



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

# **TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER WORKING GROUP 16**

## **TRLWG 16**

**Wednesday 5 June 2024**

**830am – 5pm**

**Upstairs Pearl's Building  
Victoria Parade, Thursday Island**

**Meeting Papers**

**TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER WORKING GROUP 16**  
**(TRLWG 16)**

**Wednesday 5 June 2024 | 830am – 5pm**  
**Upstairs Pearl's Building, Thursday Island**

**DRAFT AGENDA (v2)**

**1 PRELIMINARIES**

**1.1 Welcome and apologies**

The Chair will welcome members and observers to the 16th meeting of the TRL Working Group.

**1.2 Adoption of agenda**

The Working Group will be invited to adopt the draft agenda.

**1.3 Declaration of interests**

Members and observers will be invited to declare any real or potential conflicts of interest and determine whether a member may or may not be present during discussion of or decisions made on the matter which is the subject of the conflict.

**1.4 Action items from previous meetings**

The Working Group will be invited to note the status of action items arising from previous meetings.

**1.5 Out of session correspondence**

The WG will be invited to note out of session correspondence on WG matters since the previous meeting

**2 UPDATES FROM MEMBERS**

**2.1 Industry members**

Industry members and observers will be invited to provide an update on matters concerning the Torres Strait TRL Fishery, in particular, providing comment on fishing patterns, behaviours, prices, and market trends for the 2023-24 season so far.

**2.2 Scientific and Economic members**

Scientific and economic members and observers will be invited to provide an update on matters concerning the Torres Strait TRL Fishery.

**2.3 Government agencies**

The Working Group will be invited to note updates from AFMA, TSRA and QDAF on matters concerning the Torres Strait TRL Fishery.

**2.4 Papua New Guinea National Fisheries Authority**

The Working Group will be invited to note a verbal update from the PNG National Fisheries Authority.

## **2.5 Native Title**

The Working Group will be invited to note a verbal update from Malu Lamar (Torres Strait Islander) Corporation RNTBC and other Working Group members on native title matters relevant to the TRL Fishery.

## **3 CHANGES TO MANAGEMENT CONTROLS**

The Working Group will be invited to discuss a review of management controls in the TRL Fishery, noting an overview on changes and proposals to date and provide advice on future changes to be prioritised, assessed and consulted on.

## **4 RESEARCH PRIORITIES**

The Working Group is invited to discuss and provide advice on future research priorities for the TRL Fishery.

CSIRO will also deliver a short presentation on how the new TSRA-funded climate change and fisheries project fits in with other CSIRO research in the Torres Strait. This was an action item from TRLWG 14 (6 July 2023).

## **5 OTHER BUSINESS**

The WG will be invited to raise any other matters for consideration.

## **6 DATE AND VENUE FOR NEXT MEETING**

The WG will be invited to discuss a suitable date for the next Working Group meeting.

**The Chair must approve the attendance of all observers at the meeting. Individuals wishing to join the meeting as an observer must contact the Executive Officer – Georgia Langdon ([georgia.langdon@afma.gov.au](mailto:georgia.langdon@afma.gov.au))**

<b>TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER WORKING GROUP (TRLWG 16)</b>	<b>MEETING 16 5 June 2024</b>
<b>PRELIMINARIES Welcome and apologies</b>	<b>Agenda Item 1.1 For Noting</b>

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the Working Group **NOTE**:
  - a. an acknowledgement of Traditional Owners;
  - b. the Chair's welcome address;
  - c. apologies received from members unable to attend.

## **BACKGROUND**

2. As at 23 May 2024 no apologies had been received.

<b>TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER WORKING GROUP (TRLWG 16)</b>	<b>MEETING 16 5 June 2024</b>
<b>PRELIMINARIES Adoption of agenda</b>	<b>Agenda Item 1.2 For Decision</b>

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the Working Group consider and **ADOPT** the agenda.

## **BACKGROUND**

2. This meeting was noted with members at TRLWG 15 (14 December 2023) with the original intent of evaluating any implemented changes to the 2024 hookah season opening dates. Although changes to the hookah season were not implemented, this meeting is being convened to progress further changes to management controls in the TRL Fishery.
3. TRLWG 16 was confirmed with members on 26 April 2024, with a draft agenda circulated for comment.
4. Following comment from members, a revised agenda v2 was circulated on 15 May 2024.

<b>TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER WORKING GROUP (TRLWG 16)</b>	<b>MEETING 16 5 June 2024</b>
<b>PRELIMINARIES Declaration of interests</b>	<b>Agenda Item 1.3 For Decision</b>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Working Group members and observers:
  - a. **DECLARE** all real or potential conflicts of interest in the Torres Strait Rock Lobster Fishery at the commencement of the meeting (**Attachments 1.3a**);
  - b. **DETERMINE** whether the member may or may not be present during discussion of or decisions made on the matter which is the subject of the conflict;
  - c. **ABIDE** by decisions of the Working Group regarding the management of conflicts of interest; and
  - d. **NOTE** that the record of the meeting must record the fact of any disclosure, and the determination of the Working Group as to whether the member may or may not be present during discussion of, or decisions made, on the matter which is the subject of the conflict.

## BACKGROUND

2. Consistent with the *Protected Zone Joint Authority (PZJA) Fisheries Management Paper No. 1* (FMP1), which guides the operation and administration of PZJA consultative forums, members are asked to declare any real or potential conflicts of interest.
3. Working Group members are asked to confirm the standing list of declared interests (**Attachments 1.3a**) is accurate and provide an update to be tabled if it is not.
4. FMP1 recognises that members are appointed to provide input based on their knowledge and expertise and as a consequence, may face potential or direct conflicts of interest. Where a member has a material personal interest in a matter being considered, including a direct or indirect financial or economic interest; the interest could conflict with the proper performance of the member's duties. Of greater concern is the specific conflict created where a member is in a position to derive direct benefit from a recommendation if it is implemented.
5. When a member recognises that a real or potential conflict of interest exists, the conflict must be disclosed as soon as possible. Where this relates to an issue on the agenda of a meeting this can normally wait until that meeting, but where the conflict relates to decisions already made, members must be informed immediately. Conflicts of interest should be dealt with at the start of each meeting. If members become aware of a potential conflict of interest during the meeting, they must immediately disclose the conflict of interest.
6. Where it is determined that a direct conflict of interest exists, the forum may allow the member to continue to participate in the discussions relating to the matter but not in any decision making process. They may also determine that, having made their contribution to the discussions, the member should retire from the meeting for the remainder of discussions on that issue. Declarations of interest, and subsequent decisions by the forum, must be recorded accurately in the meeting minutes.

**TRLWG Declarations of Interest from most recent meetings**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Declaration of interest</b>
<b>Members</b>		
John Glaister	Chair	Member of Parks North, Chair of Northern Prawn Management Advisory Committee (NORMAC), Chair of the Torres Strait Prawn Management Advisory Committee (TSPMAC).
Laura Blamey	Scientific Member	Contributes to Torres Strait research projects that receive research funding, including currently shared science and Indigenous knowledge to support fisheries capacity building in Torres Strait. No other interests in the fishery..
Sevaly Sen	Fisheries Economist Member	<p>Nil pecuniary interests in Torres Strait fisheries. Director of Oceanomics Pty Ltd, a fisheries economics and management consultancy. Current contracts include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economics Lead, Human Dimensions Research Coordination program of the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (contracted through the University of Tasmania)</li> <li>• Sustainability Advisor to Sydney Fish Market</li> <li>• Co-investigator on Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) Project 2012-042, Impact of COVID-19 on the Australian Seafood Industry: January 2020-June 2021 and beyond</li> <li>• Contractor on FRDC Project 2022-176: ARDC: Food Security Data Challenges: Increasing food security through liberation of fishing and aquaculture data.</li> <li>• Independent economist member on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSW Marine Estate Expert Knowledge Panel</li> <li>• NSW Mulloway Harvest Strategy Working Group</li> <li>• NSW Ocean Trap and Line Harvest Strategy Working Group</li> <li>• NSW Total Allowable Fishing Committee</li> <li>• SA Allocation Review Committee.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Les Pitt	Traditional Inhabitant Member – Kemer Kemer Meriam	Traditional Inhabitant Member Kemer Kemer Meriam, TIB licence holder and runs an independent freezer facility on Erub Island. Board member of Zenadth Kes Fisheries.
Charles David	Traditional Inhabitant Member - Kulkalgal	Traditional Inhabitant Member Kulkalgal, TSRA Fisheries Advisory Committee and Zenadth Kes Fisheries member.

Patrick Mooka	Traditional Inhabitant Member – Guda maluyilgal	Traditional Inhabitant Member Guda Maluligal. Zenadth Kes Fisheries representative. TIB licence holder.
Jermaine Reuben	Traditional Inhabitant Member - Maluyilgal	Traditional Inhabitant Member Maluyilgal, TIB licence holder.
Thomas Fujii	Traditional Inhabitant Member - Kaiwalalgal	Traditional Inhabitant Member Kaiwalalgal. Queensland East Coast TRL and TIB licence holder. Zenadth Kes Fisheries member
Mark Dean	Industry Member	TVH operator.
Peter Frazis	Industry Member	Employee of MG Kailis Pty Ltd. MG Kailis Pty Ltd is a holder of 5 TVH license. Seafood buyer from Torres Strait, QLD, and PNG TRL fisheries
Trent Butcher	Industry Member	TVH licence holder
Brodie Macdonald	AFMA Member	To be declared.
Jenny Keys	QDAF Member	Nil.
Damien Miley	TSRA Member	TSRA Program Manager Fisheries. TSRA hold TRL licences on behalf of Torres Strait Islanders
Georgia Langdon	Executive Officer	Nil.
<b>Observers</b>		
Quinten Hirakawa	TSRA	TSRA employee, TIB licence holder with a TRL endorsement.
Adam White	TSRA	TSRA Program Manager Fisheries. TSRA hold TRL Fishery licences on behalf of Traditional Inhabitants.
Roshni Subramaniam	CSIRO	Postdoctoral fellow at CSIRO, conducting research on the tropical rock lobster supply chain. No interest in the TRL Fishery.
Torres Webb	CSIRO	To be declared.
Alex Kailis	MG Kailis Lobster	To be declared.
Richard Takai	TIB Fisher	To be declared.
Harry Nona	TIB Fisher	To be declared.



