

30th Protected Zone Joint Authority Meeting

Meeting outcomes

Monday 25 February 2019

Teleconference

Welcome and Apologies

The Chair opened the 30^h meeting of the Protected Zone Joint Authority (PZJA) and welcomed attendees.

1. Determination a Total Allowable Catch for the Tropical Rock Lobster Fishery 2018-19 Fishing Season

1.1. The PZJA **DECIDED** that the Torres Strait Tropical Rock Lobster (TRL) Fishery will have a final

Australian Total Allowable Catch (TAC) between 408,637.5 kg or 544,850 kg for the Australian jurisdiction of for the 2018-19 fishing season, pending agreement with Papua New Guinea (PNG) on catch sharing arrangements under the *Torres Strait Treaty 1985* (the Treaty):

- a. The TRL Resource Assessment Group (TRLRAG) met on 5 February 2019 and recommended a final Recommended Biological Catch (RBC) for the Torres Strait TRL Fishery (inclusive of waters under Australian and PNG jurisdiction) for the 2018-19 fishing season of 641,000 kg;
- b. The TRL Working Group (TRLWG) met on 19 February 2019 to consider the TRLRAG advice, and recommended a final TAC of 641,000 kg for the Torres Strait TRL Fishery for the 2018-19 fishing season.
- c. The final TAC is shared between Australia and PNG as per the terms of the Treaty. The Australian TAC is Australia's catch share of the final TAC, as agreed with PNG in writing. Australia and PNG will meet on 25 February 2019 to finalise catch sharing arrangements. This paper will be updated with final catch sharing arrangements as agreed with PNG prior to consideration by the PZJA;
- d. The Australian TAC is dependent on whether Australia and PNG decide to access their cross-endorsement catch allocations in each other's waters:
 - i. if PNG decides not to access its cross-endorsement catch allocation in Australian waters, under Article 25 of the Treaty, Australia has preferential entitlement to this allocation and the final TAC for the Australian TRL Fishery will be 544,850 kg;
 - ii. if PNG decides to access its full cross-endorsement catch allocation in Australian waters, the final TAC for the Australian TRL Fishery will be no less than 408,637.5 kg;
 - iii. if PNG decides to access part of its cross-endorsement catch allocation in Australian waters, the final TAC for the Australian TRL Fishery will be somewhere between 408,637.5 kg and 544,850 kg.
- e. At a preliminary meeting on 17 January 2019, both Australia and PNG indicated they are unlikely to seek access to their respective cross-endorsement catch allocations for the 2018-19 fishing season. However, at the TRLWG meeting on 19 February 2019, PNG National Fisheries Authority officers indicated that they may be reconsidering this position.

1.2. The PZJA **NOTED** that AFMA (as the PZJA delegate) will complete relevant administrative processes to implement the TAC for the TRL Fishery for the 2018-19 fishing season, in particular:

- a. If required, determining the traditional inhabitant boat (TIB) TAC Catch Date to cease fishing under TIB licences in accordance with the *Torres Strait Fisheries (Tropical Rock Lobster) Management Instrument 2018*. Under the recommended TAC in (1) above, the final TIB TAC will be 270,395.43 kg or 360,527.24 kg. This will only happen if the reported catch from the TIB sector is reached, or will be reached, before 30 September 2019; and
- b. amending conditions on transferable vessel holder (TVH) licence holders with respect to their individual allocation of quota by varying their licence conditions under section 22 of the *Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1984*. The total allocation between TVH licence holders will amount to no more than 33.83 per cent of the final TAC in (1) above. The relative individual allocations will be made consistent with the 2007 catch verification process.

2. 2019-2020 Total Allowable Effort

2.1. The PZJA **DETERMINED** the Total Allowable Effort (TAE) in the Torres Strait Prawn Fishery (TSPF) to be 9,200 days for the 2019 and 2020 fishing seasons, pursuant to subsection 2.5(1) of the *Torres Strait Prawn Fishery Management Plan 2009* (the Plan).

