

<b>TORRES STRAIT SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Meeting 56 5-6 October 2011</b>
<b>Update from Torres Strait Working Groups and Committees</b> Tropical Rock Lobster Resource Assessment Group	<b>Agenda Item No. 4.1 FOR NOTING</b>

## **PURPOSE**

To provide the TSSAC with an update on the activities of the Tropical Rock Lobster Resource Assessment Group (TRL RAG).

## **BACKGROUND**

The main role of the Tropical Rock Lobster Resource Assessment Group is to provide advice on the status of tropical rock lobster and on the impact of fishing on the marine environment. Advice provided by the TRLRAG should address biological, economic and wider ecological factors impacting on the fishery. The TRL RAG will also be responsible for advising the PZJA on an annual TAC when quota management for the fishery is implemented.

The last meeting of the TRL RAG (TRL RAG No. 10) was held in Cairns on 23-24 August 2011.

## **DISCUSSION**

The major outcomes from TRL RAG No.10 were that the TRL RAG:

1. Accepted the 2011 stock assessment model presented by CSIRO.
2. Noted that current spawning stock biomass was well above the target level (B<sub>targ</sub>) in 2011.
3. Agreed to preliminary TAC recommendation for 2012 of 964t (90%CI, 497 -1432 t).
4. Noted the progress of the CSIRO Management Strategy Evaluation project.

The TRL RAG discussed the most recent stock assessment for the Torres Strait tropical rock lobster fishery and the results of the 2011 visual surveys conducted by CSIRO. The abundance of one year old lobsters was much higher than the long-term average and the TAC in the fishery in 2012 is therefore also predicted to be higher than the long-term average. Catch figures for 2010 were also discussed at the meeting to assess the performance of the fishery. The total catch of lobster for 2010 in the Australian jurisdiction of the Torres Strait was 470 tonnes, or 82% of the Australian TAC (575 tonnes) set for 2010.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Nil