

Over the past 15 or so years that the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) has been in operation they have partnered the Department of Fisheries in the successful management of the marine natural resources of this State. Whilst their charter has been to promote the sustainability and development of the seafood industry within Australia, they have recognised the fundamental need to ensure the sustainability of the underlying resource base. Many of the resources that have been the focus of FRDC projects are also the target of recreational fishers, and many projects provide overall benefits to the general marine ecosystem with subsequent benefits to the whole community.

Such a large spillover of benefits from such projects provides a very significant level of public good and over 50% of FRDC funded projects could be classified as having a sustainability focus. In addition, the benefits to the wider community can be demonstrated by the significant level of co-investment by the State Government across Australia, on behalf of the broader community. In Western Australia, this occurs from both in kind contributions of Department of Fisheries staff working on these projects and in some case additional cash contributions to the project.

The research that has been funded by the FRDC has been a significant factor in the high management success of the marine resources in WA. Most of our key resources have benefited directly from one of more FRDC projects. This positive achievement is reported annually to the WA Parliament in our State of the Fisheries Report.

We very clearly see the ongoing need for the investment in the fisheries resources of Australia, and we propose that the focus remain on those aspects related to effective natural resource management.