



**THE CRAWFORD FUND**  
*For a Food Secure World*

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Media are welcome to attend**

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### **SMALL INDIGENOUS FISH CAN HAVE A BIG IMPACT IN NUTRITION AND HEALTH**

Fish can play a vital role in improving the nutritional quality of diets for the poor and offer a unique opportunity to address food security and malnutrition. It's important that small indigenous fish species are not overlooked.

This will be the key message of a co-presentation by Dr Jessica Bogard, Nutrition Systems Scientist at CSIRO and Dr Shamia Chowdhury, Nutrition Specialist at WorldFish, to *“Reshaping Agriculture for Better Nutrition: The Agriculture, Food, Nutrition, Health Nexus”*, the 2018 Crawford Fund annual conference in Canberra on 13-14 August. Drs Bogard and Chowdhury will join international and Australian specialists to consider how to reshape agriculture to address the increasingly urgent and competing needs of the hungry and the over-nourished, and the finite resources of our environment.

“Given widespread malnutrition issues in Bangladesh, and the fact that fish play a vital nutritional role in Bangladeshi diets, there is significant opportunity for fish to play a greater role in contributing to improved food and nutrition security,” said Dr Chowdhury.

“As well as being an important part of the diet in Bangladesh, especially for the poor, fish are also inextricably linked to the culture of the Bangladeshi people and support the livelihoods of more than 17 million people,” she said.

“Nutrient composition analysis has shown wide variability in the nutritional value of different fish species, with small indigenous fish species (SIS) being a particularly rich source of iron, zinc, calcium, vitamin A, vitamin B12 and other micronutrients, in comparison to commonly farmed species,” said Dr Bogard.

“WorldFish and our partners have developed a package of approaches to maximise the benefit of fisheries and aquaculture for nutrition outcomes,” said Dr Chowdhury.

Drs Bogard and Chowdhury will explain the range of activities that have shown numerous benefits for nutrition, gender equity, income, and livelihoods.

These approaches involve: inclusion of nutrient-rich SIS in pond polyculture systems, enhanced stocking of SIS in wetlands, integrated vegetable production on pond dykes and homestead gardens, simple processing of fish to improve suitability for consumption by infants and engaging women in fish harvesting to promote frequent consumption of SIS by women and children.

“Nutrition-sensitive approaches to fish agri-food systems are central to contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals in Bangladesh and beyond,” they concluded.