

<p>Torres Strait <b>PZJA</b> Protected Zone Joint Authority</p>   <p>Queensland Government</p>	<p><b>TORRES STRAIT PROTECTED ZONE JOINT AUTHORITY</b></p>	<p><b>Meeting No. 16 11 December 2003</b></p>
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## ***SUMMARY RECORD***

1. The sixteenth meeting of the Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority (the PZJA) was held in the Torres Strait Regional Authority Boardroom on Thursday Island on Thursday 11 December 2003.
2. The meeting was chaired by the Commonwealth Minister for Fisheries, Forestry and Conservation, Senator the Hon Ian Macdonald. Queensland was represented by the Queensland Minister for Primary Industries and Rural Communities, the Hon Henry Palaszczuk (who participated by phone). The Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) was represented by Mr Terry Waia, Chair of the Torres Strait Regional Authority.
3. Invited stakeholders were allowed to participate in the PZJA meeting as observers. This enabled the Ministers and Mr Waia to seek stakeholder input to key issues as they were considered. A list of meeting participants, including observers, is annexed as **Attachment A**.
4. The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone including representatives from PNG, Torres Strait and other observers who had travelled to attend the meeting. The Chair and other members noted that we had some very difficult decisions to make at this meeting. Minister Palaszczuk apologised for not being able to attend the meeting in person. Mr Waia added his comments to the opening that we are looking to have sustainable fisheries for our children's future and he thanked everyone for coming today.
5. Mr Jack Billy opened the meeting with a prayer.

### **Agenda**

6. The order of agenda was changed to consider rock lobster agenda items first followed by the fin-fish and then the prawn fishery.

The agenda for the meeting is annexed as **Attachment B**.

### **Outcomes**

7. The outcomes from the meeting are annexed as **Attachment C**.

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

### **PZJA MEETING**

Senator the Hon Ian Macdonald  
Commonwealth Minister for Fisheries,  
Forestry and Conservation  
Chairman of the Protected Zone Joint  
Authority

Hon Henry Palaszczuk  
Queensland Minister for Primary  
Industries and Rural Communities  
(Participated by phone from Brisbane)

Mr Terry Waia  
Chairman  
Torres Strait Regional Authority

### **RESPECTIVE DELEGATIONS**

#### **Papua New Guinea Delegation**

Augustine Mobiha  
NFA, Senior Fisheries Manager  
Barre Karre  
NFA Torres Fisheries Manager

#### **Commonwealth Delegation**

Minister Macdonald's office  
Vanessa Findlay  
Departmental Liaison Officer  
Angus Nicholls  
Fisheries adviser  
Australian Fisheries Management  
Authority  
Trysh Stone  
Senior Manager, Northern Fisheries  
John Marrington  
Torres Strait Fisheries  
Ryan Murphy  
A/g Manager NPF

Department of Environment and  
Heritage  
Simone Retif

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and  
Forestry (DAFF)

Mr Daryl Quinlivan  
Executive Manager  
Christian McDonald  
Policy Officer

#### **Queensland Government delegation**

Queensland Fisheries Service

Peter Neville (by Phone)  
Deputy Director General  
Mr Jim Gillespie  
General Manager  
Dr John Kung  
Policy Officer

#### **TSRA delegation**

Mike Fordham  
General Manager  
Brendan O'Conner  
Manager Policy  
Peter Yorkston  
Fisheries Coordinator  
Toshio Nakata  
CRC Torres Strait

#### **Traditional Representatives**

Kila Odo (Murray)  
Kenny Bedford (Darnley)  
Lota Warri (Yorke)  
Jack Billy (Coconut)  
Yen Loban (Muarlag)

#### **Industry representatives**

Rock lobster fishery  
Ray Moore  
Gary Christopher  
Prawn fishery  
Mark Millward  
Rob Giddins  
Barry Wilson

