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## JCU and MBD lead Singapore aquaculture delegation

James Cook University and MBD are helping spearhead a Townsville Enterprise delegation to Singapore that will expand capacity for the export of Australian scientific and technological know-how in sustainable prawn production to the Asia Pacific region.

In recognition of the enormous rise in population increase driven demand for sustainably farmed seafood, JCU plans rolling out a tropical aquaculture program through its Singapore campus that will build upon a highly successful ten year collaborative research and development relationship in Townsville with aquaculture water bioremediation expert, MBD.

Through a team based in Vietnam, MBD is already working on large scale aquaculture water bioremediation solutions in the region and will commercialise the design and delivery of major projects, based upon its award winning HRAP Bioremediation System, over coming years.

MBD recently announced the acquisition of the Queensland based tiger prawn and cobia farmer, Pacific Reef Fisheries – including the land and permits needed to construct a new 259 hectare state-of-the-art prawn and seaweed production facility at Guthalungra, near Bowen that will see a near quadrupling of prawn production. MBD is now also at Stage 1 commissioning of its new \$13M natural astaxanthin production facility at Ayr that will enable the inclusion of nutritious natural astaxanthin in prawn feed, in place of synthetic pigment.

Addressing the 2017 Townsville Enterprise ‘Singapore Insights Delegation’ today, MBD Managing Director, Andrew Lawson said research and development funded by MBD and government at JCU Townsville will pay enormous dividends to Australia by “unlocking the door to the first major expansion of the Queensland prawn industry in 15 years.”

“If not for the visionary work undertaken by MBD in our ground-breaking collaborative partnership with James Cook University, the sustainable economic expansion of the prawn industry adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park would have remained a dream. By commercialising a solid on-going pipeline of our research and development work at JCU, we’re keeping our customers and investors at the cutting edge of modular and scalable, sustainable aquaculture – and that’s a very exciting place for us to be”, Andrew Lawson said.

Mr Lawson noted that Northern Australia is currently the epicentre for some of Australia’s biggest aquaculture industries which collectively account for approximately \$300 million of aquaculture product annually – with strong potential for additional growth thanks to MBD’s breakthrough seaweed based water bioremediation solutions.

“James Cook University and MBD are well positioned to work with Singaporean interests around disease management, genetics, bioremediation, environmental and ecological sustainability innovation, skilled workforce development, achieving scale, and food safety – especially within the fast growing prawn aquaculture segment”, he said.

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