




Speech By
Hon. Mark Furner

MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Aquaculture Industry

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries) (10.05 am): When I was appointed the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries, I had a vision to make Queensland the aquaculture capital of the world.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Really!

Mr FURNER: I love hearing the adulations from those opposite, who are unlike members on this side of the House as we support the development of agriculture, fisheries and everything that goes along with that. In 2016-17, in Queensland aquaculture was a \$120 million industry supporting more than 530 full-time jobs. This week's announcement by the Premier that Tassal has bought a 7,000-hectare property near Mackay to develop a major aquaculture project shows that the government's commitment is on track. With 1,000 construction and operational jobs to be established, that is a great result for Mackay and the Whitsunday region. It is a great result for the local economy and for Queensland. I look forward to tomorrow and travelling to Proserpine with the member for Mackay to see firsthand Tassal's vision for its future and that of the area. This government is all about jobs, which is why we do the hard yards with companies such as Tassal to make such investments possible and to get on the front foot to facilitate strong and sustainable industries that mean jobs for Queenslanders.

However, that is not all. In November last year it was wonderful to attend the opening of the Gold Coast Marine Aquaculture precinct in Mossman with the member for Cook. It is one of the biggest black tiger prawn farming companies in Australia. I note that the Tassal development is one of the six aquaculture development areas that the Palaszczuk Labor government created at the start of the year to grow aquaculture. We want to attract investors to develop and build aquaculture projects across Queensland, because we want to give communities more employment opportunities and growth in their economies. Aquaculture is the fastest growing food industry globally, so it is important that, as a government, we do everything we can to tap into that potential.

A booming aquaculture sector has the added benefit of taking the pressure of our wild-caught fisheries. Wild-caught product cannot keep up with growing global demand for seafood protein, which is why aquaculture is the fastest growing food industry globally. This government's support for the sector means more jobs for regional communities, a stronger Queensland economy and the chance to make this state the aquaculture capital of the world.