SANDFISH PRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF SEA RANCHING IN NORTHERN AUSTRALIA

Will Bowman
Fishing grounds extend from Cape Don to Queensland border
Collection by hand or diving with hookah unit
Began in September 2004 at the Darwin Aquaculture Centre (DAC)

By late 2005 able to routinely run larvae through the hatchery depending on broodstock availability
- 5g to 290g in seven months
- Growth rate peaked at 2.5g per day
Relocated the hatchery within DAC to increase capacity

Actively sought to secure farm site suitable for sandfish production
Current hatchery
Salinity maintained at 30‰
Temperature range 27 °C – 31°C
- Six 0.1ha ponds
- Eight 1ha ponds
- 3ha currently under production
- 4ha being set up
- Salinity in the reservoir 24.6‰ – 38.6‰
- Temperature range 24.7°C – 35.2°C
- Salinity at the discharge 5‰ - 42.9‰
Sea Ranching

- Umbakumba community – Groote Eylandt
- ‘Little Lagoon’
Site Characteristics

**FOR**
- Existing stocks
- Suitable habitat
- Good water visibility
- Low tidal range (up to 1.5m)
- Protected from weather

**AGAINST**
- Distance from hatchery
- Logistical difficulties
Future

- Pond management
- System design
- Viability of sea ranching
- Bio-economic model
Thank you