

**TORRES STRAIT FINFISH WORKING GROUP MEETING**  
**3 – 4 October 2006**  
**PEARLS BUILDING, THURSDAY ISLAND**

**Recommendations of the FFWG to the TSFMAC and TSSAC**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Agency</b>
1	6	The FFWG recommends to the TSFMAC that in relation to dual endorsed licences (i.e. licences endorsed for both Reef line and Spanish mackerel fisheries) individual endorsements be permitted to be tendered in the open tender process.	DPI&F
2	10.1	The FFWG recommends to the TSFMAC that Mr Neil Green be appointed to the FFWG as an Industry member, Dr Ashley Williams be appointed to the FFWG as the Research Member and Mr Francis Pearson be appointed as the Community Fisher Representative for Poruma (replacing the previous member Mr Jack Billy) and Mr Wilson Billy from Warraber (replacing the previous member Mr Mr Samuel Tamu)	DPI&F
3	5	The FFWG agreed to recommend the following research priorities for the Finfish fishery to the next meeting of the TTSSAC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Research required to improve stock assessment (see action item 1 below);</li> <li>- Extension of Genetag style research into the Torres Strait;</li> <li>- Ecological risk assessment of species other than coral trout;</li> <li>- Extending CRC research logs at certain island freezers.</li> </ul>	DPI&F

Note: The majority of the FFWG recommendations from this meeting form part of the development of the management plan. As such these issues will be considered by the TSFMAC at a later date when they are in a more finalised state.

## Action Items

No.	Agenda	Action	Agency
1	3	Create a spreadsheet of scenarios for both fisheries and advise the AAP of the issue with Option e (i.e accumulative impacts of platforms taking up the 2% option).	AFMA
2	5.1	Provide a list of prioritised recommendations to update the Spanish mackerel stock assessment.	Dr Williams
3	5.1	Investigate Genetag in terms of costs and feasibility of application in Torres Strait	DPI&F Dr Williams
4	5.3	Provide the FFWG with a concise list of management recommendations/options in relation to implementing seasonal closures and size limits for Passionfruit (leopard) coral trout.	Dr Williams
5	6.1	Provide fishery data and options (e.g average over a number of years, percentage quartile) for setting the TACC and trigger reference points for other species in both the reef line and Spanish mackerel fisheries.	AFMA DPI&F
6	6.2	Analyse and identify a schedule of individual catch rates for conversion purposes.	AFMA DPI&F
7	7	Consult with community fishers on the impacts of a filleting ban.	TSRA
8	7	Analyse catch/effort data in relation to partitioning Reef line and Spanish mackerel fishing for dual endorsed boats.	AFMA DPI&F Dr Williams
9	7	Provide options in relation to reference points for TACC usage and 'other species' take.	DPI&F

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**MEETING START TIMES: DAY 1&2 – 8.30AM**

## **AGENDA**

### **OPENING**

### **APOLOGIES**

### **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

1. Ratification of record of previous FFWG meeting (15 Feb - 17 Feb 2006)
2. Actions and/or business arising from the previous FFWG meeting
3. Outcomes from PZJA 19 (issues of relevance to the Finfish fishery)
4. Fishery Objectives – objectives, strategies and performance measures (QDPI&F)
5. Research
  - 5.1 Spanish Mackerel Stock Assessment
  - 5.2 Reef Fish Management Strategy Evaluation
  - 5.3 Population biology of coral trout species
6. TAC setting
  - 6.1 Capacity of fishery;
  - 6.2 TAC-TAE conversion (including efficiency issues);
  - 6.3 Allocation of Units
  - 6.4 Unit value
  - 6.5 Frequency of TAC setting
7. Management System for 2008 (QDPI&F)
  - 7.1 Management Plan commencement date;
  - 7.2 Fishing season;
  - 7.3 VMS and reporting system;
  - 7.4 Trading rules;
  - 7.5 PNG/AUS Catch sharing arrangements (Mackerel)
8. Data
  - 8.1 AFMA strategy to improve data management
  - 8.2 Data plan
9. Dates for future meetings
10. Other business
  - 10.1 *Membership and permanent observers*

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**DRAFT RECORD OF MEETING**

THESE ARE **DRAFT** MINUTES WHICH HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO MEMBERS OF THE FINFISH WORKING GROUP (FFWG) FOR COMMENT. IF **NO** COMMENTS ARE RECEIVED BY **1 DECEMBER 2006** THESE MINUTES WILL BE TAKEN AS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING AND WILL BE RATIFIED AT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP.

