

Sustainable fisheries

Advancing a sustainable seafood industry

One of the key activities for OceanWatch Australia is working with seafood industry members to advance the sustainability of Australian fisheries and introduce sustainable technologies and behaviours .

The primary objective is to work with the fishing industry on the uptake of environmental best practice in the industry and of effective and practical methods and technologies that minimise the catch of non-target species (by-catch).

This program is delivered predominately to the professional sector through OceanWatch's national environmental extension service called [SeaNet](#). SeaNet has been running since 1999 and is currently funded by the Australian Government's *Caring for Our Country* grant scheme. It has a long list of achievements aimed at improving industry's responsible fishing credentials and biodiversity conservation in action, protecting species, reducing by-catch, introducing sustainable technologies and behaviours. See [SeaNet 10 years of achievements booklet](#).

The SeaNet program is directed by a [National Steering Committee](#) that includes seafood industry leaders and representatives of Australian Government departments and agencies. The committee meets to set and oversee the [SeaNet Strategic Plan](#).

SeaNet officers currently operate in [QLD \(Far North and South East\), NT, WA, NSW, VIC, TAS and SA](#). These officers provide information and advice to fishers on environmental impacts, development of environmental management systems and the take-up of improved fishing gear, new technologies and methods. At the state and Territory level, SeaNet also works with a local [reference group](#).

SeaNet officers also work with fishery managers and researchers to develop improved methods and technologies as well assist with their implementation.

As well, the Australian Government is using SeaNet to [raise awareness of marine pests](#) among fishers and encourage the take up of [new protocols](#) aimed at preventing the introduction or spread of marine pests in fisheries that are currently pest free.

OceanWatch Australia's [Tide to Table program](#) undertakes projects to improve sustainability by rehabilitating environments that have been degraded, as well as to change the behaviour and practices which cause these problems in the first place.

The [Tide to Table program](#) established in 2004, has been very successful as it has involved local land and marine producers, businesses, communities and government agencies. By working together, these groups find by finding practical 'on-ground' solutions that rehabilitate river systems and estuaries. These local projects improve water quality, rehabilitate fish habitat and rebuild resilience in the environment.