#### **Inhabitant**

Nick Schultz  
QSIA  
Rosemary Millward

## MEETING OUTCOMES

**The Prawn Fishery**

1. Each member of the PZJA made comment on the proposed 4 year reduction plan for the Prawn fishery tabled by Senator Macdonald (Attachment E). Mr Waia agrees with the proposed management strategy subject to resolving the application of effort reductions to the TSRA licences and increased flexibility in their use. Minister Palaszczuk thought it was a good plan but that further consultation was required.
2. The PZJA AGREED
  - i) that the issue of effort reduction and associated future management arrangements in the Torres Strait Prawn Fishery be considered at a special meeting of the PZJA in Cairns on Monday 19 January 2004. This would allow stakeholders to conduct consultation on the new proposal introduced by the Chair to reduce effort in the fishery using a staged approach over the next 4 years; and
  - ii) that the agenda for this meeting will be based on the proposed prawn items for this December 2003 meeting of the PZJA (Attachment D), with the addition of an item to consider arrangements to allow more flexible use of the Torres Strait Islander entitlements.
3. The PZJA AGREED to revert the overall net length from 80m back to 88m, including words in the relevant FMN to define the use and possession of nets including try gear.
4. The PZJA APPROVED:
  - i) the process for testing and evaluating new BRDs in the prawn fishery as recommended by TSFMAC;
  - i) that the following BRDs (square mesh codend, square mesh panel, fisheye, bigeye, and radial escape section) be implemented as approved BRDs commencing 1 March 2004 (subject to subsequent review given any new information);
  - ii) the continued use of these BRDs and that their respective specifications be revisited at the end of the 2004 season once pertinent research information is available; and
  - iii) the V Flap BRD for use in the 2004 season, subject to review by the PWG following receipt of information from east coast trials.

**Tropical Rock Lobster Fishery: 2004 management arrangements**

5. The PZJA AGREED to implement for 2004 a ceiling on TIB licences that existed on 11 December 2003 with "CR" symbol and a reduction in TRL commercial tenders in line with the following table.

Number of Tenders before reduction	Number of Tenders 2004
1	1
2	2
3	2
4	3
5	4
6	4
7	5

The PZJA will review these arrangements at the end of 2004 with the expectation that significant progress will be made on developing longer term arrangements for controlling effort in the fishery, which are in line with the spirit and objectives of the *Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1984* and *Torres Strait Treaty 1985*.

6. The PZJA expressed concern regarding the seriousness of the trawling for tropical rock lobsters during their spawning migration in PNG waters and noted that the PNG authorities had taken action against a PNG operator allegedly involved in this activity.

**Tropical Rock Lobster Fishery: Longer term arrangements with specific reference to a TAC**

7. The PZJA NOTED that:

- i) the TRL Working Group concluded that a TAC management approach is not recommended because research resources are insufficient to set the TAC, there are difficulties in allocating the TAC (cultural and other issues), and the limitations on compliance resources preclude effective compliance and monitoring;
- ii) stakeholders are unsure of their access rights in the fishery and are not willing to compromise sufficiently so management can make real progress on fishery management issues; and
- iii) until a clear decision is made regarding priority of access in the rock lobster fishery, Management's ability to implement effective, agreed mechanisms to control effort is limited.
- iii). That the PZJA AGREED to amend FMN 58 to clarify the method of measurement of tropical rock lobster.
- iv). The PZJA REQUESTED a report on fisheries compliance in Torres Strait Fisheries.

## **Strategic Assessment: Assessment Report and Statement of Management Arrangements**

8. The PZJA ENDORSED
- i) the Statement of Management Arrangements for the Torres Strait Rock Lobster Fishery subject to any minor corrections for submission to the Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH); and
  - ii) the rock lobster Strategic Assessment Report for submission to DEH on the basis that the TRLWG and AFMA Board Environment Committee have both supported the document.