**ATTENDANCE**

**Day 1**

Members

John Marrington	(Chairperson)
Jim Prescott	(AFMA)
Shane Gaddes	(DPI&F)
Toshio Nakata	(TSRA Fisheries Co-ordinator)
Lota Warriia	(TSRA – Yorke Community Fisher Representative)
Arthur Naawi (proxy for Ken Bedford)	(TSRA – Darnley Community Fisher Representative)
Wilson Billy (proxy for Sam Tamu)	(TSRA – Warraber Community Fisher Representative)
Kila Odo	(TSRA – Mer Community Fisher Representative)
Francis Pearson (proxy for Jack Billy)	(TSRA – Poruma Community Fisher Representative)
Larry Hudson (proxy for Carl D'Aguiar)	(Mackerel/Reef line Fisher)
Tony Vass (proxy for Shaun Hanson)	(Mackerel Fisher)
Dr Ashley Williams	(Research Representative – JCU)

Observers

Dr John Kung	(DPI&F)
Henning Christensen	(Mackerel Fisher)
Greg McBeth	(Reef Line Fisher)
Damien Miley	(TSRA)
Mark Jones	(AFMA)

**Day 2**

As per day 1	
Kirsten Maclean	(AFMA)
Tony Vass (morning only)	

**APOLOGIES**

Shaun Hanson  
Kenny Bedford  
Bert Matysek  
Carl D'Aguiar

## **DAY 1 – Tuesday 3 October 2006**

### **Agenda Item 1: Ratification of record of previous FFWG meeting (15-17 Feb 2006)**

The draft minutes were ratified by the FFWG as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

### **Agenda Item 2: Actions and/or business arising from the previous FFWG meeting**

Dr Kung went through the Action Items from the previous FFWG meeting. Most of the items had been addressed or were to be further progressed in later agenda items.

### **Agenda Item 3: Outcomes of PZJA 19 (Issues of relevance to Finfish fishery)**

Mr Gaddes summarised the decisions from PZJA 19 held on Thursday Island, 27-28 April 2006, relating to the Torres Strait Finfish fishery. Members discussed issues regarding the Allocation Advisory Panel (AAP) process and the implementation of the 10nm closures.

Also under this agenda item Mr Gaddes summarised the Torres Strait Fisheries Management Advisory (TSFMAC) discussions and recommendations relevant to the Finfish fishery.

The TSFMAC discussed the implications of Papua New Guinea (PNG) requesting catch sharing arrangements be re-established for the Spanish Mackerel fishery (See Agenda Item 7.5) and the impact this would have on management arrangements for the 2007 season.

The TSFMAC recommended that the 2006 management arrangements be rolled over into 2007. However, recognising the potential sustainability concerns that could result from increased PNG participation in the fishery, the TSFMAC recommended a mid season review of the fishery if there was a significant increase in catch or effort.

The TSFMAC also considered the Queensland Seafood Industry Association (QSIA) concerns regarding potential Article 23 implications for the reef-line fishery if PNG requests catch sharing arrangements in that fishery. The TSFMAC noted the concerns however it did not recommend any action.

**Correspondence** - Mr Marrington tabled letters from Mr Neil Green, President of the (QSIA) to Senator the Honourable Eric Abetz and Mr Kila Odo. Mr Green's letter to Senator Abetz requested that the Australian Government purchase a further 25% of the reef line fishery during the open tender process to account for any future request by PNG to initiate catch sharing arrangements. Mr Green's letter to Mr Odo requested support for a 100% Government buy-out of the non-traditional inhabitant sector of the finfish fishery. The quota, which is to be held by traditional inhabitants, could then be leased back to commercial operators.

