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| **TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER** **RESOURCE ASSESSMENT GROUP (TRLRAG)**  | **MEETING No. 19****13 December 2016** |
| Torres Strait Fishers Association (TSFA): Constant total allowable catch (TAC) for the TRL Fishery | **Agenda Item 8.1****FOR DISCUSSION AND ADVICE** |

**RECOMMENDATION**

# The RAG discuss and provide advice on the TSFA recommendation for a constant TAC for the TRL Fishery to be based on the average catch of the past 10 years.

**KEY ISSUES**

# The development of the TRL Harvest Strategy will be in consultation with industry members and broader stakeholders once the draft Harvest Strategy Framework (HSF) is agreed by the RAG. It is recommended the RAG consider the TSFA advice during the development of the HSF.

# The Torres Strait Fishers Association (TSFA) provided a paper to AFMA on 4 August 2016 recommending the total allowable catch (TAC) be set based on the average annual catch over the last 10 years (Appendix A). The paper was circulated to the RAG out-of-session on 29 August 2016.

# If the TAC was based on the average of the Torres Strait global catch over the last 10 years (2007 to 2016 inclusive) the recommended TAC would be 639.4 t (Table 1).

# At the CSIRO TRL Science Workshop held at Thursday Island on 2 November 2016 it was noted that if a constant TAC were to be adopted the TAC would need to be set at approximately 400 t to protect the resource when it fluctuates to low levels. If the TAC was set higher there would be an unacceptable risk of overfishing.

**Table 1**. Torres Strait TRL (*Panulirus ornatus*) catch information for 2007 to 2016.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **TIB**  | **TVH** | **PNG** | **TS\_Total** | **Global\_TAC** |
| 2007 | 267 | 269 | 228 | 764 | 842 |
| 2008 | 207 | 100 | 221 | 528 | 751 |
| 2009 | 135 | 91 | 161 | 387 | 450 |
| 2010 | 182 | 279 | 293 | 754 | 853 |
| 2011 | 201 | 503 | 165 | 869 | 803 |
| 2012 | 151 | 370 | 174 | 695 | 964 |
| 2013 | 127 | 362 | 108 | 597 | 871 |
| 2014 | 132 | 273 | 261 | 666 | 616 |
| 2015 | 173.9 | 152.7 | 235.7 | 562.3 | 769 |
| 2016 | 207.1 | 237.6 | 127.1 | 571.8 | 796 |

\*PNG catch data is from 15 August 2016.