

## ALGAE SET TO PROVIDE \$20 MILLION INJECTION

**REGINA LOVIC - THE BURDEKIN GROWER - FRIDAY APRIL 17<sup>TH</sup> 2015**

IF Pacific Reef Fisheries get the final approval they need to expand their facility into Guthalungra, algae research mastermind's MBD have vowed to follow with plans to invest \$20 million in North Queensland projects.

MDB Energy Limited have proven their technology which uses algae to clean dirty farm water is worth expanding into Queensland and overseas after trials completed last year.

The Pacific Reef Fisheries' Ayr farm pioneered the technology where water from prawn ponds is successfully filtered and cleaned before being put back into the Great Barrier Reef area.

MBD Energy Limited managing director Andrew Lawson said the researchers are also looking at growing red algae in other areas in freshwater in the Burdekin area this year.

"North Queensland and in particular the Burdekin area hold great promise for investment and job growth over the coming years," he said.

"MBD has been investigating uses for algae at its R & D facility at James Cook University over the past six years.

"The facility is one of the world's largest dedicated Algae facilities.

"The potential match with the requirement for low cost remediation of water for the aquaculture industry led to MBD pursuing the demonstration project at Pacific Reef.

"In addition to cleaning the water MBD expects the sales of the algae to grow in value as we target high value products and increase production volumes.

"The trials verified the effectiveness of the system at large scale," he said.

"The results offer for the first time a low cost system that can be applied to expansion and new projects along the coastline.

"Subject to final approval for the outflow pipe Pacific Reef Fisheries are hoping to receive a permit for a new 259 ha farm at Guthalungra.

"This farm will operate under the zero nett discharge regulations and be an exciting demonstration for the prawn industry.

Mr Lawson said the project will create more than 150 new jobs and significant investment for the region with the hope of more projects for the region in the coming years.

"With more than 70 per cent of Australia's seafood imported this represents a major development opportunity for the region," he said.

"China recognised the opportunity to build a large aquaculture industry 20 years ago.

"Over the last 10 years this has grown to generate more than \$10 billion per year of food.

"On the back of progress and large scale demonstration MBD has continued to receive strong interest across the NQ aquatic and cane industries for the bioremediation technology.

“We are investigating running an industry based trial for the clean-up of water at a cane farm or facility in the second half of this year with a view to expand to large scale commercial projects in 2016.”



CLEANING WATER: MDB Energy Limited's algae research site at Pacific Reef Fisheries.