



QUEENSLAND AQUACULTURE  
STRATEGY 2024–2034  
CONSULTATION PAPER

July 2024

University of the Sunshine Coast submission

## Contents

Introduction .....	1
About UniSC .....	1
Response to Consultation Paper .....	1
Vision.....	1
Purpose and alignment .....	1
Queensland’s strengths, opportunities and challenges.....	2
Proposed actions.....	2

## Introduction

The University of the Sunshine Coast (UniSC), via our Centre for Bioinnovation, is pleased to provide a submission to inform a whole of Queensland Government aquaculture policy and strategy.

UniSC would welcome the opportunity to elaborate on any aspect of our submission. If this is of interest, please contact Jason Mills, Head of Government Relations on [jmills3@usc.edu.au](mailto:jmills3@usc.edu.au).

### About UniSC

UniSC is one of Australia's youngest and fastest growing universities spanning five campuses across Queensland. Located in an area of unique geographical importance, UniSC is the world's only university with campuses on three connecting UNESCO biosphere reserves and World Heritage Listed K'gari.

UniSC's [Centre for Bioinnovation](#) uses bio-inspired approaches to contribute to drug discovery, disease diagnostics and therapeutics. Improving societal outcomes and supporting ecosystems through a focus on aquaculture, conservation and biodiversity.

On the world stage, UniSC is recognised by The Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings as a global leader in climate action, clean water sanitation, life on land, and life below water. This ranking comes alongside the Australian Research Council's recognition of UniSC as a producer of world-class research in 26 speciality areas, including environmental science, medical and health sciences, neuroscience, technology, and psychology.

## Response to Consultation Paper

### Vision

Prawns remain the predominant contributor to the value and volume of aquaculture in Queensland, despite longstanding discussions about and efforts to achieve greater diversification, both to offer more species in the market, and reduce market risk.

UniSC believes the vision for Queensland aquaculture strategy should acknowledge and focus on the importance of supporting the existing prawn industry and help it maximise innovation but also outline a strategic plan for diversification. Currently there is no clear evidence as to how species are chosen for diversification or a road map of what will be introduced, where and why.

### Recommendations

- *The draft vision be amended to include the word 'diverse' e.g. "Our vision is that Queensland is a thriving, world-leader in sustainable aquaculture. Our state's aquaculture industry is respected for its **diverse** high-quality produce, innovation and environmental stewardship".*

### Purpose and alignment

UniSC is supportive of the purpose statements, particularly the focus on research, and we note the importance of research funding being made available to deliver on that objective. We suggest that under 'Alignment', Queensland's new Science Strategy be added to the list.

### Recommendations

- *The Purpose should include a clear commitment to providing funding to deliver on the identified research priorities.*
- *Add Queensland's new Science Strategy to the list of aligned policy and implementation priorities.*

### Queensland's strengths, opportunities and challenges

UniSC would like to see the Government undertake more comprehensive engagement with key research providers across the State. This broader consultation should involve as many of the research leaders in Queensland as possible. For example, UniSC is an Australian leader in aquaculture biotechnology including reproductive biology and spawning induction of key aquaculture species, diagnostics and analytical chemistry, as well as having strong expertise in marine ecology, yet UniSC, has not been included in this consultation process.

### Recommendations

- *The Queensland Government consult and establish research partnerships more broadly with Queensland's aquaculture research providers.*

### Proposed actions

*Examine the feasibility of establishing an aquaculture demonstration site to highlight research and innovation and provide training and extension opportunities.*

UniSC is supportive of this proposed action, noting the inherent difficulty of choosing a location and focus given aquaculture production, research and training are undertaken throughout Queensland. With respect to the training aspect, we note the TAFE Queensland Aquaculture Centre of Excellence, while excellent, does not provide training on prawns, Queensland largest sector. Red claw production might grow but is unlikely to replace prawns in the foreseeable future, so any training element should focus on the key species.