### **Agenda Item 4: Fisheries Management Objectives**

Dr Kung spoke to this item. He outlined the need for objectives in the management plan and the necessity for performance against the objectives to be measurable. Each management objective was then discussed with members providing input into the management objectives, performance indicators, trigger reference points and management responses.

Dr Kung also outlined the proposed framework for the objectives. It is proposed that the management objectives and performance indicators are to be included in the management plan with trigger reference points and management responses sitting in Policy outside the legislation. This approach allows greater flexibility and prevents automated management intervention occurring when unforeseen and possibly external circumstances cause performance indicators to hit trigger reference points. For example market based issues that are not related to sustainability may result in a drop in effort or catch triggering a reference point and automating a management response.

Mr Prescott discussed the need for separate objectives for the reef line and Spanish mackerel sectors. While there were benefits to this approach it was decided to keep the objectives sufficiently broad so that they meet the needs of both sectors.

The preliminary objectives are outlined in the table below.

LEGISLATIVELY BASED		POLICY BASED		RESOURCING AND COSTS	
Management objective (proposed)	Performance Indicator	Trigger Reference Point	Management Response	Projects/Resources Required	Costs
<p>1) To maintain catches at sustainable levels.</p> <p><b>Strategies:</b> A single TACC for each fishery (reef line and Spanish mackerel) to be set at a level of historical stable average catch for the fishery.</p> <p>Monitoring of the TACC to be supported by use of VMS, prescribed logbooks and the docket book system.</p> <p>Other strategies to include minimum and maximum size limits, no-take species, closures and the remaining suite of input controls currently in place.</p>	<p>i) Sustainable yield estimate for fishery</p> <p>ii) TIB Sector - Harvest level in relation to 50% of season Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC)</p> <p>iii) TVH Sector – Effort level in relation to Total Allowable Effort for sector. TAE to be converted from 50% of TACC.</p>	<p>Either total fishery catch declines by X% over the next season OR</p> <p>TACC reached within X% of season (CCT importance)</p> <p>X% of TACC reached</p> <p>X% of TAE reached</p>	<p>FFWG to review fishery and make appropriate recommendations to TSFMAC, within 12 months of trigger being reached, to ensure than annual catch does not exceed TACC</p>	<p>TACC setting and trigger review – additional FFWG meeting</p> <p>Data collection and Quota/VMS Monitoring – tied in with other fisheries and overall estimate.</p>	\$20,000
<p>2) To optimise the yield from the fishery</p>	<p>i) Sustainable yield estimate for fishery</p> <p>ii) Proportion of TACC/TAE used</p>	<p>X% of TACC or TAE not used</p>	<p>FFWG to review fishery and make appropriate recommendations to TSFMAC, within 12 months of trigger being reached.</p>	<p>FFWG meeting as for Objective 1</p>	
<p>3) To protect the traditional way of life and livelihood of traditional inhabitants, in particular in relation to their traditional fishing for finfish</p> <p><b>Strategies:</b> TACC to consider traditional fishing needs and expectations</p> <p>Support research projects that identify traditional fishing needs and expectations</p>	<p>iv) Reference point to be identified from CRC-TS projects (NOO &amp; Busilacchi)</p>	<p>Trigger reference point to be derived from CRC-TS research projects</p>	<p>FFWG to review TACC setting process, within 12 months of trigger being reached, to ensure that traditional fishing needs are met.</p>	<p>FFWG meeting as for Objective 1)</p>	
<p>4) To provide for the optimal utilisation, cooperative management, and for catch sharing to occur with PNG</p> <p><b>Strategies:</b> Ensure mechanisms for information collection and sharing is in place so utilisation can be optimised.</p> <p>Maintain cooperative links and communication with PNG's National Fisheries Authority.</p> <p>Enable PNG participation in fisheries consultative structure.</p>	<p>v) catch sharing arrangements and complementarity of management arrangements as negotiated between Australia and PNG</p> <p>vi) shares harvested as per Article 23 of the Treaty</p>	<p>Failure to reach negotiated agreements at Bilateral Meeting process</p> <p>X% of allowable effort under catch sharing reached</p>	<p>PZJA agencies to review catch sharing agreement process to identify resolution mechanisms</p> <p>PZJA agencies to advise PNG licensee and NFA of approaching limit</p>	<p>Bilateral fisheries meetings with PNG – already in existence (cost neutral)</p> <p>Process created to monitor PNG cross border endorsement activity and entry/exit reporting for PNG Licensee – functions are part of day to day activity for personnel (cost neutral)</p>	
<p>5) To promote economic development in the Torres Strait area with an emphasis on providing employment opportunities for traditional inhabitants, and to ensure that these development opportunities are socially and culturally appropriate</p> <p><b>Strategies:</b> Implement quota trading policies to promote net shift of quota to traditional inhabitant commercial fishers</p>	<p>vii) rate of change of community fishing share of Australian TACC</p>	<p>catch allocated to community fishers shifts to X:X by X years from commencement of management plan</p>	<p>FFWG to review quota trading policies within 12 months of trigger being reached</p>	<p>Data collection and Licensing Monitoring – tied in with other fisheries and overall estimate.</p>	

