects and to become proactive in identifying and linking with an expanded range of appropriate R&D research providers. The project also sought to establish a broader network of funders.

More than 50 stakeholder groups were contacted and briefed about the 'Empowering Industry' project and its potential benefits. This led to approximately 40 presentations being given across Australia to an audience of more than 200 industry people.

As a result of this contact, 35 potential R&D projects were developed with input from the 'Empowering Industry' project. This outcome far exceeded the 'Empowering Industry' project's objective of identifying five potential projects. In all instances (except one) of projects an Industry person was the investigator or equivalent.

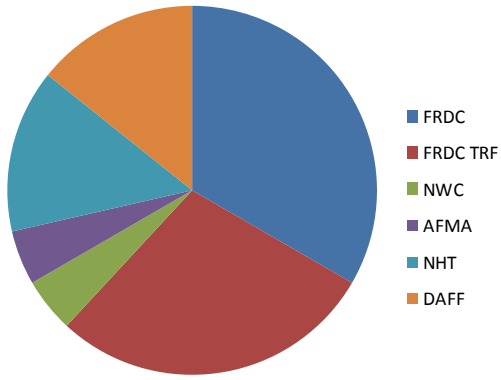
Identifying alternatives to FRDC funding, as well as ensuring that FRDC funded projects aligned with the funding criteria, were critical components of this project. Six national funding agencies/sources were identified for use during the project.

Of the 35 potential R&D projects, 20 full proposals were developed and submitted to various funding agencies. Projects focussed on environmental performance (32%), industry profitability and efficiency (26%), people and Industry development (18%) and product development (15%). Sixteen proposals were successful in obtaining funding. The 'Empowering Industry' project generated R&D funding of approximately \$1,300,000, giving a return of almost \$9.00 in funding for every \$1.00 of FRDC funding expended on the 'Empowering Industry' project.

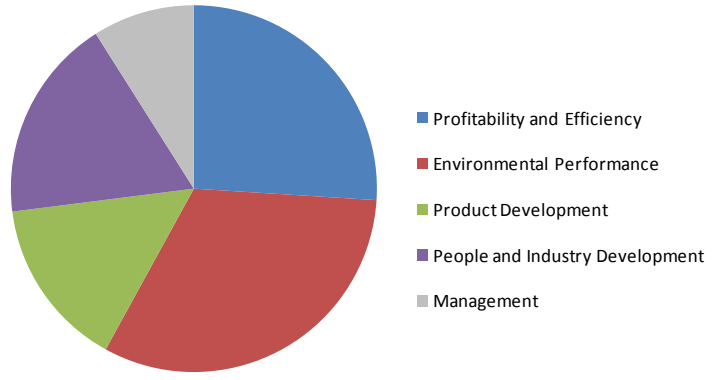
During the 2008/09 funding cycle 10% of all approved FRDC full projects and 40% of the approved Industry initiated projects were developed with support from the 'Empowering Industry' project. The 'Empowering Industry' project assisted in the development of 28% of all approved Tactical Research Fund (TRF) projects and 62% of approved Industry projects.

From the perspective of involving Industry in R&D, the project was an overwhelming success and highlighted their real need for assistance. The 'Empowering Industry' project identified that there were numerous opportunities for more extensive Industry involvement in R&D, but in many instances their input needed to be actively sought and assistance provided to work through the R&D process.

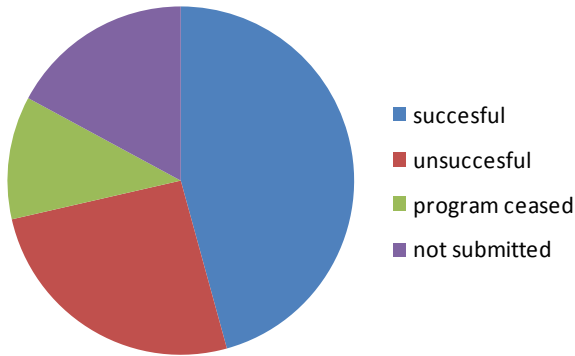
Based on the success of this trial, a number of Industry representatives have called for the development of an ongoing mechanism to deliver a similar service to the broader seafood and fishing industry, ensuring that: it is cost-effective, inclusive and transparent, operates at a national or regional scale, and provides opportunities for the existing funding process to be improved.



