



MEDIA RELEASE

Minister Announces Awareness Programme

Following the Coalition Launch of their Policy Platform “Strengthening and Protecting Australia’s Fishing Industry” SEA Chairman, Dr Ron Edwards, spoke with Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eric Abetz to seek clarification regarding seafood promotion.

“The Minister said he can assure the SEA Board (and its members) that from his point of view the \$4m Environmental Recognition Fund is there for Seafood Promotion and that I am free to quote him as such. He made no bones about the fact that the money is there for seafood promotion and, as a result, we will be in contact with the Department to discuss the programme”, highlighted Ron.

In his speech the Minister had said “The Australian seafood industry is subject to strict environmental standards, and is a world leader in environmental performance. Consumers, both internationally and domestically, are beginning to demand seafood that is not just premium in quality but that has been produced in a responsible and sustainable way. The Australian seafood industry is well placed to capitalise on this emerging trend. The Coalition Government will commit \$4 million to an Environmental Recognition Fund to build awareness of the premium sustainability of Australian seafood and to assist the industry to take advantage of its considerable environmental progress.”

Ron added that “SEA, in conjunction with its partnership in Seafood Services Australia Ltd, a leader in environmental sustainable management, is committed to work with industry and Government to design a programme which will build awareness of the world leading environmental position of the Australian seafood industry, within both domestic and international markets and establish a competitive grants programme to assist Australian fisheries and businesses, on a dollar for dollar basis, to undertake independent environmental certification. This is a point of difference in the global market that Australia competes in and it is essential that the industry benefits from all the hard work that has been done. As highlighted by Mitch Tonks, UK TV chef, restaurant owner and purveyor of fine seafood, said when he was in Australia last month, ‘the environmental work being done in the Australian seafood industry is world class and needs to be promoted’ and this now gives us that opportunity.”

SEA will be promoting the SSA Network activities to its membership and reminds everyone that the next of those will be in Adelaide on 28 November 2007 – information can be seen at <http://www.seafood.net.au/network/welcome.php>

FURTHER INFORMATION: SEA Chairman, Dr Ron Edwards, 0408 925 805. Also see the SEA website <http://www.seafoodpromotion.com> and SSA website <http://www.seafood.net.au>.

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