### **Agenda Item 5.1: Spanish mackerel Stock Assessment**

Dr Williams presented members with a summary of the CRC Torres Strait produced report 'Stock assessment of the Torres Strait Spanish Mackerel fishery'. The assessment was based on a sex specific age structured model similar to that used in the Northern Territory Spanish Mackerel fishery. Dr Williams also summarised the management strategy evaluation (MSE) methods contained in the report. MSEs were completed based on two harvest strategies, one based on levels of catch, the other based on levels of fishing mortality.

The stock assessment item was placed on the agenda for noting however as the results are likely to be fed into the TAC setting process a great deal of discussion took place. Members discussed the assumptions and data included in the model and the likely implications that resulted from these assumptions. It was generally acknowledged that the assumptions resulted in an assessment which was not based on the exact biology of Spanish mackerel in the Torres Strait. Mr Vass expressed concerns that due to the lack of data in the Torres Strait the estimates of maximum sustainable yield produced by the assessment were overly precautionary.

Mr Prescott suggested that the areas that resulted in major uncertainty in the model should be identified with research directed at these areas to increase the confidence in the model. Members agreed that research into improving the assessment should be included in the research priorities for the fishery to be passed on to the TSSAC.

The genetic tagging system (Genetag) in place in the Northern Territory was also discussed with Dr Williams advising that data from such a system in the Torres Strait would improve confidence levels in the assessment. Mr Gaddes and Dr Williams undertook to investigate the feasibility of Genetag in the Torres Strait.

**Action Item - Dr Williams to provide a list of prioritised recommendations to update the Spanish mackerel stock assessment.**

**Action Item - Dr Williams and Mr Gaddes to investigate Genetag in terms of costs and feasibility of application in Torres Strait.**

### **Agenda Item 5.2: Reef fish management strategy evaluation**

Dr Williams informed members of the management strategy evaluation (MSE) being completed for the reef fish fishery. An MSE is a tool that allows managers and stakeholders to see how well different management strategies perform with regard to various objectives that are set. In other words, management strategies are identified and the MSE evaluates likely consequences for fishers, the fish stocks and management for each strategy. The MSE for the Torres Strait will be based on the effect of management on the common coral trout as this is the primary target species for the fishery.

The working group identified a range of management objectives for the fishery. A different set of objectives was identified for each stakeholder group.

Mr Pearson advised that activities like the MSE highlighted the need for more monitoring and extension to outer islands to allow CFG members to better participate in management forums. This was particularly important with regards to traditional take which was not monitored by the docketbook system (Mr Pearson indicated that a relatively large number of Spanish mackerel are taken at his island for subsistence for example).

In light of the discussion into MSE Mr Prescott advised the working group of the Commonwealth harvest strategy which is currently under development. The harvest strategy works on the basic premise that catch or effort is restricted when a stock drops below 40% of virgin stock levels. If the fishery continues to decline to levels below 20% of virgin levels the fishery is closed.

