



TORRES STRAIT SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING NO. 64

MINUTES

24 JUNE 2014

CHAIR: MR IAN CARTWRIGHT

These are draft minutes for consideration by the Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee. If no comments are received by 11 July 2014 then these minutes will be ratified at the next meeting of the TSSAC.

Prepared by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority on behalf of the Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority



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FINAL AGENDA

1. Meeting Administration

- 1.1. Preliminaries - Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners/Chairs Opening Remarks/Meeting attendance/Declaration of Interests/Apologies
- 1.2. Review and Adoption of Agenda
- 1.3. Correspondence
- 1.4. Ratification of TSSAC 63 Minutes
- 1.5. Action Items from TSSAC 63

2. 2013/14 Research Project Update

- 2.1. Smart phone technology for remote data collection in the Torres Strait Traditional Inhabitant finfish fisheries (UTAS)
- 2.2. Characterization of Traditional subsistence Fisheries in PNG Treaty Communities Project (CSIRO)
- 2.3. Beche de Mer Identification Guide (CSIRO)
- 2.4. Tropical Rock Lobster Assessment/Survey (CSIRO)

3. 2014/2015 Research Project Update

- 3.1. Defining the status of Torres Strait Spanish mackerel to inform future fisheries allocation and sustainable fishing
- 3.2. Improved Torres Strait Prawn Fishery profitability and pathways for a sustained flow of benefits to Torres Strait Island communities

4. TSSAC Processes

- 4.1. 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 Budget
- 4.2. 2014 Annual Operation Plan review (verbal)
- 4.3. 2014-2015 Torres Strait Strategic Research Plan

5. Other business

- 5.1. Update from PZJA Forums (verbal)
- 5.2. Native Title Update (verbal)
- 5.3. Confirmation of TSSAC No. 65

Individuals wishing to attend the meeting as an observer are required to contact the Chair, Mr. Ian Cartwright: c/o TSSAC Executive Officer – Alicia Sabatino (Alicia.sabatino@afma.gov.au) to notify of your desire to attend.





ATTENDANCE – TSSAC #64 (24 June 2014)

The following members and observers were in attendance at TSSAC No. 64:

Members & Observers

Name	Role	Declaration of Interest
Mr. Ian Cartwright	Chairperson	Consultant, AFMA Commissioner
Mr. Shane Fava	AFMA Representative	Fisheries Manager, AFMA
Ms. Alicia Sabatino	Executive Officer (AFMA)	Fisheries Management Officer, AFMA
Dr Michael O'Neill	Scientist	Fisheries Scientist, QDAFF
Ms. Sevaly Sen	Social/Economics Member	Consultant
Dr Stephen Newman	Scientist	Fisheries Scientist, WA Fisheries
Mr. Tom Roberts	Fisheries Queensland Representative	Fisheries Management Officer, QDAFF
Mr. Darren Rowe	Fisheries Queensland Representative	Fisheries Management Officer, QDAFF
Miss Mariana Nahas	TSRA representative	Fisheries Project Manager, TSRA
Mr. Kiwat Lui	Near Western Cluster Representative	TSRA Board Member & PBC Representative

Apologies

Mr Kenny Bedford, TSRA Fisheries Board member

Mr Ian Liviko, PNG NFA





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Action Items – TSSAC #64 (24 June 2014)

No.	Action Item	Agenda no.	Champion	Due date
1.	Email Mariana Nahas (TSRA) to confirm date for final changes to minutes from TSSAC meeting 63.	1.4	AFMA/TSRA	25/6/2014
2.	Send appreciation letter from the TSSAC WG, RAG and MAC Chairs regarding input into the AOP.	1.5	AFMA	9/7/2014
3.	Send AOP Research Priorities Setting table to WG, RAG and MAC Chairs for noting.	1.5	AFMA	9/7/2014
4.	Email from the TSSAC Chair to the TSRA regarding the need for ongoing funding for the UTAS Smart phone project.	2.1	AFMA	29/7/2014
5.	Organise meeting with Sevaly and Ian regarding PNG Treaty Communities project draft report”	2.2	AFMA	25/6/14
6.	Identify peer reviewer for the PNG Treaty Communities Project	2.2	AFMA	16/8/2014
7.	AFMA to distribute BDM final report to TSSAC members.	2.3	AFMA	When available.
8.	Speak to Torres Strait Fishers Association (TSFA) regarding consultation with Ugar and PI Andrew Tobin.	3.1	AFMA	12/8/2014
9.	Email the TSSAC all documents from the Masig prawn meeting	3.2	AFMA	When available.





