

## **Industry Development projects for the SEF**

Australia's South East Fishery (SEF) is a complex commercial fishery, which operates between the shallow coastal waters off south eastern Australia to a depth of over 1000m off the continental shelf. It is an extremely valuable fishery, targeting species such as blue grenadier, tiger flathead, orange roughy, ling, redfish, ocean perch, school whiting, warehou, and dories.

For decades, most of the research carried out for the SEF has focussed on the collection of biological data, assessment of the status of fish stocks, and more recently, the economics of the fishery and the impacts of fishing on the environment.

In 2000, the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) initiated the SEF Industry Development Subprogram to initiate new research and development projects across the whole of the SEF supply chain. The aim of this subprogram is to increase the value of SEF products by value adding to fish products, adopting new technologies and improving utilisation of catches.

Dr. Ian Knuckey from Queenscliff's Marine and Freshwater Resources Institute heads up the SEF Industry Development Subprogram, which is backed up by an industry-based steering committee. Since its commencement in 2000, the Subprogram has begun to initiate a number of projects including:

- (i) **E-BOAT** – Through a partnership between software developers (OLRAC) and the South East Trawl Fishing Industry Association (SETFIA), software has been developed to enable date, time, position, depth and water temperature information to be automatically recorded for each shot together with catch composition and environmental information entered directly by the skipper. This data can then be analysed, graphed and incorporated into stock assessments. In the long term, SETFIA believes that a fleet of fishing "E-boats" could provide invaluable information to fishers, researchers and managers alike, whilst significantly reducing the costs to industry of managing the fishery. It also has the potential to open up electronic marketing sites to fishers for a more efficient way of marketing and selling fish.
- (ii) **Skills and training packages** – the development of specialised packages to improve skills and training across the SEF's supply chain, especially in areas such as product handling, food safety and OH&S. This work is being done in conjunction with Astrid McCormick of Seafood Training Victoria.
- (iii) **Waste utilisation** – the development of suitable cost-effective techniques to process the wide variety of discarded fish-waste from the SEF into a useable form such as aquaculture feed or organic fertilisers.

For more information about the industry development subprogram please contact Ian Knuckey at MAFRI on 52580 111 or [ian.knuckey@nre.vic.gov.au](mailto:ian.knuckey@nre.vic.gov.au)