



Speech by

**JAN JARRATT**

**MEMBER FOR WHITSUNDAY**

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**AUSTRALIAN PRAWN AND BARRAMUNDI CONFERENCE**

**Ms JARRATT** (Whitsunday—ALP) (11.17 p.m.): I recently had the opportunity to attend the Australian prawn and barramundi conference in Sydney, which had among its many sponsors the Queensland Department of State Development and the Department of Primary Industries. I was extremely impressed by the calibre of presentations during the two-day conference. Session topics included export market opportunities, sustainable aquaculture, prawn domestication, marketing and sales, and industry development. It is quite clear that the Australian prawn and barramundi associations are very serious about industry development and best practice deployment. The level and quality of research and development in the field of aquaculture is quite outstanding, with a range of industry, government and research organisations dedicated to ensuring Australian aquaculturists remain competitive in the global market, while at the same time ensuring that environmental best practice is achieved.

An incredible amount of time, money and effort is being expended in areas such as bioremediation technology, waste reduction, nutrition and animal health, and farming techniques. While all this points to a very bright future for the local aquaculture industry, there are hurdles yet to be overcome. Not the least of these is finding a path through the swathe of local, state and Commonwealth regulations relating to aquaculture. Of course, unlike our counterparts in other Australian states, Queensland has the added complication of protecting the Great Barrier Reef from degradation due to inappropriate water and nutrient discharge. There was much evidence at the conference that every effort is being made to develop and promote environmentally friendly practices that will allow the coexistence of the reef with aquaculture.

One of the highlights of the conference for me was a presentation delivered by Bowen Mayor Mike Brunner and the Manager of Bowen Collinsville Enterprises, David Nebauer. The theme of their address was Aquaculture Industry Development in Action, Bowen Shire Aquaculture Industry Development Project. The Bowen Shire Council and Bowen Collinsville Enterprises are great ambassadors and supporters of the aquaculture industry in Queensland. Their presence at the conference spoke volumes about the proactive approach they have taken in relation to attracting new aquaculture businesses to the Bowen shire, and they have good reason to be positive in their approach.

In 1998 the Mackay Aquaculture Group and the Dry Tropics Aquaculture Advisory Group completed the Burdekin-Broadsound Area Identification Study. This study confirmed that more than half of the areas identified as being suitable for aquaculture development between St Lawrence and Ayr were located in the Bowen shire. With the assistance of the Department of State Development, Bowen Collinsville Enterprises launched a further report that has identified specific sites within the shire that have great potential for the development of large-scale prawn farms.

The great work does not stop there. Bowen Collinsville Enterprises commissioned a community consultation project that clearly established community support for future aquaculture ventures within the shire. In addition, they convened an aquaculture regulatory round table which saw local, state and Commonwealth officers meet in an attempt to iron out some of the regulatory red tape encountered in the process of establishing permits for aquaculture.

Time expired.