<b>TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER WORKING GROUP (TRLWG 16)</b>	<b>MEETING 16 5 June 2024</b>
<b>PRELIMINARIES Action items from previous meetings</b>	<b>Agenda Item 1.4 For NOTING and DECISION</b>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Working Group:

- a. **NOTE** the progress against actions arising from previous meetings (**Attachment 1.4a**).
- b. **NOTE** the draft meeting summary of TRLWG15 held on 14 December 2023 and circulated to members for comment on 23 May 2024 (**Provided separately**).
- c. Having regard to member comments, if agreeable, **ADOPT** the draft meeting summary as final.

## BACKGROUND

### *Actions arising*

2. Updates are provided on the status of actions arising from previous TRLWG meetings at **Attachment 1.4a**.

### *Meeting summary*

3. In lieu of a standard meeting record, a draft meeting summary of TRLWG 15 held on 14 December 2023 was provided out of session for comment on 22 May 2024.
4. Working Group members are invited to provide comment on the summary document out of session.
5. Having regard to any comments provided by members out of session, or at this meeting, the WG is invited to adopt the draft meeting summary as final.

## Action items from previous TRL Working Group meetings

#	Action Item	Meeting	Responsible Agency/ies	Status
1.	QDAF Member to provide update on developments in Native Title and Access Rights to the East Coast Fishery for Traditional Inhabitants.	TRLWG13	QDAF Member	<b>Complete</b> A new Cape York Special Fisheries Working Group has been set up, with a focus on identifying pathways for economic development. Noting the cost barrier, as raised by Traditional Inhabitant industry members, to fisheries access (including the current QLD Indigenous quota allocation), the TRLWG agreed the Cape York Special Fisheries Working Group would be a good way to continue this conversation. The QDAF Member agreed to provide TRLWG with details of upcoming Cape York Special Fisheries Working Group meetings and any opportunities to attend.
2.	TIB Members and Malu Lamar to conduct further consultation with communities regarding Proposals 3 – 5	TRLWG13	TIB Members and Malu Lamar	<b>Ongoing</b> AFMA have not received additional advice from TIB Members or Malu Lamar. AFMA and TSRA agreed to explore what support may be needed to progress this, and other action items which may be assigned to TIB Industry Members as they arise.
3.	CSIRO to share presentation on how climate change projects in the Torres Strait fit together.	TRLWG14	CSIRO	<b>Ongoing</b> Presentation to be delivered at TRLWG 16 by CSIRO under <b>Agenda Item 4</b>
4.	QDAF Member to provide TRLWG with details of upcoming Cape York Special Fisheries Working Group meetings and opportunities for Torres Strait stakeholders to attend.	TRLWG 15	QDAF member	<b>Not commenced</b> The QDAF member is invited to provide an update at this meeting (TRLWG 16)
5.	AFMA and TSRA to explore what support may be needed to progress action item #2 above, and any other action items which may be	TRLWG 15	AFMA, TSRA	<b>Not commenced</b>

#	Action Item	Meeting	Responsible Agency/ies	Status
	assigned to Traditional Inhabitant Members as they arise.			
6.	TSRA to look into what support they may be able to provide to support consultation on the emergency amendments to management measures.	TRLWG 15	TSRA	<b>Complete</b> The TSRA member is invited to provide an update on the consultation that occurred at the end of December 2023/January 2024
7.	TRLWG to meet in March or April 2024 to discuss outcomes of the emergency amendments to management measures and any other proposed measures.	TRLWG 15	AFMA	<b>Complete</b> This meeting (TRLWG 16) is an outcome of this action item.
8.	AFMA to arrange a meeting with TRLWG Traditional Inhabitant Members and the Malu Lamar Observer to discuss concerns regarding the PNG applications for cross-endorsement in the 2023-24 fishing season, including compliance and localised competition and depletion.	TRLWG 15	AFMA	<b>Ongoing</b> It is AFMA's suggestion to add this to the agenda for the next TRL WG meeting (scheduled for December 2024). This will be following a complete season of cross-endorsement fishing which will allow for more informed discussions.

<b>TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER WORKING GROUP (TRLWG 16)</b>	<b>MEETING 16 5 June 2024</b>
<b>PRELIMINARIES Out-of-session correspondence</b>	<b>Agenda Item 1.5 For NOTING</b>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Working Group **NOTE** the correspondence sent out-of-session since TRLWG 15 meeting held on 14 December 2023.

## BACKGROUND

2. The following correspondence was circulated out-of-session since the TRLWG meeting held on 14 December 2023. Copies of this correspondence can be requested at any time from the TRLWG Executive Officer.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Item</b>
6 March 2024	For Information - AFMA circulated information regarding the approval of two Treaty endorsements for two PNG boats to fish in areas of Australian jurisdiction of the Torres Strait Protected Zone under cross-endorsement arrangements in the 2023-24 TRL Fishing season.
8 March 2024	AFMA circulated a copy of the letter to licence holders advising of the revised TAC of 357.57 tonnes as determined by the Minister.
10 April 2024	AFMA sought availabilities from Working Group members regarding TRL WG 16 during the week beginning 27 May 2024.
24 April 2024	AFMA sought availabilities for an alternative Working Group 16 meeting date, being Wednesday 5 June 2024.
15 May 2024	AFMA sent a revised draft agenda (v2) and circulated an information flyer relating to the CSIRO TRL Supply Chain Workshop.
23 May 2024	AFMA circulated a draft Meeting Summary of TRLWG 15 for member comment.
23 May 2024	AFMA circulated the meeting papers for TRLWG 16

<b>TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER WORKING GROUP (TRLWG 16)</b>	<b>MEETING 16 5 June 2024</b>
<b>UPDATES FROM MEMBERS Industry members</b>	<b>Agenda Item 2.1 For Noting</b>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Working Group **NOTE** updates provided by industry members.

## BACKGROUND

2. Verbal reports are sought from industry members under this item, with particular emphasis on economic and market related impacts to the 2023-24 fishing season.
3. It is important that the Working Group develops a common understanding of any strategic issues, including economic and fishing trends relevant to the management the TRL Fishery. This includes within adjacent jurisdictions. This ensures that where relevant, the Working Group is able to have regard for these strategic issues and trends.
4. Working Group members are asked to provide any updates on trends and opportunities in markets, processing and value adding. Industry is also asked to contribute advice on economic and market trends where possible.
5. At the last meeting of the Working Group (TRLWG 15, 14 December 2023), the Working Group noted updates provided by industry members and observers regarding the performance of the Torres Strait TRL Fishery during the 2022-23 season:
  - a. fuel prices remain high, market prices are low, catch rates are about average and freight and transport costs continue to increase.
  - b. Difficulties in market access, particularly China, continues to undermine the economic viability of the TRL Fishery, and businesses that rely on it. In January 2023, China banned live imports of TRL. This was followed by a ban on all imports of TRL in June 2023. The ban is affecting other jurisdictions (e.g. Queensland) as well as other countries, including PNG.
  - c. As a result, less boats have been operating, including on the East Coast.
6. Further details of discussions are provided in the draft meeting summary of TRLWG 15 provided at **Attachment 1.4b**.

<b>TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER WORKING GROUP (TRLWG 16)</b>	<b>MEETING 16 5 June 2024</b>
<b>UPDATES FROM MEMBERS Scientific and Economic members</b>	<b>Agenda Item 2.2 For Noting</b>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Working Group **NOTE** updates provided by scientific and economic members.

## BACKGROUND

2. Verbal reports are sought from scientific and economic members under this item.
3. It is important that the Working Group develops a common understanding of any strategic issues, including research and economic trends relevant to the management the TRL Fishery. This includes within adjacent jurisdictions. This ensures that where relevant, the Working Group is able to have regard for these strategic issues and trends.
4. Scientific and economic members are asked to contribute advice on any broader strategic research projects or issues that may be of interest to the Torres Strait.

<b>TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER WORKING GROUP (TRLWG 16)</b>	<b>MEETING 16 5 June 2024</b>
<b>UPDATES FROM MEMBERS Government agencies</b>	<b>Agenda Item 2.3 For Noting</b>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. That the Working Group:

- a. **NOTE** the written update provided by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) below;
- b. **NOTE** the verbal update provided by Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (QDAF); and
- c. **NOTE** the verbal update provided by the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA).

## KEY ISSUES

### ***TAC Increase***

2. On 7 March 2024, Senator the Hon. Murray Watt determined an increase to the total allowable catch (TAC) of tropical rock lobster (TRL) in the Australian waters of the TRL Fishery from 200 tonnes to 357.75 tonnes for the 2023-24 fishing season (*Torres Strait Fisheries Tropical Rock Lobster (Total Allowable Catch) Amendment Determination 2024*). In line with the increased TAC the kilogram value of each quota unit and available catch for each TRL fishery sector outlined in the Table below.

TRL Fishery Sector	TAC (kilograms)	Number of quota units	Value of each quota unit (kilograms)	Available catch (kilograms)
Traditional Inhabitant Boat (TIB) licence holders	357,750	662,016*	0.357751	236,836.935
Transferable Vessel Holder (TVH) licence holders		337,981		120,913.065

\*held in trust by the TSRA

### ***Changes to the start of the hookah season 2024***

3. On the basis of the recommendations from TRLWG 15 (14 December 2023) AFMA prepared the necessary documents to pursue changing the start of the hookah season in 2024. However, following two separate consultative processes undertaken by the TSRA, the proposal to shift the hookah season opening date was not supported and therefore AFMA did not proceed to make any changes to enable this.
4. TSRA is invited to provide further detail on the consultative process and outcomes that were undertaken over the December 2023/January 2024 period relating to this matter.