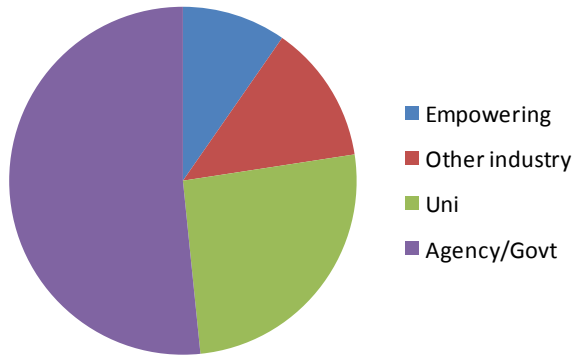
Where "Empowering Industry" projects sought funding from



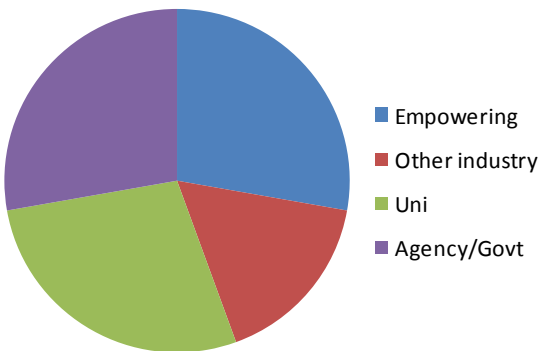
"Empowering Industry" project focus area



Status of projects assisted by the Empowering Industry Project



Percentage of FRDC full projects supported by sector



Percentage of TRF projects supported by sector

# PROJECTS DEVELOPED WITH ASSISTANCE OF THE 'EMPOWERING INDUSTRY VERSION 1' PROJECT 2007/8

## Projects Supported and Funded

- A collaborative recruitment forecasting programme for the NT Mud Crab Fishery (built on Community Surveys of Mud Crab Stocks in the Northern Territory project)
- Community Surveys of Mud Crab Stocks in the Northern Territory
- Ecologically sustainable spear fishing through policy, risk assessment, monitoring and education (Australian Underwater Federation – AUF)
- Effectiveness of larger mesh size in reducing the capture of juvenile target species in select NSW ocean beach seine operations
- Empowering Industry R&D: Cost Benefit Analysis of management options for the Northern Prawn Fishery
- Empowering Industry R&D: Developing quality standards for Endeavour prawns as part of the pathway towards a clean and green promotional strategy for the Industry
- Empowering Industry R&D: Improving profitability to Industry through the identification and management of 'tough' fish syndrome in tropical Saddletail Snapper
- Empowering Industry R&D: Trials of gear modifications to reduce bycatch in freshwater fyke nets
- Empowering Industry R&D: Trials of T90 mesh configuration for bycatch reduction and more efficient fishing in the GABTF
- Empowering Industry R&D: Uniform flesh quality for premium market positioning: Australian Blue Crabs
- Empowering Industry R&D: Unique industry opportunity to trial pipi stock enhancement to improve sustainability and harvest rates on Yagon Beach, NSW inland fisheries
- Future seafood leaders: taking stock
- Moving To A Common Vision And Understanding For Equitable Access For Indigenous, Recreational And Commercial Fishers:- NT Fishing And Seafood Industry Delegation To NZ
- Northern Territory Seafood Council – Industry Stocktake
- Redefining deepwater closures in the SESSF to reduce the impact on the commercial deepwater fishery and maintain adequate protection of orange roughy
- South east trawl – investigation of sea exclusions in wet boat sector
- Trawl industry bycatch forum

## Projects developed but not funded:

- Empowering Industry R & D: Trials of quad gear to improve fishing efficiency in the NPF
- Empowering Industry R&D: Feasibility of using electronic logbook software for the effective onboard collection and transfer of catch / effort and environmental data in NSW
- Empowering Industry R&D: Benchmarking and reducing freshwater consumption in the seafood processing sector
- Empowering Industry R&D: Capacity building in the commercial fishing industry through culturally appropriate indigenous training
- Empowering Industry R&D: Development of a screening level risk assessment methodology to assess the risk posed by contaminants present in catchment runoff to inshore and inland fisheries
- Empowering Industry R&D: Establishing shelf life, quality and consistency in 'grab and go' packaged meals of wild caught Australian seafood
- Empowering Industry R&D: Increasing harvest and post harvest survival through customised processing equipment in the Port Lincoln mussel industry
- Empowering Industry R&D: Reduction of Seabird interactions and mortalities in the SESSF (trawl) due to warp strikes

### **Projects developed but funding source ceased or changed:**

- Industry Action Program - NPF Industry Pty Ltd – Action Grant for Marketing
- Queensland Seafood Industry Association – Industry Action Program
- Tasmanian Scallop Fisherman’s Association – Industry Stocktakes
- Tasmanian Scallop Fisherman’s Association - pest eradication and proactive waste management

### **Projects considered but not further developed:**

- Empowering industry R&D: Commercial potential of freshwater & marine plants as food
- Empowering Industry R&D: Techniques for conditioning eels in intensive aquaculture
- Empowering Industry R&D: Calendar of the year
- Empowering Industry R&D: Identification of a farmed based method to measure stress levels in Barramundi
- Empowering Industry R&D: Improving catch quality to achieve a premium in the SA sardine industry
- Empowering Industry R&D: Self Management of the Tasmanian Scallop Fishery