### **Agenda Item 5.3: Population biology of coral trout species**

Dr Williams spoke to this item. Members were provided with a summary of a CRC Torres Strait project looking at the biology of the three major coral trout species in the Torres Strait. For each species members noted the spatial distribution, age distribution, spawning season, total mortality, growth rates and size at sex change.

Dr Williams advised that the only major concern resulting from the project related to the leopard trout, *P. areolatus*. The leopard trout appears to be maturing at a larger size than the other species, resulting in a later sex change. Consequently the current size limit does not protect as many males as the other coral trout species. Further protection could be afforded to this species through an increase in the minimum legal size or through a maximum legal size.

Mr McBeth noted that this corresponded with his own observations and stressed the need for responsible management in this case pointing out that the leopard trout needed extra protection in light of the current research.

**Action Item – Dr Williams to provide the FFWG with a concise list of management recommendations/options in relation to implementing seasonal closures and size limits for Passionfruit (leopard) coral trout.**

## **DAY 2 – Wednesday 4 October 2006**

Mr Nakata acted as Chair for the morning session due to Mr Marrington being called out on other matters. Mr Nakata welcomed Ms Maclean who has taken up a data position within AFMA.

Members noted that the main aim of Items 6 and 7 of this agenda was to introduce the concepts to the FFWG and work towards recommendations for the TSFMAC. Mr Nakata asked what the timelines for the development of the management plan were. The goal was to have another FFWG late in the year or early 2007 with a TSFMAC in March 2007. It was also proposed that separate stakeholder meetings be held in the interim period to draft the Quota Monitoring Systems for each of the sectors.

### **Agenda Item 6: TACC setting**

#### **6.1 – Capacity of the fishery**

Dr Kung spoke to this item. With regards to the method of setting the TACC, members preferred the option of having the PZJA set the TACC in a similar manner to that included in the draft TRL management plan.

Members discussed the species to be included in the TACC. Mr Prescott recommended that species that could no longer be taken, for example Maori wrasse, should not be included in the TACC. He also questioned whether sharks should be included. Members discussed the issue and it was recommended that the TACC should be set on coral trout species only. No limits would be placed on other species as 80% of the TVH and 60% of the TIB catch is coral trout.

There was general concern that effort could move from coral trout on to other species under a coral trout only quota. While members considered this unlikely given the price paid for coral trout, it was recommended that the catch of other species be closely monitored. Both the traditional inhabitant and non-traditional inhabitant representatives agreed that a quota based on coral trout would be effective for their sectors.

The timeframe for setting the TACC was deferred until more data are available when the data verification process is completed.

Members discussed the method of setting the TACC for both the reef line and Spanish mackerel fisheries. Members decided that, consistent with the PZJA decision, a stable period of production was the most suitable method for the reef line sector.

Members discussed the method for setting the TACC in the Spanish mackerel fishery in more detail. Members considered the relative benefits of using the stock assessment or using a stable period of production as in the reef line sector. After considering the merits and assumptions of the

stock assessment it was decided to use a stable period of production and use the stock assessment to assess the relative risks associated with the TACC levels.

The actual method of setting the stable period of production for each fishery would be discussed at the next working group meeting after some scenarios could be modelled and different periods assessed. Mr Prescott highlighted the need to consider both catch and effort when determining the period to be used. This was also raised by industry because the reef line fishery has very few boats and the seasonal effort can vary significantly if one or two boats do not fish in a given season.

**Action Item: AFMA/DPI&F to provide fishery data and options (e.g average over a number of years, percentage quartile) for setting the TACC and trigger reference points for other species in both the reef line and Spanish mackerel fisheries.**

## 6.2 – 6.5 TAC / TAE conversion, Unit system and Unit Value.

Members discussed the process for converting the TAC to ITE for each licence. The general consensus was that it would be inequitable to use a fleet average for all licenses as there is a significant difference in the efficiency of each license (or the potential for significant differences). In light of this members suggested that the average daily catch rate for each licence be used as a conversion factor. Using this method ensured the conversion factor is matched to each license and the way that it operates in the fishery.

