

Productive Partnerships:

The development of a tropical rock oyster farm on South Goulburn Island



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Traditional Owner aspirations

- TO's from Tiwi Islands and South Goulburn Island approached NT fisheries in 2009
- Desire for rock oyster farming on country
- History: re-establish a successful Aboriginal tropical rock oyster industry
- Culturally aligned employment and economic opportunities



Black-lip rock oysters

- Native Species that Occurs in the NT
- History of harvesting locally for food
- Good Oyster for Farming: Grows well and Tastes great



Tropical Oyster Advisory Group

- Part of the Yagbani Aboriginal Corporation Executive Board
- Making decisions about how to develop their oyster farming business
- Community ownership
- NTG goal supporting Aboriginal ownership and business development



Wild Oyster Broodstock Collection

- Local Knowledge
 - Where large Black-lip oysters can be found
 - How to spot the Black-lip oysters
- Broodstock oysters sent to Darwin Aquaculture Centre for Breeding
- Hatchery Production



Wild spat collection

- Potential low cost method for collecting rock oyster spat for grow-out
- Training in construction and site selection
- Combining traditional knowledge and oyster farming technology



Oyster Grow-out sites

- 3 sites trialled
 - Wigu
 - Fletchers
 - Mardbalk
- Growth and Survival
- Water Quality sampling



Oyster Grow-out Systems

- Floating Baskets, Post and Rail, Intertidal longlines
- Preliminary Grow-out trials show ~18 months to market Size 70mm
- Measure growth and survival
- Intertidal longlines most suitable



Farm Site Selection

- TO commitment to establish farm
 - MOU
- Hatchery success
- Fletchers Point Site Selected
 - Oyster Growth
 - Water quality
 - Suitable site
 - Access- car and boat



Farm Construction

- September 2018- 200 metres oyster longline
- 2018/2019 Wet season- Additional 300 metres longline
- September 2019- 1200 metres longline



Growing oysters

- Grading
- Cleaning Baskets- over catch and biofouling
- Longline maintenance
- Oyster harvest: Processing and Packing



Future Vision

- Oysters Are Our Goldmine!
- Develop Sustainable Commercial Oyster Farm on South Goulburn Island
- South Goulburn Island Black-lip rock oysters on restaurant plates in Darwin



Acknowledgements

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