### ***Cross-endorsement of Papua New Guinea boats***

5. In September 2023, AFMA received nominations from a Papua New Guinea licenced operator for two boats and their associated tenders (7 each) to fish for TRL in areas of Australian jurisdiction of the Torres Strait Protected Zone under cross-endorsement arrangements in the 2023-24 fishing season.
6. After careful consideration of the nominations in accordance with the PZJA Guidelines for authorising cross-endorsement in areas of Australian Jurisdiction of the Torres Strait Protected Zone (the Guidelines), as of Friday 1 March 2024, AFMA as the licencing delegate approved two Treaty endorsements to fish for the remainder of the TRL season.
7. Further detail is provided in a Fact Sheet (**Attachment 2.3a**) which is also available on the PZJA website. This information was also disseminated to licence holders via SMS.
8. The cross-endorsed boats commenced their first fishing trip in Australian waters on Saturday 13 April 2024. At the time of writing, the boats had completed two fishing trips and commenced a third. AFMA will provide a catch update at the meeting.
9. The boats have mainly been fishing on South Warrior Reef and have been boarded and inspected twice by authorities. An AFMA compliance officer will be available at the meeting to provide further updates.

### ***Review of Traditional Inhabitant sector quota units***

10. At its meeting on 19 November 2019, the PZJA agreed-in-principal that this review be undertaken by an Independent Allocation Advisory Panel (IAAP) in accordance with the PZJA's Fisheries Management Paper No. 2 Guidelines for the formation of allocation advisory panels for the allocation of fishing concessions in the Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority Fisheries where fisheries management arrangements change significantly (FMP 2). The PZJA then directed the PZJA Standing Committee (PZJASC) to provide draft Terms of Reference (TORs) for an IAAP, including membership and process, to the PZJA so the authority to confirm this in-principal decision.
11. In accordance with this PZJA decision, the review process commenced and AFMA drafted TORs for the PZJASC's consideration at its meeting on 19 – 20 May 2021. At this meeting, the TSRA confirmed support for an independent review however, shared concerns regarding an IAAP approach.
12. In light of this development, the PZJA agreed that an alternative framework for the allocation of quota units to the traditional inhabitant sector should be developed. Engaging a consultant would allow this to be done independently and expertly, and with consideration of community views.
13. At its meeting on 19 July 2023 the PZJA endorsed terms of reference for this consultant. TSRA, with support from AFMA and QDAF have taken the lead on progressing this.
14. TSRA is invited to provide a verbal update on this process at the meeting.





**Australian Government**

**Australian Fisheries Management Authority**

# **Australian Fisheries Management Authority Advice**

Torres Strait Treaty endorsements in the  
Australian Fisheries Jurisdiction of the  
Protected Zone

Tropical Rock Lobster Fishery (TRL) –  
2023/24 Season

[www.pzja.gov.au](http://www.pzja.gov.au)

1300 723 621



In September 2023, an application was received from a Papua New Guinea (PNG) licenced operator to participate in the Torres Strait Tropical Rock Lobster Fishery within the area of Australian fisheries jurisdiction of the Torres Strait Protected Zone. This application was made under the provisions of the Torres Strait Treaty, which is a Treaty between Australia and the Independent State of Papua New Guinea concerning sovereignty and maritime boundaries in the area between the two countries, including the area known as Torres Strait.

After careful consideration of the nominations in accordance with the PZJA *Guidelines for authorising cross-endorsement in areas of Australian jurisdiction of the Torres Strait Protected Zone* (Guidelines available on the PZJA website - [www.pzja.gov.au/corporate-and-reports/cross-endorsement-guideline](http://www.pzja.gov.au/corporate-and-reports/cross-endorsement-guideline)), AFMA as the licensing delegate, has approved two Treaty endorsements for two PNG licenced vessels, *FV Jupiter (and associated seven tenders)* and *FV Dinh Thang (and associated seven tenders)*, operated by the company Aquila Enterprises Limited, to fish for TRL this season.

AFMA are aware of concerns expressed by some sectors of the Torres Strait community and TRL industry regarding these approved Treaty endorsements. This document intends to provide information and clarify common questions which community members may have about this activity.

## **PNG Cross-endorsement Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Why can PNG fish in Australian waters and how much can they catch?**

- The Torres Strait Treaty provides for the catch sharing of Tropical Rock Lobster between Australia and Papua New Guinea. It is agreed that 85% of the global TAC is to be taken in Australian waters and 15% of the global TAC is to be taken in PNG waters. This is based on the agreed distribution of TRL in the area of the Torres Strait Protected Zone.
- Of the 85% share of the TAC in Australian waters, PNG is entitled to catch 25% of that share under what is commonly referred to as “cross-endorsement” arrangements.
- Based on a global TAC of 530 tonnes this fishing season, split between the two countries, PNG are entitled to catch 92.75 tonnes in Australian waters this season. An illustration of this season’s catch sharing agreement is outlined on page 3.
- Each year, the global TAC for the whole TRL fishery is set for each fishing season through a rigorous process of scientific assessment undertaken by CSIRO. It is then considered by the PZJA TRL Resource Advisory Group (TRL RAG) and the TRL Working Group (TRL WG). Both advisory committees have traditional inhabitant members, one from each island cluster nation. For more detail on how the TAC is set, refer to the TRL Management Arrangements Booklet 2023-24.
- The PNG licence nominations were discussed at the TRL RAG & WG meetings in December 2023. Concerns raised by traditional inhabitant members at these meetings were taken into consideration in the development of the licence conditions to be applied to the PNG licence Treaty endorsements.
- Agreement on the global TAC and how it is to be shared between Australia and PNG occurs annually at a meeting between AFMA and PNG National Fisheries Authority (PNG NFA), in accordance with the Torres Strait Treaty. This most recently occurred in January 2024.
- PNG have not accessed their share of the catch in Australian waters since 2015, however, in 2023 PNG sought nominations for two PNG licenced TRL boats and their associated tenders to fish for PNG’s 92.75 tonne catch entitlement in Australian waters in the 2023-24 TRL fishing season. This is called a Treaty endorsement.



## How long can they fish for?

- The PNG boats are authorised to fish until the end of the TRL fishing season (30 September 2024) or until their catch entitlement (92.75 tonnes) is caught.

## What fishing rules will apply to the PNG boats?

- Treaty endorsements are subject to conditions just as Traditional Inhabitant Boat (TIB) and Transferable Vessel Holder (TVH) fishing licences are, and it is an offence under the *Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1984* to fail to comply with a condition of a Treaty endorsement.
- Consistent with the Guidelines, a range of conditions have been applied to the PNG Treaty endorsements. These include, but are not limited to, conditions that are:
  - the same to those applied in Australian Torres Strait TRL Fishery:
    - a) carrying an operational Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) on each primary boat;
    - b) daily logbook reporting (the same as the TVH sector);
    - c) catch reporting via the TDB02 Catch Disposal Record;
    - d) a total catch limit (92.75 tonnes as per the catch sharing agreement); and
    - e) moontide hookah closures.
  - applied to the Treaty endorsements only (i.e. are not conditions applied in the Australian TRL Fishery):
    - a) exclusion from the area commonly referred to as Australia's "outside but near" area;
    - b) a prohibition on the landing or transshipment of catches in areas of Australian jurisdiction;
    - c) prior entry/exit reporting requirements;
    - d) exclusion from the Australian Territorial seas north of the Fisheries Jurisdiction Line (i.e. Anchor Cay, Black Rocks, Bramble Cay, Deliverance Island, East Cay, Kerr Islet, Pearce Cay and Turu Cay).
    - e) boat markings with a "T"; and
    - f) a requirement to land all catches in PNG (specifically, the Port of Daru).
- A prohibition on fishing in areas around inhabited islands in Australian waters was applied. This is consistent with Australia's obligations to acknowledge the traditional way of life and livelihood of traditional inhabitants regarding traditional fishing. The coordinates of these prohibited areas are detailed in the Treaty endorsement conditions. Refer to map on page 3 for indicative purposes only.
- PNG National Fisheries Authority have also advised AFMA that an NFA senior fisheries officer and NFA fisheries observer will be on board both boats for each Treaty endorsement fishing trip.

**If you have queries on this matter, please contact DFAT, TSRA, or AFMA:**

### **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

Torres Strait Treaty Liaison Office  
P +61 7 4069 1495  
E [Andrew.Berryman@dfat.gov.au](mailto:Andrew.Berryman@dfat.gov.au)

