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GO-AHEAD FOR MAJOR MARINE SCIENCE CENTRE EXPANSION

Public works approval has been given for a \$6.6 million expansion of the Lincoln Marine Science Centre at Port Lincoln.

Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Minister, Rory McEwen said the expansion would be a key factor in positioning the state as a world class centre for marine science, education and industry development through the Marine Innovation SA (MISA) initiative

“The redevelopment is being jointly funded by the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI) and Flinders University,” Mr McEwen said.

“The increased capability the centre will provide has the potential to benefit SA’s wild fisheries catch and aquaculture production by three dollars for every dollar spent.

“It’s expected the expansion will generate an additional 250 regional jobs by 2020.

“The re-development is the first stage of four proposed expansions over the next 30 years. The initial works would almost double the size of the current centre, house an additional 35 scientists and educational staff, and cater for increased student numbers,” Mr McEwen said.

Flinders University Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor Chris Marlin, said construction was expected to start by the second half of next year.

“The 887 square metre single storey building will be a purpose built facility to provide increased marine research and education facilities.

“Port Lincoln will also greatly benefit with enhanced education pathways for further and higher education within the industry, more employment opportunities for researchers and teachers, and better prospects for regional development,” Professor Marlin said.

MISA Steering Committee Chair and SARDI Executive Director, Dr Rob Lewis said the new high-tech laboratories would be critical in supporting MISA’s research and education in the areas of seafood product quality and value adding, aquaculture innovation and ecosystem services.

“The expanded capability will place Port Lincoln on the world stage for southern temperate marine research, drawing high level scientists to lead projects that will open many new opportunities for the seafood industry,” Dr Lewis said.

“There will be particular emphasis placed on research and education into prawns, rock lobster, southern bluefin tuna, abalone, sardines, mussels, oysters and yellowtail kingfish at the LMSC.

“This research has the potential to at least triple the value of SA’s average annual value of production which currently stands at \$445 million.”

MISA is a partnership of the South Australian Government, South Australian Research and Development Institute, Flinders University, University of Adelaide, South Australian Museum and the seafood industries.

MISA partners are working together to deliver the science capability needed to realise the State’s Seafood Plan to more than double the value of seafood production to \$2 billion by 2015, and create an additional 3500 direct and indirect jobs by 2010.

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