



AquaNet

Directed Call for Proposals July 30, 2004

AquaNet is inviting proposals in the area of shellfish. The attached document describes the background and rationale, suggested team members, partners and deliverables.

Evaluation criteria for the proposal, the submission process and a description of AquaNet policies and procedures pertaining to the awarding and monitoring of research grants are posted in the research section of AquaNet's Website at www.aquanet.ca.

AquaNet invites applications from all eligible researchers in the fields described. To be eligible, research applicants must

- state relevance to the Canadian aquaculture sector;
- have a partner who will commit a minimum of 50% of the funding required; and
- be able to commit to a quick turn-around of results, i.e. within one year of project initiation.

Deadline for application: September 10, 2004

Research Question:

What are the strategies to enhance shellfish aquaculture productivity and profitability in Canada?

Rationale and justification:

Expansion of shellfish aquaculture remains a key priority for both levels of government – federal and provincial - especially as it creates opportunities for First Nations and coastal communities. In recent years, however, the Canadian shellfish aquaculture sector has experienced significant price and market erosions, leading to consolidation and a sense of uncertainty in the sector. High shellfish mortality rates continue to affect sector efficiency and profitability. In addition to environmental conditions, several characteristics of shellfish, including physiology, growth, age, nutritional state, genetic background, and health, impact performance and production.

There is a need to develop an integrated approach to shellfish sector development that involves improving sector productivity, updating environmental (ecosystem) management criteria and transferring research results.

With respect to proposal submissions, preference will be given to focused and interdisciplinary projects whose results will solve a key problem in a species of economic importance.

Members of the interdisciplinary research team(s) should have expertise in:

- Shellfish physiology
- Shellfish genetics and selective breeding
- Shellfish health management
- Shellfish husbandry and ecology
- Oceanography/modeling
- Economics
- First Nations / Coastal communities history
- First Nations traditional and local knowledge
- Ecology
- Human health and nutrition

Partners

- Shellfish growers and their supporting organisations
- Government regulators and managers
- Companies involved in shellfish health management
- Shellfish processing and marketing companies
- First Nations, NGOs

Deliverables

- Knowledge of biological attributes for improved shellfish production efficiencies (shellfish survival, growth, health) and increases in profitability
- Standard operating protocols (SOP) /improved husbandry practices and economic implications
- Improved/updated site assessment advice for regulators
- Strategies for diversification, commercialization and product development
- Highly qualified personnel (graduate students and post-doctoral fellows)
- Improved investor confidence