### **Torres Strait Regional Authority**

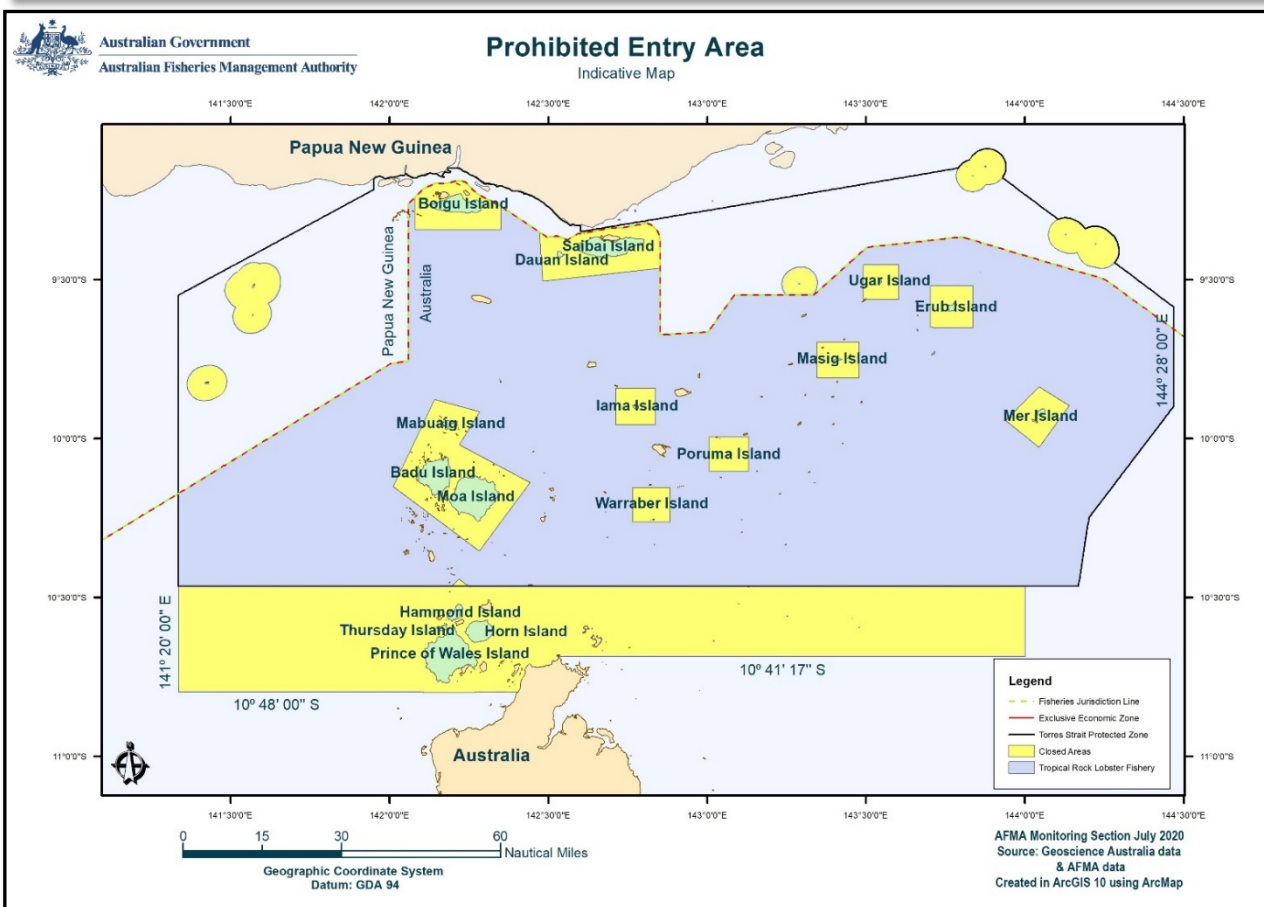
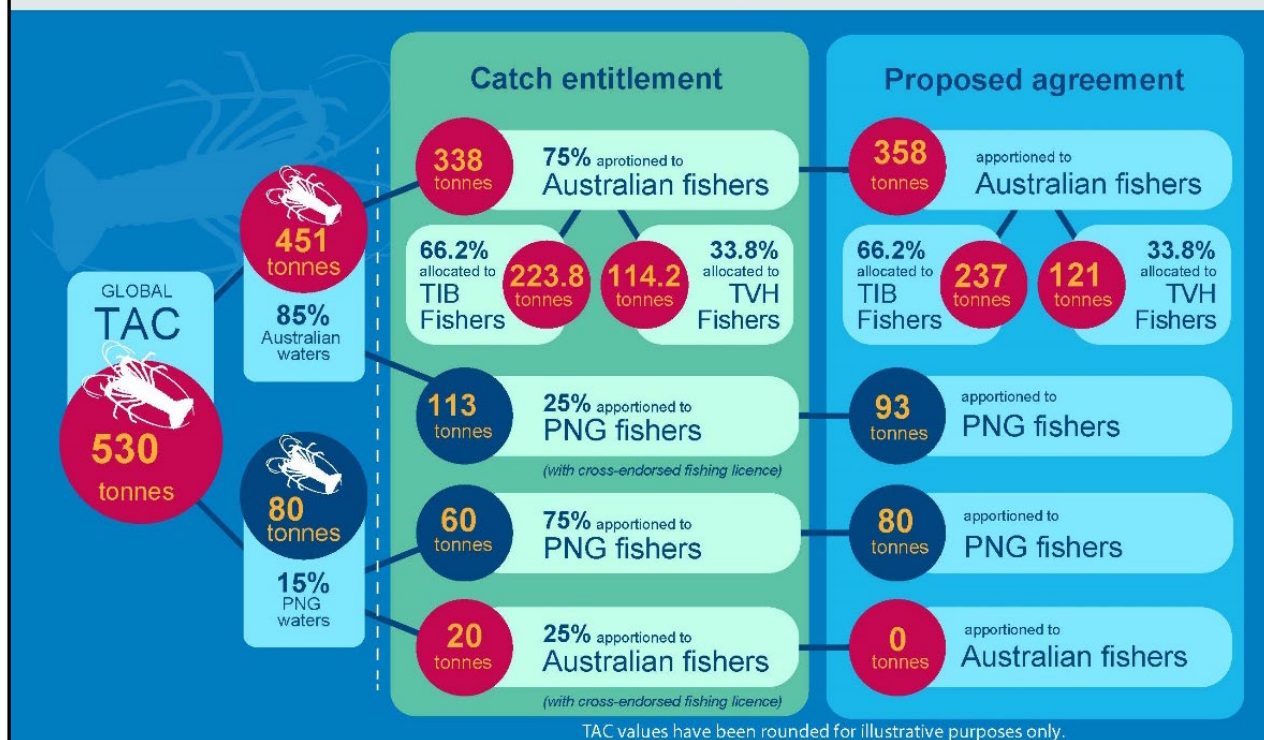
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### **Australian Fisheries management Authority**

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## TORRES STRAIT TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER CATCH SHARING AGREEMENT 2023-24



Note: Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this document is correct and accurate at the time of publication. However, the information provided is intended to serve as a guide only. This document is not intended to replace any conditions or requirements of an operator's Treaty endorsement as made under the *Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1984*.



<b>TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER WORKING GROUP (TRLWG 16)</b>	<b>MEETING 16 5 June 2024</b>
<b>UPDATES FROM MEMBERS PNG National Fisheries Authority</b>	<b>Agenda Item 2.4 For Noting</b>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Working Group:
  - a. **NOTE** the verbal update to be provided by the PNG National Fisheries Authority (NFA).

## KEY ISSUES

2. AFMA has a standing invite for officials from the PNG National Fisheries Authority (NFA) to attend all PZJA advisory committee meetings. If in attendance, NFA officials will provide an update on the PNG TRL fishery at the meeting.

## BACKGROUND

3. The *Treaty between Australia and the Independent State of Papua New Guinea concerning Sovereignty and Maritime Boundaries in the area between the two Countries, including the area known as Torres Strait, and Related Matters* (the Treaty) was signed by both Parties at Sydney on 18 December 1978 and ratified by Australia on 15 February 1985. The Treaty defines the border between Australia and PNG and provides a management framework of the common border area. This area is defined by the Treaty and is known as the TSPZ.
4. Australia and PNG established the TSPZ with the principal purpose of acknowledging and protecting the traditional way of life and livelihood of the traditional inhabitants of both Parties, including their traditional fishing and free movement (Article 10(3)). A further purpose is to protect and preserve the marine environment and indigenous fauna and flora in, and in the vicinity of, the TSPZ (Article 10(4)). A range of subsidiary obligations and rights exist under the Treaty. Relevantly, Australia and PNG commit under the Treaty to co-operate in the conservation management and optimum utilisation of Protected Zone commercial fisheries (Article 21) insofar that the achievement of the purposes for the establishment of the TSPZ are not prejudiced in regard to traditional fishing (Article 20(1)).
5. The Treaty recognises the rights of both countries to Protected Zone commercial fisheries. This recognition is implemented through cooperative management and catch sharing provisions of Part 5 of the Treaty. Since the Treaty was ratified, Australia and PNG have entered into formal arrangements under Article 22 to cooperatively manage six fisheries, which includes tropical rock lobster.

<b>TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER WORKING GROUP (TRLWG 16)</b>	<b>MEETING 16 5 June 2024</b>
<b>UPDATES FROM MEMBERS Native Title</b>	<b>Agenda Item 2.5 For Noting</b>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Working Group **NOTE** any updates on Native Title matters from members, and representatives of Malu Lamar (Torres Strait Islanders) Corporation RNTBC (Malu Lamar).

## BACKGROUND

2. AFMA has a standing invite for a representative from Malu Lamar to attend all PZJA advisory committee meetings.
3. On 7 August 2013 the High Court of Australia confirmed coexisting Native Title rights, including commercial fishing, in the claimed area (covering most of the Torres Strait Protected Zone). This decision gives judicial authority for Traditional Owners to access and take the resources of the sea for all purposes. Native Title rights in relation to commercial fishing must be exercisable in accordance with the *Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1984*.
4. Traditional Owners and Native Title representative bodies have an important role in managing Torres Strait fisheries. It is important therefore that the Working Group keep informed on any relevant Native Title issues arising.

<b>TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER WORKING GROUP (TRLWG 16)</b>	<b>MEETING 16 5 June 2024</b>
<b>REVIEW OF MANAGEMENT CONTROLS</b>	<b>Agenda Item 3 For Discussion and Advice</b>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. That the Working Group:

- a. **NOTE** a review of management controls currently applied to the TRL Fishery has been ongoing since TRLWG 10 in line with an agreed review process;
- b. **RECALL** that following extensive workshopping with industry and community consultation, two industry-based proposals were recommended for implementation at TRLWG 12 (15 December 2022).
  - i. AFMA is in the process of implementation of these proposals through a variation to licence conditions.
  - ii. TRLWG 14 further recommended that metrics for measuring the performance of any changes should be established to determine if they are achieving the intended socio-economic objectives.
- c. **NOTE** that to alleviate impacts from market challenges, TRLWG 15 (14 December 2023) recommended emergency measures to change the start of the hookah season from 1 February to 24 January 2024 and remove the February moontide hookah closure. However following consultation undertaken by TSRA, the recommendation was not supported and the changes were not implemented.

### 2. Acknowledging that industry have strong desires to see further changes to arrangements in the fishery, particularly in response to increasing external pressures impacting markets and profitability, the Working Group is being asked to:

- a. **REVIEW and DISCUSS** the industry based proposals as submitted by Working Group industry member, Peter Frazis (**Attachment 3a - pending**) which seek to:
  - i. Implement an earlier hookah season start date (1st, 7th or 15th Jan)
  - ii. Remove three moontide hookah closures during the months of February, April and May)
  - iii. Remove of some restrictions on TIB fishing effort to:
    - Allow TIB hookah diving Nov-Dec
    - Allow TIB freediving all year
    - Allow TIB freediving and hookah all year

*Note: A written paper with more details on the proposals will be submitted to AFMA from Mr Frazis and circulated to members as soon as it is available.*

- b. **REVIEW and DISCUSS** the summary and status of previous proposals to change management controls in the TRL Fishery that have been discussed through the Working Group over time (**Attachment 3b**); and

- c. Having regard to the above, discuss and **PROVIDE ADVICE** on future changes to management controls.

