

TORRES STRAIT PRAWN MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE	Meeting No. 10 30 June – 1 July 2010
Future funding for routine data assessment and reporting	Agenda Item No.3.1

RECOMMENDATION

That the TSPMAC:

- 3.1.1 **NOTES** workload requirements related to data assessment and reporting in the Torres Strait Prawn Fishery (TSPF).
- 3.1.2 **DISCUSSES** the possibility of funding routine data assessment and reporting work through observer programme savings.

BACKGROUND

Routine data assessment and reporting works principally relate to monitoring and reporting requirements for the TSPF. This includes annual reporting of catch and effort trends and ensuring the TSPF meets its reporting requirements *i.e.* Fishery Status Reports, ABARE reports, analysis of logbook data for TSPMACs, the prawn handbook and the ongoing development of the TSPF Harvest Strategy.

Historically, the majority of routine data assessment and reporting work has been undertaken by Fisheries Queensland which has been funded by a variety of sources. The completion of the *Torres Strait Prawn Spatial Management Research Project 2007-2009* however, highlighted the need to find alternate funding sources for TSPF research. In June of 2009, QPIF presented an options paper to the PZJA outlining potential avenues of funding. As a result of this paper, funding for the 2009-10 financial year was sourced from both the Commonwealth and the State, providing equal contributions. This, was only an interim arrangement to facilitate completion of ongoing projects. This funding (and that previously provided by DAFF) will not be available for the 2010-11 financial year or beyond.

The continued funding of routine data assessment and reporting work was discussed at the most recent TSPMAC (Dec. 2009). As part of these discussions a number of funding sources including the Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee and the Seafood CRC were examined in closer detail. Funds from both of these sources however, are used for discrete scientific proposals, as opposed to achieving reporting requirements / catch monitoring purposes. As such, the TSPMAC made the following recommendation:

TSPMAC 9.11: Fisheries QLD to put together a business case for the funding of routine scientific work that considers using savings from reducing observer coverage or the 25% manage costs attributed to the PNG allocation.

It is important to note that other QLD or Commonwealth managed fisheries undertake this routine data assessment and reporting work by staff members, which is budgeted through staff costs. This has simply not been done in the past due to funding which has now ceased.

DISCUSSION

The following represents a preliminary breakdown of the time (as a % of FTE) required to complete reporting and analytical requirements for the TSPF. Based on current estimates it is anticipated that approximately 13.5-14.5% of a FTE position will be required to complete the necessary work. When compared to the 2009-2010 financial year this is approximately 5-6% less. This decrease has been contributed to the completion of the DAFF report.

% of FTE	Category	Details
0.9%	BRS	Fishery Status Reports, ABARE reports etc
3.9%	HB	Analysis of logbook data & prawn handbook
2.0%	HS	Harvest strategy
6.6%	MAC	Meetings; preparation & participation, TSPMAC, Catch Sharing etc
~13.5-14.5%	(Total)	

At 13.5-14.5%, the total monies required to fund the routine data assessment and reporting work for the 2010-2011 financial year is estimated to cost approximately \$22,000 (including overheads).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Torres Strait Prawn levies at present do not incorporate a research component. As such, the funding for routine data assessment and reporting research would be a new component for industry to consider. The proposal is to fund this research through savings made via the observer program and reduced management costs. If this proposal is agreed, changes could be made to the 2010/11 budget.