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Trailer-mounted fish stunner 'transforms' operations for Australian Murray Cod producer

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By Responsible Seafood Advocate

Aquna Sustainable Murray Cod report 'vast improvement' in welfare and efficiency since installing trailer-mounted fish stunner

Scotland-based Ace Aquatec has successfully installed its first trailer-mounted in-water fish stunner for Australian aquaculture producer Aquna Sustainable Murray Cod.

Overseen by Australian distributor Fresh by Design, the trailer-mounted fish stunner is integrated with Aquna's pumping system – a bespoke modification meaning there's a seamless transition from water to ice.

Aquna Sustainable Murray Cod reported "a vast improvement" in the fish welfare during the harvesting process since installing the fish stunner in April, noting "huge strides" in reducing the environmental impact of their harvesting practices.

"By working so closely with the team at Aquna Sustainable Murray Cod, we have developed a unique




Aquna Sustainable Murray Cod report a “vast improvement” in welfare and efficiency since installing a trailer-mounted in-water fish stunner. Photo courtesy of Ace Aquatec.

stunner system that not only improves the welfare of the fish, but greatly improves the efficiency of the whole process, provides safer conditions for staff and minimizes the environmental impact of the harvesting process,” said Tara McGregor-Woodhams, CSMO of Ace Aquatec.

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As one of the few Murray Cod fisheries in the region, Aquna Sustainable Murray Cod supplies premium, pond-grown produce for the iconic Australian fish, which has increased in popularity in recent years. Situated in remote and challenging landscape, Aquna was looking for a solution that enabled them to harvest fish in a more efficient and ethical manner and opted for Ace Aquatec’s in-water stunning technology, which has a demonstrable track record of reducing fish stress at the point of harvest.

The in-water nature of Ace Aquatec's humane stunner solution no longer requires Aquna to use percussion-stunning techniques, which can be stressful for fish and the staff who handle them. The bespoke solution also means that live fish are no longer transported over long distances, which was stressful to fish and required the use of large vehicles.

"Our sites are spread across 200 km (124 miles) so the tailored solution offered by Ace Aquatec has allowed us to integrate with a mobile trailer to harvest on-site at a time that works for us which has made a huge difference to us in terms of welfare and fish quality," said Mat Ryan, managing director of Aquna Sustainable Murray Cod. "Not to mention the vast reduction in on-road transport and consequent environmental impact.



Newcomer Murray Cod makes Australia's most-wanted list

Though relatively new to the worldwide market, the perch species farmed by Aquna Sustainable Murray Cod in Australia is in high demand.



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The growing popularity of Murray Cod among the high-end restaurant market, along with interest from domestic and international markets including the United States, Spain and Japan, means that efficiency was also a key consideration in developing the stunner system. Aquna Sustainable Murray Cod aspires to produce 10,000 tons by 2030, and the installation of this technology will reportedly support this growth as the popularity of the fish continues to increase.

"Aquna Sustainable Murray Cod has big growth plans, but only if this is done in a high-welfare, high-quality way, which the installation of the stunner allows us to do in so many respects," said Ryan.

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