2.2. The PZJA **NOTED** that the:

- a. recommended TAE of 9,200 days is based upon the Plan, the TSPF Harvest Strategy and the reference points determined by the PZJA under subsection 2.4(1) of the Plan.
- b. Torres Strait Prawn Management Advisory Committee (TSPMAC) met in June 2018 and recommended the TAE be set at 9,200 days for the 2019 and 2020 fishing seasons.
- c. TAE-setting process is overdue and the annual renewal of fishing licences has been undertaken by AFMA, including an allocation of fishing days to individual operators based upon a TAE of 9,200 days. The allocation will be amended by AFMA should the PZJA wish to make a different determination.

3. Developmental Permit - Traditional Inhabitant Skills Training

3.1. The PZJA **AGREED** to vary two conditions and add one new condition for the Developmental Permit granted under section 12 of the *Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1984* to Mr Anthony Salam on 5 February 2019, in relation to skills training for Traditional Inhabitants.

3.2. The PZJA **NOTED** that the PZJA agreed out-of-session on 5 February 2019 to grant a Developmental Permit to Mr Salam. The Developmental Permit authorised two non-Traditional Inhabitants to be on board the vessel prescribed to Mr Anthony Salam's Traditional Inhabitant Boat (TIB) licences to train Traditional Inhabitant crew subject to the following training conditions:

- a. Up to two Australian non-Traditional inhabitants, Mr Rory Mangan-Smith and Mr Matthew Kingdon, are permitted to be on board (condition 7) to provide training to trainee Australian Traditional Inhabitant crew members, excluding the master of the boat (condition 8);
- b. Whilst engaging in commercial fishing;
 - i. at least one trainer must accompany the trainee (condition 9); and
 - ii. at least one trainer must be on-board a boat (condition 10).

- 3.3. The PZJA **NOTED** that these conditions did not meet the applicant's proposed operation whereby both trainers would be engaged in fishing operations with trainees on the two tender boats associated with Mr Anthony Salam's TIB licence.
- 3.4. The PZJA **NOTED** that the conditions may also cause the holder to mistakenly believe the Development Permit allows the take of Bech de Mer.
- 3.5. The PZJA **NOTED** that the proposed revised conditions include:
- a. a variation to clause 10 to facilitate the training operation as intended by the applicant;
 - b. removes clause 5(c) which refers to Bech de Mer; and
 - c. adds a new clause 20 stating the holder of this Developmental Permit is not entitled under this permit to take beche-de-mer.
- 3.6. The PZJA **NOTED** that AFMA will review Mr Salam's fishing operation under the Developmental Permit after three months of operation and may recommend further amendment to ensure the fishing operations under the Developmental Permit continue to focus on and deliver skills training benefits to Traditional Inhabitant trainees.

Close

The Chair closed the meeting.

Meeting attendance

PZJA members

Chair

- Senator the Hon. Richard Colbeck, Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources

Member

- Mr Napau Pedro Stephen AM, Chair Torres Strait Regional Authority
- Ms Claire Andersen, Executive Director, Fisheries Queensland as Deputy for The Hon. Mark Furner MP, Queensland Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries

Government Delegations

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

- Ms Anna Willock, Ag/Chief Executive Officer
- Ms Selina Stoute, Manager, Thursday Island
- Mr Steve Hall, Senior Management Officer

Queensland Government Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

- Ms Claire Andersen, Executive Director, Fisheries Queensland (as Deputy for The Hon. Mark Furner MP, Queensland Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries)
- Ms Samantha Miller, Senior Fisheries Manager, Fisheries Queensland

Torres Strait Regional Authority

- Mary Bani, Ag/Chief Executive Officer
- Mark Anderson, Manager, Fisheries Program

Office of Senator the Hon. Richard Colbeck

- Mr Matthew Flood, Advisor – Fisheries

Apologies

PZJA member

The Hon. Mark Furner MP, Queensland Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries