

OYSTER INDUSTRY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 1. May 2011

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Welcome to *Oyster Newsletter*

At the request of many oyster industry representatives, this newsletter provides an update on national and international news, events and research that may be of interest to the oyster industry. It is provided to you free, and has the simple goal of providing relevant information to industry in a clear and concise manner. It does not aim to replace those newsletters currently published for the oyster industry, but to supply and collate additional information that isn't readily available.

It is anticipated that the newsletter will be published every 3 months, and we encourage farmers to circulate it widely through the industry. Print it off and pass it around your workers. If you would like to unsubscribe, please click on the link above, or email Andy@oceanwatch.org.au.

Since this newsletter is for your information and as a tool to improve communication across oyster regions, we would appreciate any contributions, topics or ideas for future editions, stories or projects in which you are involved, photographs, or any other feedback...

Happy oystering!

Andy (OceanWatch) & Ana (University of Wollongong)

Oyster Industry Projects

NSW Oyster EMS Projects

The future of the oyster industry depends on our capacity to demonstrate that natural resources, and the environment in which we work, are utilised in a sustainable, responsible way. One way of doing this is to develop an Environmental Management System (EMS) to show how environmental impacts and risks are managed.

OceanWatch Australia (in partnership with the NSW Farmers Association) and Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority have respectively received \$400,000 and \$240,000 through the Australian Government's Caring for our Country initiative, to develop, review and implement Environmental Management Systems for the NSW oyster industry. Participation is voluntary; however engaging in the process offers significant benefits, including the opportunity to:

- Identify realistic and achievable environmental improvements
- Identify external water quality concerns and engage with landholders
- Increase profits by identifying business development opportunities
- Document farmers current stewardship of the environment and aspirations
- Increases exposure to, and prospects of receiving grants

Incentives will be available through these projects to implement actions identified in the EMS, and to improve environmental conditions in oyster producing estuaries:

Across NSW two grants will be available:

- \$100,000 for oyster growers to make environmental improvements to shed & lease areas (capped at \$4,000 per business)
- \$100,000 for land-holders and catchment groups to address water quality issues in oyster producing estuaries (capped at \$4,000 per application)

In Southern Rivers catchments (Shoalhaven to Wonboyn) additional grant funding will be available:

- \$150,000 to assist growers who wish to purchase cultivation infrastructure for conversion (e.g. plastic baskets, trays & poles)
- \$50,000 to rehabilitate water quality hotspots in the Pambula catchment

Grants open at the end of May, and are open to growers who are engaged, or have the intent to engage in an EMS.



Shoalhaven, Wagonga & Tuross oyster farmers learning about EMS at workshops.

To organise one for your estuary call Andy 0488656366

This is a fantastic opportunity for the NSW Oyster Industry to demonstrate its environmental credentials and to access funds to support further improvements. Environmental Management Systems are highly sought documents, and Andy Myers (NSW Oyster EMS Project Officer), is on hand to assist industry in their preparation. Whilst any EMS needs to be owned and driven by local farmers, Andy will be able to guide the process, and compile EMS documents based on the information provided. For more information: [OceanWatch website](http://oceanwatch.org.au) or call 0488656366

Oyster Information Portal

A new oyster project was launched in February 2011 which will bring together information from a range of environmental, climatic and industry sources to help the oyster industry develop strategies and practices to prepare for climate change and pinpoint some of the potential impacts to the industry.

This project will address one of the recommendations made at last year's oyster industry workshop related to the identification of key climate change challenges within the industry. The workshop was attended by the researchers at the Adaptation Network for Marine Biodiversity and Resources at the University of Tasmania and the outputs of the workshops have been collated in the recent publication "Climate change adaptation in the Australian edible oyster industry: an analysis of policy and practice" (http://arnmbr.org/content/images/uploads/OYSTER_REPORT_FINAL_web.pdf).

A key priority identified by the industry is *access to consolidated environmental monitoring data and relating this information to industry operations historically and into the future*. Consolidated and

spatially presented information can be effectively delivered through a web-based portal. In this project we will collate this information so that farmers can access and interpret it with relevance to their own lease productivity, general operations and closure events. In addition, the governance of the industry will be able to make better informed decisions for adaptation and to facilitate the long term viability of the industry.