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10.	Email the TSSAC Andy Bodsworth's report regarding the Prawn project community consultation.	3.2	AFMA	When available.
11.	TRL Surveys to be included on the Agenda at the next TSSAC.	4.1	AFMA	Before next meeting.
12.	Send Budget update to the TSSAC once a decision has been made regarding Andy Bodsworths proposal.	4.1	AFMA	When available.
13.	Send in-depth budget update to the TSSAC before October meeting.	4.1	AFMA	Before next meeting.
14.	AFMA to forward 2014 Final AOP to the TSSAC for final endorsement.	4.2	AFMA	4/7/2014
15.	Email Stanley Lui regarding AOP Turtle & Dugong updates in the Research Priorities table.	4.2	AFMA/TSRA	27/6/2014
16.	Send Native Title paper to the TSSAC or include at the next meeting (What the NT decision is and how it affects research in the TS).	4.2	AFMA	Before next meeting.
17.	AFMA to circulate the Strategic Research Plan final draft to the TSSAC.	4.3	AFMA	When completed.
18.	Investigate options for holding a face to face meeting of the TSSAC on Thursday Island (Need to align with NERP meetings/CSIRO TRL surveys etc	5.3	AFMA	12/8/2014





MINUTES

Preliminaries

Agenda Item 1.1 - Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners/Chairs Opening Remarks/Meeting attendance/Declaration of Interests/Apologies

The Chair welcomed TSSAC members and acknowledged traditional owners. TSRA provided apologies on behalf of Mr Jerry Stephen (observer) and Mr Kenny Bedford (TSRA Fisheries Portfolio Member).

Mr Ian Ilviko phoned in however during the meeting he was encountering phone issues and sent apologies as the signal dropped out.

Agenda Item 1.2 Review and Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted by the committee with no changes.

Agenda Item 1.3 Correspondence

The committee **NOTED** the correspondence sent to full proposal applicants;

- Mr. Andrew Tobin (Spanish Mackerel Project)
- Mr. Andy Bodsworth (Torres Strait prawn Fishery Project)

Agenda Item 1.4 Ratification of TSSAC 63 Minutes

The committee **NOTED** the minutes from TSSAC meeting No.63 however they were unable to be ratified as the TSRA required more time to make amendments. The chair asked Ms Nahas (TSRA) to provide comments to AFMA by the 8th July 2014.

Action Item 1, AFMA to email Ms Nahas confirming date for final changes to minutes from TSSAC meeting 63.

Agenda Item 1.5 Action Items from TSSAC 63

Ms Alicia Sabatino (AFMA) provided the committee with an update of the completed and ongoing action items from the TSSAC meeting 63.

Action items were taken as read noting that correspondence from action items 2 & 3 would be forwarded to Torres Strait Working Groups and Management Advisory Committees as discussed.

Action Item 2, Send letter to the TRLWG Chair, TSPMAC Chair, TRLRAG Chair.

Action Item 3, Send Research Priorities Setting table to the TRLWG Chair, TSPMAC Chair, TRLRAG Chair.

Agenda Item 2 2013/14 Research Project Update

Agenda Item 2.1 Smart phone technology for remote data collection in the Torres Strait Traditional Inhabitant Finfish Fishery

Mr Shane Fava (AFMA) provided an update to the committee detailing that all milestones for the project are up to date (noting the last milestone had delays due to the availability of representatives on Erub). The committee noted that there will be no implications to the project deliverables due to the delay in milestone 3 relating to community visits. The principal investigator (PI) has experienced problems contacting fishers in recent months; however catch data is still being logged into the application.





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At TSSAC meeting 63 there were a discussion relating to the future of the project after TSSAC funding has been exhausted, Mr. Shane Fava stated the possibility of seeking ongoing funding from other agencies such as the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) or the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC). Mr. Shane Fava advised the committee that if there were to be ongoing funding it will be good to have the application rolled out to other Torres Strait communities and that this had been suggested at recent committee meetings. It was also noted that since the application has been introduced there has been an increase in catch data in the Traditional Inhabitant sector on Erub.

Action Item 4, Email the TSRA and FRDC regarding the possibility of ongoing funding for the Smart phone technology for remote data collection in the Torres Strait Traditional Inhabitant Finfish Fishery.

Agenda Item 2.2 Characterization of Traditional subsistence Fisheries in PNG Treaty Communities Project (CSIRO)

The committee **NOTED** the update provided by Mr. Shane Fava and that the project is due for completion at the end of this financial year. AFMA is awaiting a draft final report from the PI. The committee noted that the PI has had difficulty getting data analysed due to the availability of the data analyst. There is a need for the project to be peer reviewed and AFMA is looking into options to engage a suitable reviewer (this will be finalized prior to the October TSSAC meeting).

