

TORRES STRAIT PRAWN MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE	Meeting No. 14 17-18 July 2013
REPORTS Management update	Agenda Item No 3.2 FOR INFORMATION

RECOMMENDATION

3.2.1 The TSPMAC **NOTES** the management update for the Torres Strait Prawn Fishery (TSPF).

DISCUSSION

Investment warning

In 2010, the TSPMAC agreed that the investment warning for the TSPF should be lifted. Due to the complex system of investment warnings in place in the Torres Strait, including a warning for all Torres Strait Fisheries, it has taken some time to work out how best to lift the TSPF warning. The PZJA Standing Committee supported the TSPMAC recommendation to lift the TSPF investment warning. They recommended AFMA release a media statement revoking the TSPF investment warning, and noting that all other Torres Strait investment warnings remain in force, however no longer apply to the TSPF. The investment warnings for other Torres Strait fisheries will remain until such time they are reviewed by the Torres Strait Fisheries Management Advisory Committee. The PZJA Standing Committee has agreed to the media statement at Attachment 3.2A, and the decision to lift and the warning and release the media statement will be considered by the PZJA.

Observer program

Observers were deployed in the TSPF during the 2012/13 financial year, with a target of 40 sea-days. A total of 37 sea days were achieved, which represents around 1.8% observer coverage based on 2012/13 season effort of 2,050 fishing nights. In 2011/12, 3.2% coverage was achieved, so we have been moving around the 2.8% observer coverage target for the fishery. If effort increases again during 2013/14 AFMA may need to increase the number of observer days in the fishery to ensure the 2.8% target is being applied, in accordance with the obligations of the fishery's Wildlife Trade Operation. The observer days during 2012/13 were achieved over three different trips on the Proteus and the Kamissa Lee in March 2013 and the Relentless in April 2013.

Table 1. Boats that have participated in the TSPF observer program in 2007-2013 to date.

BOAT	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Judy B	X						
Angelina S					X		
Aquarius 6	X						
Relentless		X		X		X	X
Darden Star	X						
Samantha J	X	X					
Bounty Hunter	X		X				
Gulf Bounty						X	
Vandarlia		X	X				
Proteus							X
Kamissa Lee							X

Species of interest to the traditional sector

In 2010, a list of nine species of interest to the traditional sector was compiled (Table 2) by the TSRA and TSPMAC traditional inhabitant members. This list was provided to the AFMA observer program, and any observations of these species are recorded during observer trips. In addition to the nine species listed in Table 2 below, interactions with Threatened, Endangered and Protected species such as turtles and other commercially important species such as Tropical Rock Lobsters, are also recorded.

At TSPMAC 13 in December 2012, the TSPMAC agreed that a report should be provided on interactions with these species at each meeting. Table 3 lists the occurrence of interactions with species of interest during the 2012/13 financial year.

Table 2. Species of interest to the traditional sector.

Code	Scientific name	Common Names	Traditional name
37 381002	<i>Mugil cephalus</i>	Sea Mullet	THURUD WAP
37 438010	<i>Siganus lineatus</i>	Goldlined Rabbitfish	PARASA
37 384010	<i>Choerodon Schoenleinii</i>	Black spot Tusk Fish / Parrot fish	BILLA
37 311040	<i>Epinephelus quoyanus</i>	Gold Spot Rockcod / Long fin rockcod	THUKUM
37 350017	<i>Plectorhinchus chrysotaenia</i>	Painted Sweetlip / Goldlined Sweetlips	KWIKUMUK

37 350003	<i>Diagramma labiosum</i>	Painted Sweetlip / Slatey Bream	PECOO
37 311045	<i>Cephalopholis sonnerati</i>	Tomato Cod	PELIT
37 437008	<i>Acanthurus dussumieri</i>	Pencil Surgeonfish	SABAI
37 437031	<i>Naso unicornis</i>	Bluespine Unicornfish	EEBAI

Table 3. Recorded interactions with species of interest during 2012-2013 financial year.