This project will involve scientists from the Shoalhaven Marine and Freshwater Centre from the University of Wollongong, who will work directly with oyster industry members from 4 growing areas in NSW (Camden Haven, Hawkesbury, Crookhaven/Shoalhaven and Pambula) and local groups such as Catchment Management Authorities, State Government agencies and local Councils during the next two years. Oyster industry consultation at the 4 study areas will also be undertaken with growers who have expressed their interest in participating in the project.

We will be using this newsletter to pass on information on the development of the project, in particular, to deliver information about the dates in which industry workshops will take place and any documentation that will arise from the project that would benefit the industry.

This project is funded by the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation, Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency on behalf of the Australian Government, the Southern and Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authorities and Bega Valley Shire Council.

Please contact us (Ana Rubio arubio@uow.edu.au m: 042 728 5999) for further information on the project and to register your name as an active participant in the industry consultation workshops that we will be undertaking. First industry workshop will take place the second week of August – write it down in your diaries!

Australian and World News

Source to Sea – ABC Landline

If you missed the 23rd of March 2011 ABC Landline program on working towards the health of the Hawkesbury-Nepean River catchment, including a few minutes on the Hawkesbury oyster growers, you can now access it online at: <http://www.abc.net.au/landline/content/2010/s3174898.htm>

Report card positive for NSW Aquaculture

Oysters have remained the top performing sector in the NSW aquaculture industry according to the annual aquaculture report card, Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson said today. http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/389214/20110511REPORT-CARD-POSITIVE-FOR-NSW-AQUACULTURE.pdf

End the mussel myth! – Australian Mussel Industry Association

The Australian Mussel Industry Association has been working hard on breaking the strong urban myth of discarding mussels that do not open after being cooked as they are unsafe to eat. We thought it was a great example of educating community. Let us know what do you think. Go to the following link for further information on the mussel myth:

<http://www.australianmussels.com.au/mythbusting>

Murray the Mussel video

Related to story above

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vmmlmdkv-2w>

Reviving New York's rivers -- with oysters!

Architect Kate Orff sees the oyster as an agent of urban change- "oyster-tecture". Bundled into beds and sunk into city rivers, oysters slurp up pollution and make dirty waters clean. Kate shares her vision for an urban landscape that links nature and humanity for mutual benefit in this video:

http://www.ted.com/talks/kate_orff_oysters_as_architecture.html

Infection with the new variant of oyster herpesvirus (OsHV-1 μ Var) specific for *Crassostrea gigas*: Its global expansion from France

A message from the President of The World Oyster Society on the OsHV-1 μ Var for Pacific Oysters

http://www.worldoyster.org/about%20wos_e.html

Oyster clean up for Port Stephens

More than 26 hectares of derelict oyster leases in Port Stephens, north of Newcastle, are set to be cleaned up under a move by the State Government.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2011/05/08/3210700.htm?site=newcastle>

Its oyster time in Narooma

[Oyster growers on Narooma's Wagonga Inlet are hopeful of supplying the oyster bar and other outlets during this year's Narooma Oyster Festival.][Growers are also looking ahead, working on an Environmental Management System to tackle urban, agricultural and bushland runoff into the inlet]

<http://covers.ruralpress.com/frontpages/66/51985.pdf>

Oyster thefts plague Great Lakes region

There have been more oyster thefts in the Great Lakes region in the lead up to Easter, prompting renewed police patrols of the area.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2011/04/26/3200288.htm>

Consumers shell out \$100 for an oyster

Oysters ten times bigger than average, and costing \$100 each, are becoming a popular challenge for consumers in South Australia

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/201105/s3215966.htm>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5qwdhodtj-l>

Turning the Tide in Favour of Cleaner Oysters

Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Dr Mike Kelly, today launched improved environmental management systems designed to increase sustainability for the oyster industry around Broken Bay, NSW.

<http://simonfoodfavourites.blogspot.com/2011/04/broken-bay-oysters-oceanwatch-ems.html>

<http://www.brokenbayoysters.com.au/events/turning-the-tide-in-favour-of-cleaner-oysters/>

Two-day oyster festival 'boon' for Narooma

This year's Narooma Oyster Festival, was extended to two days and had thousands of visitors. The 12-meter oyster bar was busy for the entire festival with customers having to wait for their orders as visitors went crazy for oysters!

As part of the Festival, there was an option to participate in the **Oyster Ultimate Experience**. For \$50 ticket, you spent an hour with one of the south coast oyster growers learning about oyster farming, tasting oysters from 5 different estuaries along the south coast and enjoying some refreshing wine. Tickets for the event were sold out despite multiple sessions.

