



HISTORICAL BREAKTHROUGH IN TUNA AQUACULTURE

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International aquaculture history was made when the South Australian Clean Seas Tuna Company, with support from the Australian Seafood Cooperative Research Centre (CRC), successfully achieved a high degree of spawning in captive Southern Bluefin Tuna resulting in the production of millions and millions of eggs – a world first.

Scientists from the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) said they were especially proud of the break-through result, after being associated with the project for many years. USC Professor Abigail Elizur said, “This is a triumph of planning and persistence with great Australian entrepreneurs. Clean Seas Tuna have broken the mould and have shown that it is biologically possible to spawn giant tuna”.

It has been reported that there are now so many larvae that even if only a few percent survive, then the number of captive tuna now will exceed all those in the entire history of Australian aquaculture.

To top off this rare achievement, Clean Seas Tuna have created this breeding phenomenon all indoors!

Dr Len Stephens, Managing Director of the CRC summarised the breakthrough as innovative and the first step to commercialisation, “ We now have the potential to commercially open a new path to revolutionise the tuna industry and see

captive Australian tuna aquaculture grow to a multibillion dollar sector. This is what great science is all about – taking a risk. I commend Clean Seas Tuna and the participant scientists for thinking outside the square and pursuing this very impressive challenge”.

Dr Stephens, who linked scientists to Clean Seas Tuna through the collaborative nature of the CRC scheme said, “The unique partnership between our CRC participants - the Fisheries Research Development Corporation, the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC), the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI), Flinders University, the Northern Territory Department of Regional Development, Primary Industries, Fisheries and Resources and New South Wales Department of Primary Industries is just another example of how connecting Australia’s brightest and most talented researchers together can produce results of a such an incredible magnitude”.

“SARDI scientists, under the banner of Marine Innovation South Australia, have played a valuable role in improving the performance of larvae during the critical early stages of culture,” said Dr Stephens.

SARDI was the first research agency in Australia to receive eggs from Clean Seas Tuna Ltd, and has been successful in hatching them and rearing larvae to 15 days. Experiments are continuing to explore ways to further boost larval performance.

SARDI Principal Scientist Aquaculture, Mr Steven Clarke, says “having the opportunity to work on such an innovative research project is exciting”.

This world leading research aims to support future growth of the Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna industry by developing a supply of hatchery reared tuna fingerlings for ongrowing.

The USC also acknowledge generous support from international science collaborators from the University of Maryland and the European Tuna Consortium as well as Kinki University.

The Australian Seafood CRC is established and supported under the Australian Government’s Cooperative Research Centres Programme. Other investors in the CRC are the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation, Seafood CRC company

members, and supporting participants.



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