

Precision Seafood Harvesting Programme Quarterly Progress Report (April - June 2013)

Executive Summary

The Precision Seafood Harvesting programme has now completed its fifth quarter of PGP funded activity. From a single concept design, the programme now has three sizes of prototype harvesting systems in development to suit the different sized test vessels. One design is already in beta testing and the two others are expected to commence beta testing this year. Stability in the performance for these base designs, for low fatigue and low damage delivery of targeted species of fish, is allowing second tier objectives to be prioritised over the next period. These will include objectives of improved fish handling, selectivity and acquisition. The marketing and communication strategy is also being progressed in-line with these testing results and using newly developed methodologies to define and communicate the criteria for improved performance. Significant points to note over this quarter were:

- Commercial testing of the first in-shore (snapper) beta (β) specification design commenced in June 2013. Preparations for the release of the second β -specification are in the final stages. Initial results from the early commercial testing have been promising. Feedback and notes from the crew have been adopted into several minor design improvements.
- Testing of the first off-shore (hoki) low fatigue design is progressing and it is anticipated that delivery of the third beta specification intended for off-shore (deepwater) will be on schedule and within the 2013/14 year.
- Formal protection of the intellectual property is progressing with the filing of the international patent application (PCT) this quarter.
- This quarter the PSH programme expenditure was under budget as was the expenditure for the full year. The most significant area of underspend was due to delayed implementation of the commercial testing phase.
- Controlled landings of fish that were harvested using the new technology have provided good results to date. These landings have included the first deliveries of live fish for market evaluation.
- Marketing and communication objectives are being progressed. A selection process has resulted in an external marketing company being engaged for the purpose of developing strategy and delivery of market outcomes for the PSH programme.
- Assessment tools for the measurement of quality and sustainability performance have been developed and are now in the early stages of execution.
- The deployment of stable prototype harvesting system designs are allowing progress to increase on selectivity and handling objectives. These will be a priority for the PSH programme moving into the 2013/14 year.