




Speech By
Hon. Mark Furner

MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE

Record of Proceedings, 5 September 2019

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Aquaculture Industry

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries) (9.51 am): Nearly one year ago here in Townsville at James Cook University I said, 'I want to make Queensland the aquaculture capital of the world.' In 2016-17 aquaculture was a \$120 million industry employing more than 530 Queenslanders full-time. Just two weeks ago I had the pleasure, along with the member for Mackay, of visiting the Tassal aquaculture facility just three hours away from here in Proserpine.

Australia's leading seafood producer, Tassal, plans to start immediately stages 3 and 4 of its development. What is more, it has announced the purchase of a property near Mackay which will be developed into a black tiger king prawn facility. The development is expected to create 1,000 construction and operational jobs for Mackay and the Whitsundays, a great result for Mackay and the Whitsundays region, the local economy and Queensland. The government is all about jobs. That is why we do what we do. We do the hard yards with companies like Tassal to make their investment possible and get on the front foot to facilitate strong, sustainable industries that mean jobs for all Queenslanders.

I know that Tassal's development is one of the six aquaculture development areas the Palaszczuk government created at the start of the year to grow aquaculture. As reported in the *Townsville Bulletin* this morning, another Tasmanian company is coming to Queensland. Ornatas has chosen land at Toomulla Beach, just north of here, to set up a world-leading first lobster farm. We want to attract investors to develop and build aquaculture projects in these areas and across Queensland, because we want to give communities more employment opportunities.

Aquaculture is the fastest growing food industry globally, so it is important we as a government do everything we can to tap into the potential. A booming aquaculture sector has the added value of taking the pressure off our wild caught fisheries. Wild caught product cannot keep up with the growing demand for seafood protein which is why aquaculture is the fastest growing food industry globally. This government's support for the sector means jobs for regional communities, a stronger Queensland economy and the chance to make this state the aquaculture capital of the world.