-“It was a great opportunity to taste oysters from different locations - I was really impressed about how different they tasted!”- Canberra visitor

-“I really enjoyed the event, great set-up and very interesting. The oyster farmer made it so interesting” – Sydney visitor



Enjoying the Narooma oyster festival!

Newsletters

NSW Farmers Association: Oyster Committee newsletter

http://www.nswfarmers.org.au/policy_committees/oyster

Industry and Investment, Aquaculture newsletter

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/aquaculture/publications/aquaculture-newsletter>

OceanWatch newsletter

<http://www.oceanwatch.org.au/category/news/>

FISH Magazine (newsletter of the Fisheries Research & Development Corporation - FRDC)

<http://www.frdc.com.au/resources/fish>

Catchment Management Authorities

Northern Rivers:

http://www.northern.cma.nsw.gov.au/news_eneews.php

Hunter Central Rivers:

http://www.hcr.cma.nsw.gov.au/default.asp?section_id=54

Hawkesbury-Nepean:

<http://www.hn.cma.nsw.gov.au/resourcelibrary/>

Sydney Metropolitan:

<http://www.sydney.cma.nsw.gov.au/publications/recent-publications.html>

Southern Rivers:

http://www.southern.cma.nsw.gov.au/news_publications-newsletters.php

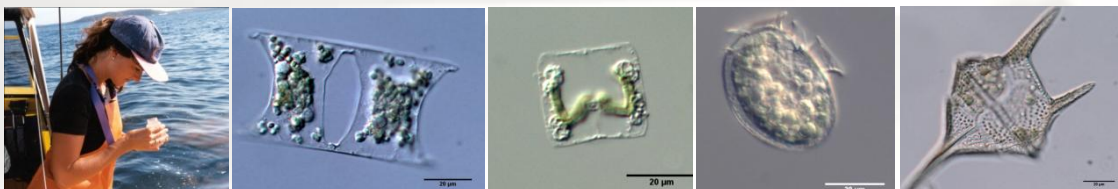
Oyster Related Research

Microalgal biodiversity in the coastal waters of New South Wales, Australia.

With over half a century of physical and chemical data from south-eastern coastal waters of Australia now under review by marine scientists, climate-related trends in water chemistry, temperature and physical circulation are emerging, with consequences predicted for phytoplankton ecology. This PhD study aims to investigate the spatial and temporal patterns of microalgae along the New South Wales coastline in light of these climate-related variations. Changes in species composition and abundance, frequency and type of reported microalgal blooms, tropical species incidence and duration, timing of spring bloom onset, climate change indicator species and the presence and enumeration of toxic/nuisance taxa will be investigated in light of associated physicochemical data.

Toxic phytoplankton data collected from thirty oyster-growing estuaries will be investigated for spatial and temporal trends in toxic episodes. This information will provide a clearer idea of the risks phytoplankton pose to the shellfish industry. It will provide information about high and low risk estuaries/sites and how toxic species are changing in abundance and distribution along our coastline. With this improved understanding, management decisions can better minimise the risk from biotoxin events, resulting in greater market security for producers and consumers alike.

This project will also investigate one of the very common, highly toxic microalgae occurring in Sydney coastal waters - the diatom genus *Pseudo-nitzschia* (producers of the extremely toxic domoic acid). Species belonging to this genus are not all toxic and microscopic examination to species level is not always conclusive. This group will be examined using electron microscopy and molecular techniques with the aim of resolving the taxonomy of this genus within Australian coastal waters. This may lead to establishing a rapid assessment tool for future monitoring.



Penelope Ajani, PhD Candidate, Macquarie University Penelope.Ajani@mq.edu.au

Funded: Australian Postgrad. Award, Australian Biological Resources Study & NSW Food Authority

Coming Events

7th – 10th June - World Aquaculture 2011 - Aquaculture for a Changing World - Brazil
<https://www.was.org/WasMeetings/meetings/Default.aspx?code=WA2011>

5th July - First Australasian Scientific Conference on Aquatic Animal Health – Cairns
<http://www.frdc.com.au/research/AAH-Conference>

15th – 18th September - 4th International Oyster Symposium, World Oyster Society – Hobart
http://www.worldoyster.org/index_e.html

23rd – 25th October - Seafood Directions Conference – Gold Coast
www.seafooddirections2011.com

8th – 11th November - NSW Coastal Conference – Tweed Heads
<http://www.coastalconference.com/>

For other Aquaculture conferences worldwide:
<http://www.conferencealerts.com/aqua.htm>

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