## KEY ISSUES

3. Ongoing external market challenges, supply chain disruptions and socio-economic concerns continue to hamper fishing effort in the TRL fishery. These issues have been characterised by industry as the worst set of external circumstances ever faced by the TRL industry.
4. These pressures have, in some ways re-defined the rationale for certain changes to management arrangements with a more recent push to increase participation in the TIB sector and remove barriers to maximise catch and market supply when market prices are at their peak (e.g. just before Chinese New Year).
5. To address this in the interim, TRLWG 15 discussed emergency measures for the 2023-24 season only to:
  - a. change the start of the hookah season from 1 February to 24 January 2024;
  - b. remove the first moontide hookah closure (scheduled for 7-13 February 2024); and
  - c. agree that TVH licence holders would not fish using hookah from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2024.
6. This recommendation was agreed to by the Working Group and the necessary documents to administer the changes were prepared by AFMA ready for Ministerial sign off, however following consultation undertaken by TSRA in December 2023/January 2024, the recommendation was not supported by communities/industry and the changes were not implemented. As such, the 2023-24 hookah season opened on 1 February as normal, with the first moontide hookah closure proceeding on 7 February as scheduled.
7. As discussed at TRLWG 15, the 2023-24 fishing season is proving to be just as challenging for industry. It is timely now that the Working Group consider further changes to management arrangements where appropriate. To help inform discussions, a summary of previous proposals to change management controls in the TRL Fishery that have been discussed through the Working Group over time is provided at **Attachment 3b**.
8. The Working Group is also asked to consider the industry based proposals submitted by Industry member Peter Frazis (**Attachment 3a – pending**).

## BACKGROUND

9. Changes to management controls in the TRL Fishery have been discussed for several years in the Working Group before and since the implementation of the TRL Management Plan.
10. Prior to the TRL Management Plan, a suite of changes to management controls were due to be discussed at TRLWG 6 which met on 25-26 July 2017 however the meeting finished early due to a lack of quorum and none of the issues were addressed further.
11. Following this, all management efforts were directed in finalising the TRL Management Plan and developing the TRL Harvest Strategy. During this time the PZJA reaffirmed that no further changes would occur until after the implementation of the Plan which came into force in November 2018.



12. After two seasons of sectoral catch shares and quota under the Plan, the Working Group (TRLWG 11; 17 December 2020) was asked again to revisit proposed changes to management controls with the following considerations:
- a. That AFMA's preference is to conduct a review in a careful, and considered step-wise manner;
  - b. To ensure a clear understanding of the rationale of any proposed change, including an assessment of expected benefits and outcomes against objectives, relative to a clear set of evaluation criteria;
  - c. To understand who is likely to be affected or who is to benefit, and those might be distributed;
  - d. That any proposed change will need careful consideration of the potential impacts on fishing patterns or fisher behaviour, which may impact catch rates and CPUE indices; and
  - e. That any proposed changes would require broader stakeholder consultation.
13. TRLWG 11 then agreed to a review process which includes:
- a. determining what's in scope, and out of scope for the review using the list of previously raised proposals to change management controls as a starting point;
  - b. consider the benefits and/or impacts against with consideration of how the proposals align with the objectives for the fishery and the *Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1984* (the Act) (**Attachment 3c**);
  - c. what criteria may be used to evaluate proposals for changes to management controls;
  - d. prioritisation of proposals;
  - e. consideration of broader stakeholder input on the above at a dedicated stakeholder workshop; and
  - f. public consultation.
14. The Working Group should note that the complexity and/or ease involved in changing an existing management control may be influenced by a range of factors:
- g. Rationale - some proposals will have a clear rationale for change, while others may be less clear and require further discussion and consultation;
  - h. Benefits and impacts – some changes may benefit some individuals, or one sector, while disadvantaging others.
  - i. Objectives – some changes may or may not be consistent with the objectives of the Fishery and the Act.

Table 1. Summary and status of management controls and proposals for change raised over time.

Management measure	Controls	Changes proposed	Date Raised	Status
Input controls	Boat length restriction & policy	Option for primary vessels limited to 9.9m being increased to 13.9m	TRLWG 4 (27-28 Aug 2015)	<b>Not Progressed</b> TRLWG 4 identified this item as a high priority following the implementation of the Management Plan.
		Review how/if use of tow cages undermines boat length restrictions	TRLWG 10 (12 December 2019)	
	Fishery closure (Oct – Nov)	Review fishing season dates to align with international markets	TRLWG 4 (27-28 Aug 2015)	<b>Complete</b> Amendment of the fishing season dates to enable the effective implementation of the Management Plan was considered at TRLRAG 24 (18 19 October 2019). No recommendation was made to change the fishing season for this purpose.
	Hookah closure (1 December – 31 January)	Allow free-dive and lamp fishing year round	TRLWG 4 (27-28 Aug 2015)	<b>Not Progressed</b> Last proposed for discussion at TRLWG 6 (25 26 July 2017). However, this item was not considered due to the early closure of the meeting (lack of quorum).
		12 month season for free-dive and lamp fishing for TIB boats only	TRLWG 5 (5-6 April 2016)	
		Proposal to permit lamp fishing from TIB boats only	TRLWG 5 (5-6 April 2016)	
		Requested the hookah season commence earlier (on 1 January) and possibly close again in March to allow industry to maximise the catch value in the season by fishing to the Chinese New Year market, and restricting hookah catches in March when market prices are reduced and lobster mortality is higher due to moulting and increased water temperatures and lobster discards.	TRLWG 10 (12 December 2019)	<b>Not Progressed</b>
		Emergency measures to change the start of the hookah season from 1 February to 24 January 2024 and remove the February moontide hookah closure.	TRLWG 15 (14 December 2023)	<b>Not supported or implemented</b> Recommendations were agreed to however following consultation undertaken by TSRA, the proposal was not supported nor implemented.

	Moontide closures	Amend method for setting hookah closures to coincide with full moons and moult cycles	TRLWG 6 (25-26 July 2017)	<b>Complete</b> This was reconsidered at TRLWG 8 who agreed to maintain the existing methodology
		Requirements concerning the possession and use of hookah gear around hookah closure periods, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creating provisions that allowed for transiting to the fishing grounds before the hookah season re-opened. AFMA advised that in the absence of implementing Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) on all boats (primary, tenders and dinghies), this would be a complex arrangement to enforce.</li> <li>- Bringing the closure forward by 12 hours, allowing boats to leave port from midday, rather than midnight.</li> <li>- Allowing the compressor unit to remain stowed in dories, and only having to remove the hookah hoses whilst in Port.</li> </ul>	TRLWG 9 (19 February 2019)	<b>Not supported</b> The hookah possession requirements were strengthen in 2018 via changes to the TRL Management Instrument.  The three proposed amendments to the hookah possession requirements were widely consulted on in 2022 but were not supported.
		Submission from Trent Butcher and Mark Dean <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Submission received on 25 November 2019 from TVH TRLWG members proposing moon-tide hookah closures be removed for the 2019-20 fishing season onwards.</li> <li>- TVH members advised that their preference in the long-term is to remove all moon-tide hookah closures.</li> </ul>	TRLWG 10 (12 December 2019)	<b>Not Progressed</b>
		TIB members want consideration of having an additional moon-tide hookah closures to alleviate fishing pressure on home reefs and to reduce the competition pressure on free-divers from hookah divers.	TRLWG 10 (12 December 2019)	<b>Not Progressed</b>
	Tender/dinghy number restrictions	Provide for the temporary transfer of tender boats to operate in conjunction with another primary boat held by the same licence holder	TRLWG 6 (25-26 July 2017)	<b>Complete</b> This is now permitted on a case by case basis as stipulated in the <i>Guide to</i>

				<i>Licensing Arrangements in the Torres Strait 2021</i> (available on the PZJA website)
	Gear restrictions (SCUBA & propulsion)	No proposal to change	n/a	n/a
	Equipment restrictions (spear/hand)	No proposal to change	n/a	n/a
	Meat removal from shell	No proposal to change	n/a	n/a
	Diving equipment at night	No proposal to change	n/a	n/a

Management measure	Controls	Changes proposed	Date Raised	Status
<b>Licensing Arrangements</b>	A processor/carrier licence is required to process or carry TRL at sea	Grant of a new carrier-only boat licence to non-traditional inhabitants only for vessels that are not licenced to fish.  (all fisheries)	TRLWG 6 (25-26 July 2017)	Last proposed for discussion at TRLWG 6 (25-26 July 2017). However, this item was not considered due to the early closure of the meeting (lack of quorum). Other Working Groups (Finfish Working Group on 16-17 March 2017 and Hand Collectables Working Group on 27 June 2017) have recommended further stakeholder consultation or were not supportive.
	A Master Fisherman's licence must be held by person in charge of the boat	Review arrangements for MFL  (all fisheries)	TRLWG 4 (27-28 Aug 2015)	<b>Not Progressed</b> Consistent with the recommendation of TRLWG 4 (27-28 August 2015), this item has not been progressed since that meeting. TRLWG 4 identified this item as a medium priority following the implementation of the Management Plan.
	Crewing restrictions	Removal of current condition on TIB licences i.e. ability for TIB to have non-indigenous crew  (all fisheries)	TRLWG 4 (27-28 Aug 2015)  TRLWG 10 (12 December 2019)	<b>Not Supported</b> This was widely consulted on in 2022 and was not supported by communities. TRLWG 13 (15 Dec 2022) recommended this proposal be revisited in 3 years time.
	Primary/tender operations	Option for TIB primary vessels to carry any TIB registered dinghy at any time (not in a package)  (applies to Finfish as well)	TRLWG 4 (27-28 Aug 2015)  TRLWG 10 (12 Dec 2019)	<b>Implementation underway</b> This was widely consulted on in 2022 and was largely supported by communities and recommended for implementation by TRLWG 13 (15 Dec 2022). AFMA is in the process of implementing these changes by way of licence condition variation.