There was a brief discussion regarding the challenges of the project and that AFMA will need to organise a meeting with Sevaly, Ian and Shane detailing comments to come from the draft final report that will need to be captured in the final report.

Mr. Kiwat Lui (TSRA) asked if the project had scope to look at illegal fishing on Warrior Reef. Mr. Shane Fava explained that there is a possibility that compliance delivery will be reviewed in the next 6 months and that this may impact on the current level of illegal fishing on Warrior Reef. Dr. Stephen Newman (WA Fisheries) suggested that the outcomes of the report should have direct relevance and be of benefit to the National Fisheries Authority (NFA). Furthermore, the project needs to provide future directions and strategic advice for management and to identify future potential research needs.

Action Item 5, Organise meeting with Sevaly and Ian regarding PNG Treaty Communities project "Final Draft Report".

Action Item 6, Investigate options for peer reviewer to review the Characterization of traditional fisheries in the PNG Treaty villages.

Agenda Item 2.3 Beche de Mer Identification Guide

The committee **NOTED** the update regarding the Beche de mer identification guide and that the PI in conjunction with representatives from AFMA, the TSFA and Malu Lamar have recently completed a series of visits to Torres Strait Communities to discuss the content of the identification guide. The project overall has progressed successfully, noting that milestone 4 and 5 have not been forwarded to AFMA as detailed in the milestone schedule. The TSSAC should also note that AFMA is funding the printing of an additional 100 copies of the Beche de mer identification guide and will be distributing these too communities.

Action Item 7, AFMA to distribute final report to TSSAC members.

Agenda Item 2.4 Tropical Rock Lobster Surveys and Stock Assessments

The committee **NOTED** the update regarding the TRL Stock Assessment and Survey Project. Mr. Shane Fava advised the TSSAC that the surveys are currently being conducted in the





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Torres Strait and that the project is tracking well against all required milestones (variations included).

Agenda Item 3.1. Defining the status of Torres Strait Spanish mackerel to inform future fisheries allocation and sustainable fishing

The committee **NOTED** the update provided by AFMA. There was discussion regarding community engagement with Ugar and the impediments that the PI faced regarding consultation regarding the project. Mr. Shane Fava advised the committee that at TSSAC meeting 63 the committee requested clarification on the proposed budget. AFMA has liaised with the PI and an appropriate budget has been finalized, a contract is now in place and the PI is currently setting up infrastructure for the project.. Mr. Kivat Lui recommended that AFMA speak to the TSFA and try to get them to liaise with members of Ugar.

Action Item 8, Speak to TSFA regarding consultation with Ugar and PI Andrew Tobin. There may be possibility that the TSFA can explain to Rocky the benefits of the project.

Agenda Item 3.2 Improved TSPF profitability and pathways for a sustained flow of TSPF benefits to Torres Strait Island Communities

The committee was briefed on the outcomes of the recent community meeting as part of the Improved TSPF profitability and pathways for a sustained flow of TSPF benefits to Torres Strait Island Communities project. The PI visited Masig along with AFMA officers, Industry members and Torres Strait Prawn Management Advisory Committee (TSSAC) members. There was also representation from Traditional Owners from Mer, Erub, Ugar, Masig and Poruma. There was a strong emphasis on proper community consultation discussed at the meeting with positive feedback from all of the communities on the holding of such a meeting. In general the communities supported the project noting that this was a positive step towards progression of the project.

Some community representatives stated that they did not want any hidden agendas and to be kept in the loop throughout the project. Ms. Mariana Nahas advised the committee that the PI was provided with feedback by representatives regarding the impacts of the prawn fishery on the tropical rock lobster (TRL) fishery and seabed in general.

Ms. Sevaly Sen questioned if the people knew that there is a possibility of not having a fishery in the future. Mr. Shane Fava explained the fishery is currently in viable for the small number of active operators however that there are some 40-50 operators' not active and losing money.

The TSSAC **NOTED** the brief update from the stakeholder meeting and AFMA will forward members the meeting report and TSPMAC letter when available.

Action Item 9, AFMA to email the Chairs Summary from the consultation to the TSSAC members.

Action Item 10, AFMA to email the final report from the Improved TSPF profitability and pathways for a sustained flow of TSPF benefits to Torres Strait Island Communities consultation.