Scientific names	Common Names	No. of interactions	No. Alive	No. Deceased
<i>Panulirus ornatus</i>	Ornate Crayfish			
	Observer Trip 1	22	21	1
	Observer Trip 2	793*	778	15
	Observer Trip 3	8	8	8
<i>Natador depressus</i>	Flatback Turtle	1	1	0
<i>Chelonia mydas</i>	Green Turtle	4	4	0

* The large take during the second observer trip was associated with the march of TRL occurs a few days each season. Note the majority of lobsters were released alive during this trip.

Environment report - Protected Species Update

Since August 2005, AFMA, on behalf of operators, has been passing on information on interactions with protected species from logbooks to the Department of the Sustainability, Environment, Water, Populations and Communities (SEWPaC). This arrangement means operators are only required to report once, to AFMA, rather than dual reporting to both AFMA and SEWPaC.

Under this arrangement, AFMA provides SEWPaC with quarterly reports summarising protected species interactions reported in AFMA logbooks. All quarterly summary interaction reports provided to SEWPaC to date are posted on the AFMA website at: <http://www.afma.gov.au/managing-our-fisheries/environment-and-sustainability/protected-species/>

Reported interactions for 2012 and 2013

Table 5 and

outline the number and life status of individual protected species interactions recorded during 2012 and the first quarter of 2013. The data from the first quarter of 2013 may change as more up to date information is provided to AFMA.

There were 1,625 interactions with protected species reported in the logbooks for 2012, including five turtles, one narrow sawfish, 69 syngnathids (seahorses and pipefishes) and 1,550 seasnakes.

To date, there have been 178 interactions with protected species reported in logbooks for the first quarter of 2013, including one green turtle and 177 seasnakes.

No syngnathid or sawfish interactions were reported for Quarters 2, 3 or 4 in 2012 or for Quarter 1 in 2013. Low reporting of syngnathids has been discussed at previous TSPMAC meetings, noting higher catches of syngnathids were recorded in a similar neighbouring fishery. Low numbers are still being reported in the TSPF which may be due to low interactions, or could be a lack of understanding of the mandatory requirement to report syngnathid interactions. AFMA would like to remind operators that it is mandatory to report all interactions with protected species, and that syngnathids fit within this category.

When taking effort into account during 2012 (7,475 shots), the TSPF had an interaction rate of 0.22 individuals per shot. For the first quarter of 2013, there was an interaction rate of 0.12 per shot (1,428 shots).

For more information on fishery interactions with protected species contact the AFMA environment section on 02 6225 5318 or e-mail clayton.mccloud@afma.gov.au.

Table 4. Torres Strait Prawn Fishery (TSPF) interactions with protected species reported through AFMA logbooks in 2013 (Quarter 1).

2013	Common name	Life status	Number
Quarter 1	Green Turtle	Alive	1
	Seasnakes (unclassified)	Alive	116
		Dead	12
		Unknown	49
	<i>Seasnakes Total</i>		177
1st Quarter Total			178

Table 5. Torres Strait Prawn Fishery (TSPF) interactions with protected species reported through AFMA logbooks in 2012.

2012	Common name	Life status	Number
Quarter 1	Green Turtle	Alive	4
	Turtle (unclassified)	Alive	1
	Narrow Sawfish	Alive	1
	Seahorses and pipefish	Dead	69
	Seasnakes (unclassified)	Alive	238
		Dead	5
Unknown		69	
<i>Seasnakes Total</i>			312
1st Quarter Total			387
Quarter 2	Seasnakes (unclassified)	Alive	387
		Dead	4
		Unknown	166
2nd Quarter Total			557
Quarter 3	Seasnakes (unclassified)	Alive	375
		Unknown	64
3rd Quarter Total			439
Quarter 4	Seasnakes (unclassified)	Alive	173
		Dead	69
4th Quarter Total			242
Grand Total			1,625



Attachment 3.2A - Draft Media release for Torres Strait investment warnings

Removal of Investment Warnings in the Torres Strait Prawn Fishery

As a result of recent fisheries management reviews undertaken by the Protected Zone Joint Authority (PZJA), the investment warning issued in 2000 for the Torres Strait Prawn Fishery (TSPF) has been revoked. All other Torres Strait investment warnings remain in force, however no longer apply to the TSPF.

Anyone interested in investing in any Torres Strait fishery should contact Queensland Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry for information on the current investment warnings on (07) 3225 1868 or email jason.lally@daff.qld.gov.au.