		Strengthen requirements for tender boats to operate in conjunction with the corresponding primary boat	TRLWG 6 (25-26 July 2017)	<b>Not Progressed</b> Last proposed for discussion at TRLWG 6 (25 26 July 2017). However, this item was not considered due to the early closure of the meeting (lack of quorum).
	Requirement to hold a licence	TIB licenses to share common expiry (all fisheries)	TRLWG 4 (27-28 Aug 2015)	Last considered at TRLWG 4 (27-28 August 2015). The TRLWG recommended AFMA review the licencing dates and period for TIB and TVH sector licences as part of AFMA's 2016 administrative review of licencing processes – low priority. AFMA have scoped the implementation of a common expiry date for licences in the TRL Fishery, however administrative resources are not currently available to progress this matter further. The PZJA approved the development of draft amendments to the Torres Strait Fisheries Regulations 1985 to provide for all licences to be issued for 5 years. However due to lack of key stakeholder support, legislative amendments are on hold.
		TIB licenses to be valid for 5 years (all fisheries)	TRLWG 4 (27-28 Aug 2015)	
	Requirement to hold unused quota units for a fishing season when taking TRL	No proposal to change		

Management measure	Controls	Changes proposed	Date Raised	Status
Monitoring requirements	Catch reporting	Pursuing Act amendments to make the completion of daily fishing logbooks by the TIB sector mandatory		<b>Ongoing.</b> AFMA is still progressing legislative amendments to the Act.
	Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) for primary and carrier vessels	Consideration of VMS units on all tenders and dinghys to improve spatial data	TRLRAG Data Sub-group (18 June 2019)	<b>Not progressed.</b>
Output controls	Total allowable catch for each fishing season	No proposal to change	n/a	n/a
	Weight conversion factor for processed TRL (2.677)	No proposal to change	n/a	n/a
	Size restrictions, minimum tail size of 115 mm or minimum carapace length of 90 mm	No proposal to change	n/a	n/a

### Objectives under the *Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1984*

In the administration of this Act, regard shall be had to the rights and obligations conferred on Australia by the Torres Strait Treaty and in particular to the following management priorities:

- (a) to acknowledge and protect the traditional way of life and livelihood of traditional inhabitants, including their rights in relation to traditional fishing;*
- (b) to protect and preserve the marine environment and indigenous fauna and flora in and in the vicinity of the Protected Zone;*
- (c) to adopt conservation measures necessary for the conservation of a species in such a way as to minimise any restrictive effects of the measures on traditional fishing;*
- (d) to administer the provisions of Part 5 of the Torres Strait Treaty (relating to commercial fisheries) so as not to prejudice the achievement of the purposes of Part 4 of the Torres Strait Treaty in regard to traditional fishing;*
- (e) to manage commercial fisheries for optimum utilisation;*
- (f) to share the allowable catch of relevant Protected Zone commercial fisheries with Papua New Guinea in accordance with the Torres Strait Treaty;*
- (g) to have regard, in developing and implementing licensing policy, to the desirability of promoting economic development in the Torres Strait area and employment opportunities for traditional inhabitants.*

### TRL Fishery Management Objectives

In 2005–06, the Tropical Rock Lobster Working Group recommended new management objectives which were adopted by the Protected Zone Joint Authority (PZJA). These objectives are:

- a. to maintain the spawning stock at levels that meet or exceed that required to produce the maximum sustainable yield;
- b. in accordance with the TS Treaty, to protect the traditional way of life and livelihood of Traditional Inhabitants, particularly in relation to their traditional fishing for TRL;
- c. to provide for the optimal utilisation, co-operative management with Queensland and PNG and for catch sharing with PNG;
- d. to monitor interactions between the prawn and lobster fisheries;
- e. to maintain appropriate controls on fishing gear allowed in the fishery so as to minimise impacts on the environment;
- f. to promote economic development in the TS area with an emphasis on providing the framework for commercial opportunities for Traditional Inhabitants and to ensure that the opportunities available to all stakeholders are socially and culturally appropriate for the TS and the wider Queensland and Australian community; and
- g. to optimise the value of the fishery.

Expansion in the fishery is limited to Traditional Inhabitants so as to maximise their opportunities.

The PZJA has imposed licensing provisions to prevent the growth of the non-Islander sector, both in terms of fishing capacity (boat replacement policy) and the containment of licence numbers. There is also a ban on trawlers taking lobster to prevent pressure on the lobster resource from the prawn trawling fleet.



<b>TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER WORKING GROUP (TRLWG 16)</b>	<b>MEETING 16 5 June 2024</b>
<b>TRL Fishery Research Priorities</b>	<b>Agenda Item 4 For Discussion and Advice</b>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Working Group **DISCUSS** and provide **ADVICE** on the research priorities provided in the draft rolling five-year research plan for 2025/26 to 2029/30 (the Research Plan) for the Torres Strait Tropical Rock Lobster (TRL) Fishery (**Attachment 4a**), including advice on feasibility, timing and indicative costing of essential, unfunded research project(s), and identifying any new research needs.
2. That the Working Group **NOTE**:
  - a) The current status of recently identified research needs, as last reviewed by the TRLRAG and Working Group in July 2023 (**Attachment 4b**) outlined in **Table 1**; and
  - b) The Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee (TSSAC) is scheduled to meet on 28-29 August to discuss the 2025/26 research funding.
  - c) If recent minimum research funding is secured again for 2025-26, there would be a minimum of \$645,000 available for use in Torres Strait research.
  - d) In recent years, additional funding has also been secured for critical projects, however cannot be guaranteed. Having a complete list of urgent and desirable research for each fishery is crucial in PZJA agency budget planning.
3. The Working Group is invited to **NOTE** a presentation by TRLWG Scientific Member, Laura Blamey on how the new TSRA-funded climate change and fisheries project fits in with other CSIRO research in the Torres Strait.

## KEY ISSUES

### ***Research priorities for the TRL Fishery***

4. The Working Group last discussed research priorities July 2023 and supported the recommendations of the TRL RAG.
5. There are several projects already underway or scheduled for funding which will address some of the identified research priorities. Although these will not require funding consideration by the TSSAC the RAG agreed it would be good to have these included in the research plan. These include:
  - a) TSRA's WAPIL project which will contribute to **understanding fisher behaviour**
  - b) *CSIRO's Modelling climate change impacts on key fisheries resources in the Torres Strait to co-develop adaptation and mitigation strategies*, which is the final stages of funding confirmation through TSRA's procurement process which will contribute to **understanding connectivity, environmental drivers and adaptation strategies**.
6. The RAG also agreed:

- a) that the significance of climate change across all Torres Strait fisheries, including TRL, warrants having it listed as its own priority. This item was separated out from understanding connectivity and placed as a higher priority.
  - b) The highest 'essential' priority for the fishery remains the need to undertake **fishery independent surveys, stock assessment, harvest control and Recommended Biological Catch (RBC)** work.
  - c) Undertaking an update to the 2007 **Ecological Risk Assessment (ERA)** for the TRL Fishery remains an essential priority. Assessment by CSIRO this financial year is dependent on prioritisation against other high priority fisheries. Funding can be sourced from the AFMA TRL Fishery budget (~\$20,400).
  - d) **Improvement of data collection** (to be pursued by the TRL RAG data sub-group) remains an essential priority.
  - e) **Impact and mitigation of climate change effects in Torres Strait fisheries** is an essential priority, noting the CSIRO project on this will benefit all Torres Strait fisheries, including TRL.
  - f) **Understanding fisher behaviour**, including capturing information on the impacts of COVID-19 on things like effort levels, spatial effort distribution and economically driven changes in behaviour in the fishery, remain essential priorities.
  - g) **Understanding connectivity, environmental drivers and adaptation strategies** is desirable rather than essential, as climate change has been separately identified as a priority and is higher than understanding connectivity implications between jurisdictions.
  - h) **Understanding changes to fishing power** and a **science peer review** remain desirable.
7. Assuming an available budget of \$420,000 in AFMA research funds and a minimum of \$225,000 from TSRA, it is expected there will be approximately \$645,000 available to fund new or ongoing research projects in 2025-26.
  8. This baseline funding needs to cover all fishery research priorities, and TSSAC are responsible for considering competing priorities and making recommendations on how funding should be allocated across fisheries. It is also possible PZJA agencies will be able to source additional funding above this estimated base budget for critical projects, however this is considered against individual agency budget allocations each year.
  9. Having a complete list of urgent and desirable research for each fishery is crucial in PZJA agency budget planning.
  10. A detailed breakdown of committed TSSAC funds for multi-year projects 2024/25 – 2027/28 is provided at **Attachment 4c**.
  11. The Working Group is being invited to discuss and provide advice on research priorities for the TRL Fishery for 2025/26 financial year and beyond.

### **Update on climate change projects in Torres Strait Research**

12. As per an action item from TRLWG 14 held via videoconference on 6 July 2023, CSIRO have been tasked to deliver a presentation on how climate change projects in the Torres Strait fit together with other Torres Strait research.

13. Working Group scientific member, Laura Blamey will deliver a short presentation on this matter for the Working Groups information.

## BACKGROUND

### ***TSSAC Research Funding Process***

14. Each year the TSSAC invites applications for funding to undertake research to support the management of Protected Zone Fisheries. The TSSAC seek input from each fishery advisory committee to identify research priorities.
15. Historically, Protected Zone Joint Authority fisheries research has predominantly been funded by AFMA. The AFMA research budget is generally set at around \$420,000 each year. In recent years TSRA has recently committed to contributing around \$225,000 each year towards PZJA fisheries research as a minimum, with recent contributions well above this amount. This baseline Government budget estimate allows around \$625,000 annually for all Torres Strait research.
16. Additional funding can also be sought from other bodies such as the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC), when needed, and when projects align with FRDC objectives.

### ***Draft updated TSSAC Fisheries Strategic Research Plan 2024 – 2028 and rolling five-year fishery specific research plans***

17. TSSAC operates under a Strategic Research Plan (SRP) which guides priority setting for research in Torres Strait fisheries over a five year period. The SRP specifies the research priorities and strategies that the PZJA intend to pursue in Torres Strait fisheries. The research priorities can be broad, covering all topics within the SRP, some of which may be funded by AFMA, and some of which may require funding from other funding bodies.
18. In August 2023, the TSSAC recommended that the Strategic Research Plan (SRP) change form to be a higher level 1-2 page document. They recommended the SRP be much more visual, and simply include background, research priorities and some information on how research is enabled in Torres Strait. A draft of the new SRP 2024-2028 is at **Attachment 4d**. TSSAC welcome comments from the TRLWG on the draft. The TSSAC hope to finalise the SRP at their August meeting.
19. The TSSAC requires each fishery to develop a rolling five-year research plan, which fits into the themes identified in this SRP.
20. The rolling 5 year research plan should be drafted using the existing SRP, noting the new one is not yet finalised. There are 3 research themes within the existing SRP, under which the TRLRAG and TRLWG could identify research priorities for the TRL Fishery (**Attachment 4e**). There are several strategies under each theme and suggested ideas to help RAGs and Working Groups to think about the sorts of projects which may fit within these themes and strategies.



