



Hon Joe Francis MLA
Minister for Fisheries



Hon Sean L'Estrange MLA
Minister for Finance

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JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

Reducing red tape to help grow WA aquaculture

- **Investment-ready zones can save approval time and up to \$500,000**
- **Government-funded establishment and environmental approvals for new zones**
- **Creating WA jobs in aquaculture, the world's fastest-growing food sector**

Fisheries Minister Joe Francis said the speedy 'green tick' for new and expanded aquaculture proposals in the Kimberley Aquaculture Development Zone illustrated the value of the State setting up the zone - including securing the major environmental approvals in advance.

Mr Francis said the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) had approved the MPA Fish Farms and Aarli Mayi Aquaculture Project proposals in less than 50 working days thanks to the work undertaken in developing the zone.

"If the aquaculture operators had to go it alone, without the major environmental approvals being secured by the State up-front, they would have faced considerable delays and many hundreds of thousands of dollars in expense to get to the same point," he said.

"This way, they have a short application process to the EPA which confirms they are within the parameters of the original approval - and they are good to go."

Mr Francis said the State had allocated all of the capacity in the Kimberley zone to the two proponents, allowing for up to 20,000 tonnes of fish production per year.

Finance Minister Sean L'Estrange said establishing investment-ready zones for large-scale aquaculture businesses, which met Western Australia's environmental guidelines, was driving growth opportunities in the Kimberley, Mid-West and on the South Coast.

"This progress is being recognised in the Liberal National Government's latest Red Tape Reduction Report Card," Mr L'Estrange said.

"The leases in the Kimberley zone have built-in performance criteria to ensure they are used productively and, at about \$15 per hectare, the lease fees are by far the cheapest in Australia."

Mr Francis said the proposed Mid-West zone would focus more on temperate pelagic species, such as yellowtail kingfish. When fully developed, it was expected to provide more jobs and economic diversification - key benefits of large-scale aquaculture operations.

"We hope to secure major environmental approval for the Mid-West zone by late 2016," he said.

"Our support for aquaculture growth in WA also includes the establishment of Albany's multi-species shellfish hatchery and plans for a new South Coast development zone."

Fact File

Other red tape reductions in Fisheries include:

- [Relaxing rock lobster catching restrictions on fishing charters, to enhance tourism](#)
- [Fishers under 16 no longer need a south-west Freshwater Angling Licence saving \\$20](#)

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