### **Finfish Fishery: 2004 management arrangements**

9. The PZJA:
- i) NOTED the Finfish Working Group's view that the potential additional effort during the 2004 season is unlikely to exceed 10%;
  - ii) NOTED the Finfish Working Group's view that there is potential for more interaction between the two sectors should any additional effort be realised, but the risk was considered to be low enough to be acceptable for the short term;
  - iii) NOTED that there is some disagreement with these conclusions and that there remains a residual risk of latent effort being activated; and
  - iv) The PZJA reaffirmed its decision of 12 June 2003 to implement a 30 percent reduction in commercial tenders in the line fishery to operate as an interim measure until the latent effort process is implemented.

### **Finfish Fishery: Allocation of Access**

10. The PZJA:
- i) NOTED the statements regarding conflict made by representatives of the non-indigenous commercial line fishers and Traditional Inhabitants;
  - ii) NOTED the Finfish Working Group was unable to provide a resolution to the access issues in the fishery; and
  - iii) AGREED to provide a set of principles to the FWG to guide the development of long term management arrangements and these should be guided by the "Skehill" report.

### **Finfish Fishery: Finfish Possession Limit**

11. The PZJA AGREED that:
- i) the take and possession limits for Spanish mackerel for holders of Section 19 licences, and reef fish for holders of Torres Strait prawn licences, be reduced to a maximum combined allowance of 20kgs fillets in possession; and
  - ii) these take and possession limits will be reviewed at the December 2004 meeting of the PZJA.
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## **Licence Amalgamation Policy**

12. The PZJA AGREED to extend the moratorium on licence amalgamations until the latent effort process is complete and consultation on the amalgamation policy goes through the normal cycle, which ever is later.

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Dated this            day of            2003

**IAN MACDONALD**  
**Commonwealth Minister for Fisheries, Forestry and Conservation**  
**Chairman of the Protected Zone Joint Authority**  
**For and on behalf of the Protected Zone Joint Authority**

 <p>Torres Strait <b>PZJA</b> Protected Zone Joint Authority</p> <p>Queensland Government</p>	<p>TORRES STRAIT PROTECTED ZONE JOINT AUTHORITY</p>	<p><b>Meeting No. 16 11-12 Dec 2003</b></p>
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**DRAFT AGENDA**

1. Recommendations for the Prawn Fishery
    - a. Dr Die Stock Assessment Review **FOR DECISION**
    - b. 2004 Management Arrangements **FOR DECISION**
    - c. Applying reductions to the Islander, Non Islander and PNG Entitlement **FOR DECISION**
    - d. Other Arrangements **FOR DECISION**
      1. Net Length
      2. Policy for trading days
      3. BRDs
  
  2. Management arrangements for the TRL fishery
    - a. Arrangements for 2004 **FOR DECISION**
    - b. Longer term arrangements and recommendations about a TAC **FOR DISCUSSION**
    - c. Strategic Assessment: Assessment Report and Statement of management arrangements **FOR ENDORSEMENT**
  
  3. Management of the Finfish fishery
    - a. Arrangements for 2004 **FOR DECISION**
    - b. Allocation of access principles **REPORT ON PROGRESS FOR INFORMATION**
    - c. Finfish Possession Limit **FOR DECISION**
- Licence amalgamation policy **FOR DECISION**

## ATTACHMENT D

  <p>Torres Strait <b>PZJA</b> Protected Zone Joint Authority</p> <p>Queensland Government</p>	<p>TORRES STRAIT PROTECTED ZONE JOINT AUTHORITY</p>	<p><b>Meeting No. 17 19 January 2004</b></p>
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### DRAFT AGENDA

1. Recommendations for the Prawn Fishery
  - a. Dr Die Stock Assessment Review **FOR DECISION**
  - b. 2004 Management Arrangements **FOR DECISION**
  - c. Adjusting effort to achieve sustainability **FOR DECISION**
2. Options for increasing the utilisation of the TSRA licences