# DRAFT Rolling Five Year Research Plan 2025/26-2029/30

## Torres Strait Tropical Rock Lobster Fishery



Compiled by AFMA with TRLRAG advice

Last updated July 2023

## **ABOUT THIS PLAN**

The Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee (TSSAC) seeks input from each fishery advisory body (Resource Assessment Group (RAG), Management Advisory Committee (MAC) or Working Group (WG)) to identify research priorities over five year periods from 2024/25 to 2028/29. This template is to be used by the relevant advisory body to complete their five-year plan. The plans are to be developed in conjunction with the TSSAC Five-year Strategic Research Plan (SRP) with a focus on the three research themes and associated strategies within the SRP.

All fishery five-year plans will be assessed by the TSSAC using a set of criteria, and used to produce an Annual Research Statement for all Torres Strait fisheries.

The TSSAC then develop scopes for the highest ranking projects in order to publish its annual call for research proposals. There are likely to be more scopes that funding will provide for so TSSAC can consider a number of proposals before deciding where to commit funding.

The fishery five-year plans are to be reviewed and updated annually by the Torres Strait forums to add an additional year onto the end to ensure the plans maintain a five year projection for priority research. Priorities may also change during the review if needed.

## RESEARCH PRIORITIES

**Table 1.** Five-year Torres Strait Tropical Rock Lobster Fishery research plan for 2025/26 to 2029/30.

Proposed Project	Objectives and component tasks	Year project to be carried out and indicative cost					Notes on project timings	Other funding bodies	Evaluation		
		2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30			Priority essential / desirable	Priority ranking 1-5 (1=highest)	Theme
<b>Fishery surveys, stock assessment, harvest control rules and recommended biological catch (RBC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Monitor ongoing changes in the fishery and update or develop fishery performance indicators as required.</li> <li>➤ Recommend a recommended biological catch (RBC) annually for each season.</li> <li>➤ Every third year update and implement the long-term stock assessment.</li> <li>➤ Conduct a pre- season survey in November each year, including seabed habitat monitoring.</li> <li>➤ Continue development of a harvest strategy for the TRL Fishery including an empirical harvest control rule.</li> <li>➤ Facilitate data sharing with PNG.</li> <li>➤ Development of a tiered harvest strategy for the TRL Fishery.</li> </ul>	Estimated 345,000	Estimated 345,000	Estimated 345,000			currently funded under AFMA Research Project 2021/ 0816 which is in its final year in 2024		Essential	1	1
<b>Ecological risk assessment (ERA)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Conduct an update to the 2007 ERA for the TRL Fishery.</li> </ul>	20,400	0	0	0		Assessment in 2024/25 financial year dependent on prioritisation against other high priority fisheries.	Funding can be sourced from the AFMA TRL budget for future FYs	Essential	1	1
<b>Improvement of data collection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Improved monitoring of commercial catch and effort in all sectors of the fishery.</li> <li>➤ Estimate of non- commercial take of TRL.</li> <li>➤ Alternative monitoring techniques of effort, for example GPS tracking.</li> </ul>	0	0	0	0		Data sub-group to be progressed alongside RAG meetings	Funding can be sourced from the AFMA TRLRAG budget	Essential	1	1,3
<b>Impact and mitigation of</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Enable fisheries managers and communities to better prepare for</li> </ul>							Funded by TSRA	Essential	1	1,2,3

<b>climate change effects in Torres Strait Fisheries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ climate change mitigation and adaptation, where possible integrate new and existing fisheries and environmental data within an over-arching data framework</li> <li>➤ provide estimates of the impacts that different climate change scenarios could have on the marine ecosystem and associated fisheries/species</li> <li>➤ provide estimates of the economic, social and other fisheries-related livelihood impacts of climate change on communities</li> <li>➤ Suggest some possible actions for adaptation.</li> <li>➤ Understanding large scale environmental perturbations and their impact of lobster recruitment, availability and aggregations.</li> </ul>										
<b>Understanding fishing behaviour</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Understanding the drivers and incentives in determining fishing behaviour in all sectors.</li> <li>➤ Understanding fishing behaviour under output controls: the impact of ITQs or competitive quota on the fishery (including social impacts); the extent and impact of discard mortality; the effect of changing market preferences on fishing behaviour under output controls; the extent of value adding e.g. moving to live product, targeting different sizes; the extent of high grading under output controls.</li> <li>➤ Work should also include capturing information on the impacts of COVID-19 on the fishery to ensure that analysis of fishery data is accounting for potential 'COVID noise'.</li> </ul>	<p>To be advised</p> <p>TRL Data Sub-group should commence initial conversations with industry and collection of qualitative data, with a view to developing a structured quantitative survey over time.</p>						TSRA is currently funding the related WAPIL project. The PZJA is also due to consider the next steps in the TIB quota allocation review at their upcoming meeting.	Desirable	2	1
<b>Understanding connectivity, environmental drivers and adaptation strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of migration of different age classes of lobsters between, and within, jurisdictions (e.g. PNG, QLD East Coast and Torres Strait, potentially utilising QLD logbook data).</li> <li>➤ Understanding of recruitment connectivity between, and within, jurisdictions, including key areas of larval release within each jurisdiction.</li> <li>➤ Management implications of movements and recruitment connectivity between,</li> </ul>	<p>To be advised</p>							Desirable	2	1



	and within, jurisdictions.						
<b>Understanding changes to fishing power through time</b>	➤ Understanding changes in fishing behaviour and power over time (e.g. changes to the size of engines, use of GPS, gear, areas fished, time fished, experience of divers), to inform the standardisation of CPUE data.	To be advised  Sub-group to progress once progress on improving data collection has been made – funding for sub-group meetings to be sourced from RAG budget			Desirable	2	1
<b>Science peer review</b>	➤ Consistent with best practice Guidelines for quality assurance of Australian fisheries research and science information (the Guidelines), a peer review be conducted of the TRL Fishery survey design, stock assessment and draft Harvest Strategy.  Terms of reference to be developed and considered by the TRLRAG	60,000 - 80,000  (dependent on final scope)			Desirable	3	1
<b>Mid-year survey</b> <b>Note: unless triggered under the Harvest Strategy for the TRL Fishery, this project is not a priority for the TRL Fishery.</b>	➤ Conduct mid- year survey, as required under the Harvest Strategy for the TRL Fishery.	To be conducted only if requirement to undertake a mid-year survey is triggered under the Harvest Strategy – indicative cost \$110,000 with in-kind contribution from CSIRO		\$110,000 with in-kind contribution from CSIRO (if triggered)	Only if triggered under HS priority = essential	Only if triggered under HS priority ranking = 1	1



**Table 1. Overview of recent research needs identified or discussed at previous TRLRAG and TRLWG meetings with an update on current status.**

Research need	Detail	TRLRAG and WG Prioritisation	Status	Comments/Questions
<b>Impact of climate change on Torres Strait fisheries</b>		<b>Essential</b> (as per TRLRAG 34 advice)	Supported by TSSAC, final funding approvals progressing through TSRA	Will contribute to the TRL Fishery's priority of <b>understanding connectivity, environmental drivers and adaptation strategies</b> .
<b>Fishery surveys, stock assessment, harvest control rules and recommended biological catch (RBC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor ongoing changes in the fishery and update or develop fishery performance indicators as required.</li> <li>Recommend a recommended biological catch (RBC) annually for each season.</li> <li>Every third year update and implement the long-term stock assessment.</li> <li>Conduct a pre- season survey in November each year, including seabed habitat monitoring.</li> <li>Continue development of a harvest strategy for the TRL Fishery including an empirical harvest control rule.</li> <li>Facilitate data sharing with PNG.</li> <li>Development of a tiered harvest strategy for the TRL Fishery.</li> </ul>	<b>Essential</b> (as per TRLRAG 34 advice)	<b>Currently funded</b> under AFMA Research Project (2019/0825) until the end of 2024/25.	Needs to be scoped for a new project for 2025/26 onwards  Estimated projected cost is \$345,000 annually
<b>Ecological risk assessment (ERA)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct an update to the 2007 ERA for the TRL Fishery.</li> </ul>	<b>Essential</b> (as per TRLRAG 34 advice)	Assessment this financial year dependent prioritisation against other high priority fisheries.  Not budgeted for in 2024/26	TRLRAG 29 agreed that because the Fishery is based on a single species, collected by hand, there is unlikely to be any significant change in the ecological risk factors relating to the TRL fishery since the last ERA was undertaken in 2007.
<b>Improvement of data collection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved monitoring of commercial catch and effort in all sectors of the fishery.</li> <li>Estimate of non-commercial take of TRL.</li> <li>Alternative monitoring techniques of effort, for example GPS tracking.</li> </ul>	<b>Essential</b> (as per TRLRAG 34 advice)		The RAG has supported the continuation of the data sub-group as a means to progress options for addressing ongoing fishing dependent data needs for the fishery.  The funding for RAG data sub-groups is to be sourced from the AFMA TRLRAG budget.

