



**Niall Blair**  
Minister for Primary Industries  
Minister for Regional Water  
Minister for Trade and Industry

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **GOVERNMENT PARTNERS WITH OCEANWATCH TO DRIVE 'BEST PRACTICE' IN NSW SEAFOOD**

*Editor's note: Grabs, case study and vision available [here](#)*

The NSW Government will invest up to \$800,000 over four years to expand OceanWatch Australia's Master Fisherman program to promote sustainability in the state's seafood industry.

The Master Fisherman program, a joint initiative between industry and government, is designed to enhance the knowledge, skills and professionalism of local fishers.

Minister for Primary Industries, Niall Blair said the funding commitment is a win-win for consumers and the state's fishing industry.

"Now, more than ever, consumers want to know where and how their seafood is sourced," Mr Blair said.

"Fishers who sign up to this program are ensuring environmentally friendly practices and going above and beyond to look after their product so their community has the best fish on their dish.

OceanWatch began the program in 2014 to raise the profile of the fishing industry amongst the community and improve industry standards. Since then, the program has seen a reduction in bycatch and improved workplace health and safety, as well as improved animal welfare and marine pest management. Other states are now keen to adopt similar programs to ensure the sustainability of their industries.

Mr Blair said the NSW seafood industry, including aquaculture and oyster farmers, generates over half a billion dollars of economic activity each year and employs more than 4000 people.

"This commitment is yet another example of how the NSW Government is supporting local jobs and economies, especially for the state's coastal communities," Mr Blair said.

The program is supported by NSW Fishing Industry Training Committee, NSW Department of Primary Industries, Master Fish Merchants' Association of Australia, Professional Fishermans Association, NSW Co-ops Association and the Sydney Fish Market.

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