



Southern Rock Lobster Culture in South Australia

Aquaculture SA

Aquaculture

Southern Rock Lobster (*Jasus edwardsii*) aquaculture is being investigated as a means to increasing value to the existing Rock Lobster fishing industry.

Currently the fishery lands just over 3,000 tonnes of Southern Rock Lobster a year in South Australia. It is envisaged that aquaculture could, one day, add value to the existing lobster fishery by adding weight and improving flesh quality of wild caught stocks.

At present, the Rock Lobster aquaculture industry in South Australia involves taking a small proportion of legal sized Rock Lobster (from the fishery) and holding them in sea-based pontoons in Port Lincoln and Kangaroo Island until the off-season. In doing this, it is possible to make the lobsters available to the international markets all year round.

The Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) Rock Lobster enhancement and Aquaculture Sub-program, is a national research program which involves scientists from South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia and Queensland in various aspects of lobster enhancement and culture. More information about FRDC and associated programs can be viewed at www.frdc.com.au

Fishery

The Southern Rock Lobster fishery in South Australia is divided into two zones; Southern and Northern Zones. Catches have stabilised in both zones and scientific advice indicates that the catch is sustainable (SATLAC 1998). The Southern Zone catch is controlled by catch quota whilst the Northern Zone is controlled by tight restrictions on fishing effort (ie number of fishing days and number of pots per licence).

The Southern Rock Lobster season in South Australia spans between October and May and fishing is carried out from the Great Australian Bight through to the Victorian border. In 1996/97 the Southern Rock Lobster industry in South Australia was worth approximately \$100 million in exports and employed almost 2000 people in South Australia (EconSearch 1997).

References

- ◆ Econsearch 1997. The Economic Impact of the Rock Lobster Industry in South Australia. PIRSA.
- ◆ SARLAC (South Australian Rock Lobster Advisory Council). 1998. SA Rock Lobster Industry Fact Sheets.