Research need	Detail	TRLRAG and WG Prioritisation	Status	Comments/Questions
<b>Understanding fisher behaviour</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding the drivers and incentives in determining fishing behaviour in all sectors.</li> <li>Understanding fishing behaviour under output controls: the impact of ITQs or competitive quota on the fishery (including social impacts); the extent and impact of discard mortality; the effect of changing market preferences on fishing behaviour under output controls; the extent of value adding e.g. moving to live product, targeting different sizes; the extent of high grading under output controls.</li> <li>Work should also include capturing information on the impacts of COVID-19 on the fishery to ensure that analysis of fishery data is accounting for potential 'COVID noise'.</li> <li>Commencing initial conversations with industry now, to capture qualitative information on fishing activities, would be a useful approach.</li> </ul>	<b>Essential</b> (as per TRLRAG 34 advice)	<p>TSRA is currently funding the related WAPPIL project.</p> <p>The PZJA Standing Committee is also due to consider the next steps in the TIB quota allocation review at their next meeting.</p>	TRL Data Sub-group should commence initial conversations with industry and collection of qualitative data, with a view to developing a structured quantitative survey over time.
<b>Understanding connectivity, environmental drivers and adaptation strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding of migration of different age classes of lobsters between, and within, jurisdictions (e.g. PNG, QLD East Coast and Torres Strait).</li> <li>Understanding of recruitment connectivity between, and within, jurisdictions, including key areas of larval release within each jurisdiction.</li> <li>Management implications of movement and recruitment connectivity between, and within, jurisdictions.</li> <li>Understanding large scale environmental perturbations and their impacts on lobster recruitment, availability and aggregations.</li> </ul>	<b>Desirable</b> (as per TRLRAG 34 advice)	Currently unfunded and requires an indicative cost estimate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>industry could be engaged to undertake a discrete tagging project of 0+ (recently settled) and 1+ (juvenile) lobsters to examine movement from the East Coast into the Torres Strait.</li> <li>Useful to help better understand any potential disparity between pre-season survey data, and the fishery catch data, noting that the most recent tagging study is over 30 years old.</li> <li>The currently-funded climate project work led by CSIRO (Leo Dutra) will provide greater insights into the available environmental information, and advice on what information should be collected to develop downscaled climate effects models for TS fisheries.</li> </ul>
<b>Understanding changes to</b>	Understanding changes in fishing behaviour and power over time (e.g. changes to the size of engines, use of GPS, gear, areas fished, time	<b>Desirable</b> (as per TRLRAG 34 advice)	TRL Data Sub-group to progress once progress on improving data collection has been made –	Following initial qualitative data collection, more specific resources can be dedicated towards the project to develop a

Research need	Detail	TRLRAG and WG Prioritisation	Status	Comments/Questions
<b>fishing power through time</b>	fished, experience of divers), to inform the standardisation of CPUE data.		funding for sub-group meetings to be sourced from RAG budget	representative and structured annual fishing power survey. This will be better facilitated when face-to-face stakeholder engagement is more feasible, allowing for trusted relationships with industry to be built up over time.
<b>Science peer review</b>	Consistent with AFMA's best practice <i>Guidelines for quality assurance of Australian fisheries research and science information</i> (the Guidelines), a peer review be conducted of the TRL Fishery survey design.	<b>Desirable</b> (as per TRLRAG 34 advice)	This project is currently estimated to cost between \$60,000 - \$80,000 depending on final scope. The Chair and independent scientific member agreed to finalise the Terms of Reference for the review out-of-session (TRL RAG 29)	Original driver for this research need may be now less important.
<b>Mid-year survey</b>	Conduct mid- year survey, as required under the Harvest Strategy for the TRL Fishery.	To be conducted only if requirement to undertake a mid-year survey is triggered under the Harvest Strategy – indicative cost \$110,000 with in-kind contribution from CSIRO	n/a	Unless triggered under the Harvest Strategy for the TRL Fishery, this project is not a priority for the TRL Fishery.

## Committed Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee (TSSAC) funds for multi-year projects 2024/25 – 2027/28

Key

FUNDED

Project Title	Cost per year			
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
FIS, stock assessment, Harvest Strategy and Recommended Biological Catch calculation for the Torres Strait TRL Fishery	\$338,429	(Estimate \$345,000)	(Estimate \$345,000)	(Estimate \$345,000)
Finfish Fishery: Coral Trout and Spanish Mackerel Biological Sampling 2021-2024	\$186,159	(Estimate \$190,000)	(Estimate \$190,000)	(Estimate \$190,000)
TS Spanish mackerel CKMR – contamination analysis (3 year project with stop/go after first year)	\$23,491	(Estimate \$240,000)	(Estimate \$240,000)	
Climate change project (Funded by TSRA)	\$881,755	\$177,980	\$29,202	
<b>Total cost for all contracted projects (excluding Climate Change)</b>	<b>\$548,079</b>	<b>\$775,000</b>	<b>\$775,000</b>	<b>\$535,000</b>
Predicted available research budget <sup>1</sup> (excluding Climate Change)	<b>\$548,079</b>	<b>\$645,000</b>	<b>\$645,000</b>	<b>\$645,000</b>
	\$420,000 AFMA \$128,079 TSRA <sup>2</sup>	\$420,000 AFMA <sup>3</sup> \$225,000 TSRA <sup>4</sup>	\$420,000 AFMA \$225,000 TSRA	\$420,000 AFMA \$225,000 TSRA
Available remaining funds or shortfall (factoring in TRL, Spanish Mackerel and CKMR projects ongoing and assuming available research budget moving forward)	\$0	<b>-\$110,000</b>	<b>-\$110,000</b>	<b>~\$110,000</b>

<sup>1</sup> This is an estimate of the minimum expected budget, noting sometimes PZJA agencies find additional funding for critical research above this amount. Further this amount is not guaranteed as a minimum.

<sup>2</sup> Includes \$90,000 rollover of underspent TSRA funds from 2023-24 FY and in principle support for remaining \$38,079

<sup>3</sup> Assumed Government budget allocation

<sup>4</sup> Estimate of an annual ongoing TSRA contribution

# Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee

## Strategic Research Plan 2024–2028

For more information about TSSAC and our research in the Torres Strait, visit the PZJA website at [pzja.gov.au](http://pzja.gov.au) or contact the AFMA Torres Strait Fisheries team on (07) 4069 1990 or [torresstraitresearch@afma.gov.au](mailto:torresstraitresearch@afma.gov.au).

### Who we are

The Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee (TSSAC) is a Protected Zone Joint Authority (PZJA) advisory committee providing advice to the PZJA on use of research funds for Torres Strait fisheries research.

TSSAC includes members from the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA), the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA), Fisheries Queensland, the Torres Strait Islander industry, and the scientific community.

### What we do

TSSAC provides advice and recommendations in prioritising research across all Torres Strait fisheries.

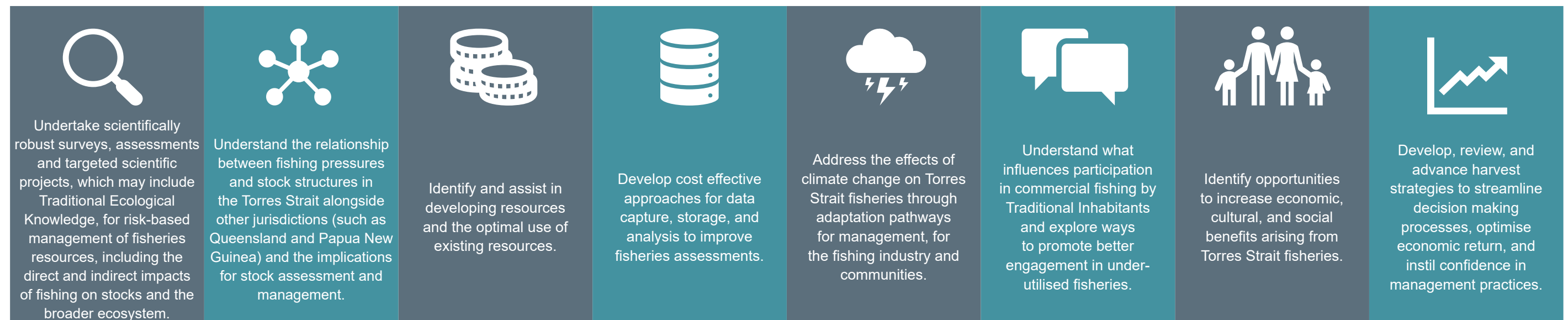
AFMA, as the secretariat of the committee, assesses milestone reports and advises on the use of funds to ensure research projects are achieving expected outcomes.

### Our objectives

- **Develop research priorities** for Torres Strait fisheries in conjunction with resource assessment groups, management advisory committees and working groups, addressing the PZJA's management objectives.
- Review and **provide advice on individual fishery research plans** for Torres Strait fisheries.
- **Advise** the PZJA on allocating research funds.
- **Engage and inform** representatives of Torres Strait communities about proposed research and project outcomes.

### Strategic research themes

Any research recommended by TSSAC for funding will help the PZJA achieve the objectives of the Act.



### Key enablers

AFMA provide secretariat support to TSSAC including organising meetings, managing research contracts and project milestones, linking research teams with Torres Strait community representatives, and publishing final project reports on the PZJA website.

The communication of research outcomes to non-scientific audiences include summary documents on project outcomes and implications for fisheries management, and these are published online and provided to relevant Torres Strait stakeholders.

PZJA continues to facilitate greater involvement of Torres Strait Islanders in fisheries research and management through capacity development and collaborative approaches in research projects.

### Research objectives

This plan responds to the complex research needs for Torres Strait fisheries where the management environment pursues sustainability objectives alongside social, economic, and cultural objectives.

Research carries high costs. In an economic environment of competing funding pressures there is a reliance on PZJA advisory committees for strategic planning to deliver the best long-term return on research investment.

There are significant social objectives in managing Torres Strait fisheries and returns on investment may need to be assessed differently to a typical western economic value model. Assessing the value of research against broader objectives will assist the PZJA pursue the social objectives of the Act, alongside the more routinely measured economic and environmental objectives.

<b>TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER WORKING GROUP (TRLWG 16)</b>	<b>MEETING 16 5 June 2024</b>
<b>OTHER BUSINESS</b>	<b>Agenda Item 5 For Discussion</b>

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the Working Group **NOMINATE** any further business for discussion.

<b>TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER WORKING GROUP (TRLWG 16)</b>	<b>MEETING 16 5 June 2024</b>
<b>DATE AND VENUE FOR NEXT MEETING</b>	<b>Agenda Item 6 For Discussion and Advice</b>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Working Group **NOMINATE** a date and a venue for the next meeting noting proposed meeting dates in the table below alongside key agenda items.

<b>Proposed Date</b>	<b>Key agenda items</b>
12 December 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consider advice of the TRL Resource Assessment Group (TRLRAG) regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Results of the November 2024 pre-season survey</li> <li>○ CPUE analyses for the 2023-24 fishing season</li> <li>○ recommended biological catch (RBC) for the 2024-25 fishing season</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Provide advice regarding a total allowable catch (TAC) for the 2024-25 fishing season</li> <li>- Progress changes to management controls pending advice of TRLWG 16</li> </ul>