

# Torres Strait Prawn Management Advisory Committee

Meeting 19 Record

17 September 2019

Teleconference

Note all meeting papers and record available on  
the PZJA webpage: [www.pzja.gov.au](http://www.pzja.gov.au)



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority



## Meeting participants

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### Members

Name	Position
William Stephens	Traditional Inhabitant Industry Member
Jim Newman	Industry member
Ed Morrison	Industry member
Clinton Farman	Industry member
Marshall Betzel	Industry member
Glen Duggan	Industry member
John Glaister	Chair
Lisa Cocking	Executive Officer and AFMA member
David Power	AFMA member
Allison Runck	TSRA member
Darren Roy	Queensland Fisheries member

### Apologies

Name	Position
Mr Francis Pearson	Traditional Inhabitant Industry Member
Mr Gavin Mosby	Traditional Inhabitant Industry Member

## TSPMAC meeting 19 decision record

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- 1.1.1 TSPMAC **SUPPORTED** the proposal to develop catch rate based triggers for monitoring sustainability of catches within fishing seasons that would replace existing effort based triggers.
- 1.1.2 TSPMAC **SUPPORTED** the proposal for the Harvest Strategy working group to develop economic indicators to monitor fishery performance over time.
- 1.1.3 The TSPMAC **NOTED** that the total cost of engaging an independent scientist to assist with reviewing the harvest strategy triggers may exceed the \$5000 originally budgeted but it is expected this can be covered with savings elsewhere.
- 1.1.4 The TSPMAC **AGREED** to convene the next face to face meeting in Cairns on Wednesday 29 January 2020.

# Meeting Administration

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The meeting opened at 10.35am.

The new members were welcomed to the meeting, including the new Chair, John Glaister, and the new industry member Mr Clinton Farman. The reappointed industry members were also thanked for their ongoing service. Apologies were acknowledged from Mr Gavin Mosby and Mr Francis Pearson.

The committee agreed to adopt the agenda as it stands.

## 1.1 Review of TSPF harvest strategy triggers

The TSPMAC discussed the harvest strategy review and considered the following main discussion points:

1. The MAC noted the developments around the review of harvest strategy triggers for the Torres Strait Prawn Fishery. The review came about because there was concern that some of the triggers in the current HS may not be working as intended, and may not take into account the fluctuations in the stock and changes to catch rates year to year.
2. A harvest strategy working group was established, which included an independent stock assessment scientist, Andrew Penney as well as AFMA, Clive Turnbull, the TSPMAC scientific member and a TSPMAC Industry member.
3. During the working group's first meeting on 30 July 2019, the working group noted that the current effort triggers used in the harvest strategy do not provide any indication on the state of the tiger prawn stocks and a catch rate based trigger would be more useful as an indicator of potential declines and the need for further review within season. A review paper on approaches for developing harvest strategy was prepared by Dr Penney and presented to the MAC for consideration. The MAC noted the review paper was very useful and supported the recommendation of the HSWG to progress with CPUE based triggers.
4. The triggers are intended to be a review point that doesn't prompt a specific management response, but instead triggers a review so management and the MAC can consider the possible reasons for lower catch rates and respond appropriately.
5. Any triggered review would also use economic data including prawn and fuel prices, to assess whether changes in the stock are more likely related to sustainability or economic pressures.
6. The TSPMAC noted that there is minimal additional cost beyond what has been budgeted, and that using CPUE based triggers in the harvest strategy is cost effective over the long term. TSPMAC supported the project being progressed and presented to a face to face meeting of the MAC in early 2020.

### Stock assessment update

7. Clive Turnbull provided a brief report on the results of the 2019 stock assessment highlighting that tiger prawn stocks in the Torres Strait are in a healthy state with high CPUE and biomass levels ranging between 60-88% of virgin biomass. This was the first assessment update in more than five years and it is expected that the results will enable ABARES to update the status report for the Torres Strait prawn fishery tiger prawn stocks from 'uncertain' to 'Not overfished and Not subject overfishing'. THE MAC noted the stock assessment results and approach for setting future TAEs will be considered further at the next meeting scheduled in early 2020/

## 1.2 TSPMAC workplan and meeting dates

The TSPMAC acknowledged that the trial of the new bycatch reduction device took place in July 2019, however, the trial was cut short due to bad weather. AFMA outlined a proposal to complete this trial on a different boat early in the 2020 fishing season. The trial could not be finalised this season as it takes time to get a new scientific permit, and AFMA considers it would be useful getting data from a second boat as well.

The committee supported further continuation of the BRD trial noting the importance of thoroughly testing the BRDs and ensuring they are effective and appropriate for use in the Torres Strait. The committee noted the full results were unlikely to be available at the next TSPMAC meeting and final results would likely be considered out of session during 2020.

## Next Meeting

The committee discussed the proposed agenda and timing of the next face to face TSPMAC meeting. January 29 was proposed as a suitable date and key agenda items included; harvest strategy trigger review, initial BRD trial results and setting of the TAE for 2021. TSPMAC noted the updated stock assessment would also be discussed in greater detail, alongside the harvest strategy trigger review. Queensland fisheries also agreed to present a paper detailing the changes occurring in the Queensland East Coast Otter Trawl Fishery so the TSPMAC can consider potential future impacts for dual endorsed operators.

The meeting closed at 11.05am