In the reef line fishery the proposed method for calculating the conversion was based on each licence not the number of tenders due to the lack of reliable data on tender numbers used. In the Spanish mackerel fishery where reliable data on tender days exists the conversion will be based on tender days. The period recommended for calculating the conversion factor was a three year moving average.

In terms of the legislative framework for the model, the working group proposed:

- Individual catch rates to be calculated and included as a license condition or included in a register,
- Unit value (e.g. x kg of whole, guts in, coral trout) to be gazetted in a fisheries management notice,
- Allocated days to be included as a license condition,
- Trading will be in units, with individual license catch rates used to convert units to days.

### Example of proposed TACC Model -

Example TACC	100t & 100 units (1 unit = 1kg)			
	TVH			TIB
Sector				
Units	50 units (50t)			50 units (50t)
Licences	TVH1	TVH2	TVH3	~ 199 licences
AAP allocates units	20 units	20 units	10 units	Competitive TAC
Avg Catch rate	150kg	100kg	200kg	
Allocated days (units/catch rate)	133	200	50	
Example of units trade (10 units from TVH2 to TVH3)	-	10 units	20 units	
New Allocated days	-	100	100	

**Action Item: AFMA/DPI&F to analyse and identify a schedule of individual catch rates for conversion purposes.**

### **Agenda Item 7: Management system for 2008**

Members discussed the basic operational aspects of the Quota monitoring system to be implemented in 2008. Of most importance in terms of complexity was the method used by the VMS system to determine which fishery dual endorsed fishers were operating in. Members considered the merits of the following options:

- all days docked at same time (i.e. dual licensed boats are able to fish in both fisheries until days from one symbol run out)
- single jurisdiction trips (i.e. fisher provides a prior notice advising what fishery they are operating in and is only to operate in that fishery)
- the tender process aims to buy out all dual licences

After considering the merits of the three options the working group recommended that single jurisdiction trips with a prior report mechanism was the most appropriate. The working group also noted that the current in possession limit for mackerel should continue under the management plan.

In light of the ability of traditional inhabitants to take unlimited quantities of fish other than coral trout, the working group discussed the possibility of coral trout being filleted and labelled 'mixed reef' to bypass the quota. To reduce the likelihood of this the working group recommended a filleting ban on all species except mackerel until after the fish have been recorded in the docket book by the fish receiver. CFG members advised that under current practices fish are not filleted at sea however they undertook to check with members to see if a ban on filleting would cause any issues.

Mr Prescott noted that as mackerel could be filleted in both sectors, what form should they be reported as under the quota monitoring system? The working group recommended that all fish should be reported as being in the form of whole fish with guts in, this included all mackerel species.

**Action Item: TSRA to consult with community fishers on the filleting ban.**

**Action Item: AFMA/DPI&F/Williams to analyse catch/effort data in relation to partitioning Reef line and Spanish mackerel fishing for dual endorsed boats.**

Dr Kung highlighted the importance of implementing a series of performance indicators and trigger reference points under agenda item 4. Members revisited some of these issues in light of the management framework recommended at this meeting and recommended a number of reference points which if triggered would require a review by the FFWG with possible management intervention. The FFWG recommended the following reference points:

#### **Proportion of sectoral TACC taken in any one year**

- o **TVH** sector – X% more coral trout taken in a season than allowed under TACC due to inaccurate TACC to TAE conversion. (NOTE: Individual catch rates to be adjusted on rolling 3 year average with appropriate trigger reference points)
- o **TIB** sector – Proportion of TIB quota not reached in the season. (e.g. reduced TIB participation in fishery)

#### **Proportion of 'other species' taken by the fishery**

**TVH & TIB** sectors - The proportion of 'other species' compared to coral trout taken in a year increases significantly above historic levels.

