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Australian Fisheries Management Authority



Queensland
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Torres Strait

PZJA

Protected Zone
Joint Authority

Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee

Meeting #49

June 25 2009

CHAIR'S SUMMARY

Chair: Mr Ian Cartwright

Prepared by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority on behalf of the Torres Strait
Protected Zone Joint Authority

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Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee

The 49th meeting of the Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee (TSSAC) was held at Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, Brisbane on 25 June 2009.

In attendance were:

Name	Role
Mr Ian Cartwright	Chairperson
Dr Annabel Jones	AFMA Representative
Mr Shaun Ossinger	Executive Officer (AFMA)
Mr Shane Fava*	QDPI&F Representative
Dr Stephen Newman	Research Member (WA Fisheries)
Mr Charles David	Traditional Property Owner
Ms Sevaly Sen	Social/Economics Member
Mr Tony Vass	Industry Representative
Mr Malawup Nona	Observer – Traditional Property Owner
Mr Steve Hall	Observer – TSRA Fisheries Policy Officer
Professor Martin Nakata	Observer – Consultant (Cultural Protocols)
Mr Neville Nakata	Observer – TSRA Fisheries Coordinator
Mr Eddie Jebreen*	QDPI&F

Apologies:

Mr Gavin Begg	BRS
Mr. Augustine Mohiba	PNG NFA
Mr. Michael O'Neill	QDPI & F
Dr. Roland Pitcher	CSIRO

* Mr Fava and Mr Jebreen attended half of the meeting each as the QDPI&F representative.

Major outcomes

The TSSAC:

- agreed to adopt the Strategic Research Plan and the 2009 Operational Plan subject to minor amendments;
- received a briefing from Prof Nakata outlining the overall approach he would be taking to his project to develop cultural protocols for researchers working in Torres Strait; Prof Nakata emphasised that principles for engagement would be built on areas of common interest and achieving enhanced benefits for all stakeholders;
- set research priorities for research areas based on agreed criteria and approved a process for calling for research proposals for funding from beginning of 2010/2011;
- supported the proposal to seek funding for an *International Indigenous Commercial Fisheries Forum*. A steering committee will now seek to progress this initiative with potential funding providers;
- agreed to recommend to AFMA for funding the research project '*Population structure and genetic composition of green turtles sold in the Daru market*' conditional on a few small amendments; and
- did not support TSRA board request to approve all research proposals in Torres Strait.

Correspondence

The TSSAC was informed by Gavin Begg that the Bureau of Rural Sciences (BRS) will no longer be able to attend the TSSAC in an observer capacity due to budgetary constraints. The Committee acknowledged the highly valued input the BRS has had to TSSAC.

TSSAC Strategic Research Plan and 2009 Operational Plan

The Torres Strait Strategic Research Plan and the Operational Plan were adopted by the Committee subject to minor amendments. The Strategic Plan and 2009 Operational Plans will now be distributed to interested parties and posted on the PZJA website.

Cultural Protocols

Professor Martin Nakata, the consultant developing the *Cultural Protocols for Researchers Working in the Torres Straits*, provided a briefing on this project.

Professor Nakata outlined the various stages of the project and provided initial findings based on a literature search of existing information. Prof Nakata will now discuss these findings with Communities in the Torres Straits in order to incorporate the individual Communities' aspirations regarding researcher engagement and protocols.

Professor Nakata emphasised that principles would be built on areas of common interest (eg sustainability of resources) and Torres Strait Islanders and researchers need to ensure the protocols are efficient and enhance benefit to all stakeholders.

Funding cycle beginning 2010/2011

The Committee adopted a process for attracting and considering research proposals for the year beginning 2010/2011 financial year based predominately on the 09/10 funding cycle.

The Committee adopted a set of criteria for prioritising research projects/research areas identified from the various PZJA consultative bodies including the Tropical Rock Lobster RAG, MACs and Working Groups. It was agreed that information provided for the funding cycle should include priority research areas rather than individual research projects. The Committee agreed to incorporate specific projects identified by consultative committees into broader research areas for inclusion into the 2009 Operational Plan.

The call for pre-proposals will be distributed via advertisements on the NRM Jobs website, Torres News, targeted emails, PZJA website and other means as appropriate from the 31 July 2009 with Pre-proposals to be submitted before 30 August 2009.

International Indigenous Commercial Fisheries Forum

There was strong support for a proposed *International Indigenous Commercial Fisheries Forum*, as per the proposal developed by Sevaly Sen for consideration of the Committee. The proposed forum intends to host Indigenous experts from around the globe to share their knowledge and experience of operating successful commercial fisheries. The committee agreed that the submitted draft project proposal was appropriate to the aspirations of the TSSAC CFG representatives. The committee discussed the possible funding partners listed on the proposal and put forth several more to be incorporated in final proposal. A steering committee was nominated to progress this initiative, with the following membership: Ian Cartwright, Annabel Jones, Sevaly Sen, Maluwap Nona and Stephen Newman

Population structure and genetic composition of green turtles sold in the Daru market

The Committee noted the amendments to the full proposals provided by Mark Hamann (JCU) on his proposal *Population structure and genetic composition of green turtles sold in the Daru market*. The Committee agreed to recommend the proposal for funding by AFMA provided some amendments are incorporated regarding more detail being provided on discussions with PNG and clarification on how the proposed workshops are going to extend the outcomes of the project.

Climate change

TSRA, AFMA and CSIRO have been in discussions regarding potential research community adaptation/resilience to climate change. The TSSAC stressed their support for research more dedicated to fisheries impacts of climate change and requested that CSIRO fisheries scientists are included in these discussions.

TSRA Board role in TSSAC research

The TSRA Board has requested that they be given the opportunity to approve all research projects to be delivered in Torres Strait. The Committee discussed and agreed that the TSSAC was an expert independent committee of the PZJA and as such, it would not be appropriate for TSSAC recommendations for funding to be dependent on TSRA Board approval.

TSRA currently sits as a permanent observer on the TSSAC and has input in assessing proposals. The TSSAC will continue to provide pre-proposals and full proposals to TSRA to inform them of research being considered by the TSSAC, and those that the TSSAC support for funding. TSRA input will continue to be considered as important part of the current, agreed TSSAC assessment procedures.

Next Meeting

TSSAC 50 was tentatively set for 5 - 6 October 2009 in Cairns to be confirmed.