TSSAC Processes

Agenda Item 4.1 2013/14 and 2014/15 Budget

The TSSAC **NOTED** the funds committed for the 2013/14 financial year acknowledging that the residual funds available for the 2013/2014 financial year (\$10K) were utilized in the \$80,000K transfer between financial years. The committee also noted the funds committed for the 2014/2015 financial year and the funds available for the 2015/2016 financial year. Mr. Shane Fava advised the TSSAC that there may be a requirement to reduce the Torres Strait





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research budget further in line with budget cuts across the whole of Government. The TSSAC noted the ongoing cost of the TRL Surveys and how it takes up a big portion of the budget. Some of the members felt that it was difficult to fund other research because of the committed funds for the TRL surveys. The chair asked for AFMA to put this on the agenda at the next TSSAC meeting. In particular there is a need to assess whether the TRL survey funding is needed on an annual basis. In this regard, given current and pending management arrangements there needs to be an assessment of whether the stock status advice and hence surveys can be undertaken either say every 2, 3 or 5 years and how robust this advice would be. This discussion is currently being had in most fisheries around Australia.

Action Item 11, TRL Surveys budget to be placed on the Agenda at the next TSSAC meeting to review the ongoing cost associated.

Action Item 12, Send Budget update to the TSSAC once Bosworth's project decision has been made.

Action Item 13, Send in-depth budget update to the TSSAC before October meeting.

Agenda Item 4.2 Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee 2014 Annual Operational Plan

The committee **NOTED** the current status of the TSSAC Annual Operational Plan (AOP). The TSSAC AOP was circulated to the committee and is currently open for comment, Mr. Shane Fava advised the committee of the development of a Research Priorities Table to assist forums in prioritizing research needs.

Mr. Kiwat Lui asked if the Native title decision can be incorporated into this document, Mr. Shane Fava explained to the group that consultation is taking place to address the Native Title concerns and meet the Governments obligations to Traditional Owners. The Chair advised that he is unclear how the Native Title decision effects research and strongly explained that there is a need for future direction in regards to Native Title and research in the Torres Strait. The Chair asked AFMA to provide a paper at the next TSSAC meeting detailing the Native Title decision and research.

Mr. Shane Fava then mentioned that the Strategic Research Plan was provided to Chris Calogeras who is part of the Indigenous Reference Group for comment.

Action Item 14, AFMA to forward 2014 DRAFT AOP to the TSSAC for final endorsement.

Action Item 15, AFMA to email Stanley Lui (TSRA LSMU) regarding AOP updates to Turtle & Dugong research priorities.

Action Item 16, AFMA to provide a paper detailing the Native Title decision and how it affects research in the Torres Strait.

Mr. Shane Fava explained to the TSSAC that the appropriate documents (Research Impediments in the TS by Dr M Nakata and Research protocols) are forwarded to researchers during the call for pre proposal process.

Agenda Item 4.3 Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee 2014-2015 Strategic Research Plan

The committee **NOTED** the current status of the Strategic Research Plan. Mr Shane Fava informed the committee that the Strategic Research Plan was sent to the Indigenous Reference Group and comments has been received back.

Action Item 17, AFMA to circulate the Strategic Research Plan.





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Agenda Item 5 Other Business

Agenda Item 5.1 Update from PZJA Forums

The committee **NOTED** the verbal update given by Mr Shane Fava noting that there has been a Protected Zone Joint Authority (PZJA) Meeting and PZJA Stakeholder forum held this year. The meetings were positive noting that the recent High Court Native Title decision dominated the meeting. Mr Shane Fava explained that AFMA will travel to the communities to discuss the TRL Management Plan. Ms Marianna Nahas provided the committee with an update regarding the Pathway to 100% ownership and detailed that AFMA/TSRA will be travelling to the communities to discuss the draft roadmap.

Agenda Item 5.2 Native Title Update

The committee **NOTED** the update provide by Mr Shane Fava detailing that the Malu Lamar is now a registered body corporate

Agenda Item 5.3 Confirmation of TSSAC meeting 65.

AFMA is supportive of having a face to face meeting on Thursday Island noting that it will need to be in line with other relevant workshops (this could be the NERP workshop etc.).

Mr Kiwat Lui recommended that presentations be done by each researcher highlighting the area of expertise having this in line with a dinner.

Mr Shane Fava advised the committee that the next meeting would include presentations from researchers such as CSIRO (TRL Surveys), the Chair explained that it would be beneficial to have CSIRO present ITQ information. It would also be advantageous to discuss options for surveys/advice on a 2, 3 and 5 year cycle and associated implications.

Action Item 18, AFMA to organize the next TSSAC meeting in line with NERP meeting/CSIRO TRL surveys or even move it to Cairns so we can have the members attend the PNG Bilats.

Meeting closed at 12:53pm