**Action Item: AFMA/DPI&F to provide options in relation to reference points.**

Members discussed the catch reporting formalities required under the new management arrangements. It was thought that only the traditional inhabitant sector would require amended catch reporting arrangements as they would be under an output based management system. The recommended catch reporting systems are:

**TIB sector**

- Docket book receipts to be submitted less than 24 hours by Buyers/Processors
- Independent validation through fish receiver documentation

**TVH sector**

- Logsheets to be returned within 15 days of the end of the month
- Independent validation through Docket book or fish receiver documentation

As the new management arrangements will include quota systems for both sectors, the working group recommended a range of quota statements and warning notices be sent to fishers at different stages of the quota year. The recommended quota statements for the two sectors are:

**TIB sector:**

- Accumulated catch totals to be provided via website, Torres news and Torres radio (4MW).
- Notification one month from estimated date of filling quota. Fisher notified of final fishing date one week in prior to fishery closing.
- Stop fishing warning also through Freezers.

**TVH sector:**

- Monthly Statements and Warning 14 days prior to days running out

Members discussed the consequences of exceeding either the ITE or competitive TAC and provided recommendations for each sector. It was considered that a different approach to each sector was warranted given the nature of the quota systems. For quota infringements the FFWG recommended:

**TIB sector**

FINs (on the spot fine) for individuals.

**TVH sector**

1:1 penalty up to five days over quota with equivalent days removed from following year's quota. Instances of greater than 5 days over quota will be referred to QBFP for prosecution.

**Fish receivers:**

Breach of licence condition if caught buying after the quota is reached. This will remove the incentive to buy illegally caught product.

**Item 7.5 – PNG/AUS catch sharing arrangements (Spanish mackerel)**

Mr Gaddes spoke to this item. Members noted PNG's renewed interest in entering catch sharing arrangements in the Spanish mackerel fishery. The nature of the fish stocks in the TSPZ mean that Australia is obligated to give PNG 35-40% of the Spanish mackerel stock under the Treaty.

Members noted the proposed catch sharing arrangements for 2007. Industry members provided comments on the issues associated with allowing increased effort into the fishery without a reduction on the Australian side. Mr Vass advised that Bramble Cay was only a very small area and could not withstand a large number of boats fishing the area at the same time. He advised that it would be prudent to limit the number of boats that can work at Bramble Cay at any one time.

### **Agenda Item 10.1 – Membership and Permanent Observers**

Mr Gaddes spoke to this item. Members noted the process being undertaken to fill vacant positions on the working group. Two people had nominated for the vacant industry position on the working group, Mr Neil Green and Mr Larry Hudson. Mr Hudson indicated that he was satisfied with Mr Green being the industry member and withdrew his nomination.

Dr Ashley Williams was endorsed by the working group to fill the vacant research member position. The working group also noted that Mr Francis Pearson would be the new CFG member for Poruma, taking over from Mr Jack Billy. Mr Wilson Billy would be the new CFG member for Warraber, taking over from Mr Samuel Tamu).

### **Agenda Item 8 – Data**

Mr Prescott spoke to this item. Members noted the data validation process being undertaken by AFMA. The process is required to make certain the allocation advisory panel's issues concerning the data are addressed before the PZJA decides on an allocation model. The data also need to be as reliable as possible before the resource allocation decision is implemented and the move to 50:50 is made.

Mr Prescott advised that the logbook data that have recently been received from Qld will be reviewed before logbook data is sent out to licence holders for validation. The traditional inhabitant data is also undergoing a cleanup process with a traditional inhabitant name standardisation exercise to be completed before docket book data is sent to traditional inhabitants for verification.

Mr Pearson suggested that more importance needs to be placed on educating traditional inhabitants of the importance of correctly filing out docket books, particularly when future allocations and monitoring will rely on these documents.

### **Agenda Item 9 – Dates for future meetings**

Members were advised that an exact meeting date could not be set at the time if the meeting; however, the next meeting was planned for late 2008 or early 2009.

### **Agenda Item 10.2 – Research priorities**

Having discussed the framework for future management arrangements in the Finfish fishery, Mr Prescott advised that it was an appropriate time to also discuss the research priorities for the fishery under the new management arrangements. Members recommended the following research priorities to the TSSAC:

- Research required to improve the stock assessment model (see action item 1 below);
- Extension of Genetag style research into the Torres Strait;
- Ecological risk assessment of species other than coral trout;
- Extending the CRC research log program at certain island freezers.