



Australian Government
Australian Fisheries Management Authority



TORRES STRAIT SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING NO. 49
25 JUNE 2009

MINUTES

CHAIR: MR IAN CARTWRIGHT

These minutes were ratified on 5-6 October at TSSAC 50

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



Queensland
Government



TORRES STRAIT
PZJA
PROTECTED ZONE
JOINT AUTHORITY

**TORRES STRAIT SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING No. 49
25 June, 2009: Commencing at 9.00am
Venue: QDPI&F, 80 Anne St.
Brisbane**

FINAL AGENDA

1 Meeting Administration

- 1.1 Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and Chairs Opening Remarks
- 1.2 Review and Adoption of the Agenda
- 1.3 Meeting attendance, apologies and observers
- 1.4 Declaration of Interests
- 1.5 Minutes from the TSSAC Meeting No. 48 on 17-18 March 2009
- 1.6 Action Items from TSSAC Meeting No. 48
- 1.7 Correspondence

2 TSSAC Procedures

- 2.1 Adoption of TSSAC Strategic Research Plan
- 2.2 TSSAC Operational Plan
- 2.3 Cultural Protocols

3 Funding round for 2010/2011 financial year

- 3.1 Annual research priorities for 2010/2011
- 3.2 Call for pre-proposals

4 TSSAC Proposals for review

- 4.1 International Indigenous Commercial Fisheries Forum- A call for a project proposal. (S. Sen)
- 4.2 Population structure and genetic composition of green turtles sold in the Daru market (M. Hamann)

5 Other business

- 5.1 Aquaculture
- 5.2 PNG research
- 5.3 Climate Change
- 5.4 TSRA Board research approval request
- 5.5 Confirmation of TSSAC No. 50



DECISION RECORD – TSSAC 49 (25 JUNE 2009)

MEETING ADMINISTRATION

- 1.5.1 The Committee **AGREED** to accept the minutes of TSSAC 48 as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

TSSAC PROCEDURES

- 2.1.1 The TSSAC **AGREED** to adopt the Strategic Research Plan for Torres Strait Fisheries following amendments detailed in 49.2.1
- 2.2.1 The TSSAC **AGREED** to adopt the Operational Plan for Torres Strait Fisheries following amendments detailed in 49.2.2.
- 2.3.1 The Committee **AGREED** the Cultural Protocols would apply to the scope of marine living resource researchers and their conduct and engagement in the field within the Torres Strait.

FUNDING ROUND FOR THE 2010/2011 FINANCIAL YEAR

- 3.1.1 The Committee **AGREED** to the criteria in 3.1 for prioritising research areas as detailed in the Annual Operational Plan for Torres Strait Fisheries.
- 3.2.1 The Committee **AGREED** that the process used in 2008 to elicit research proposals was sufficient and appropriate and the same process would be adopted for the next funding cycle.

TSSAC PROPOSALS FOR REVIEW

- 4.1.1 The committee **AGREED** that the submitted draft project proposal (*International Indigenous Commercial Fisheries Forum*) was appropriate to the aspirations of the TSSAC CFG representatives.
- 4.2.1 The TSSAC **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to AFMA for funding the research project '*Population structure and genetic composition of green turtles sold in the Daru market*' provided amendments listed in 4.2 are to the satisfaction of the TSSAC. .

OTHER BUSINESS

- 5.4.1 The committee **AGREED** that the TSSAC is an expert independent committee and it would not be appropriate for TSSAC recommendation to be subject to TSRA endorsement.



The following members and observers were in attendance at TSSAC No. 49:

Members

Name	Role	Declaration of Interest
Mr Ian Cartwright	Chairperson	Consultant
Mr Shaun Ossinger	Executive Officer (AFMA)	Senior Fisheries Management Officer, Torres Strait
Dr Annabel Jones	AFMA Member elect - Thursday Island Fisheries Manager	AFMA
Dr Stephen Newman	Scientific Member	WA fisheries researcher
Mr Tony Vass	Independent Industry Member	Ex Mackerel License Holder
Mr Shane Fava*	QDPI&F	QDPI&F Senior fisheries manager
Mr Charles David	Traditional owner	Iama Traditional Property Owner
Ms Sevaly Sen	Research Member Social/Economics	FERM Pty Ltd
Mr Eddie Jebreen*	QDPI&F	QDPI&F fisheries manager

Observers

Name	Role	Declaration of Interest
Mr Malawup Nona	Traditional Owner	Traditional Owner, Maluilgal Nation
Mr Steve Hall	TSRA Fisheries Policy Officer	
Mr Neville Nakata	TSRA Fisheries Coordinator	
Prof Martin Nakata	Consultant	

Apologies

Name	Role
Mr Roland Pitcher	Research Member
Dr Michael O'Neill	Research Member elect
Mr Augustine Mobiha	NFA - PNG

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



ACTION ITEMS

#	Action Item	Minute	Champion	Due Date	Status
1	The AFMA report, detailing a set of assessment tools for prioritizing research projects based on cost/benefit analysis and risk assessment, to be provided, when available, to TSSAC members for discussion in the future.	47.2.2	Executive Officer	Once available	Available
2	The Committee agreed to provide a paper to the TSFMAC outlining the intention of the TSSAC to not provide a formal layer of decision making between the working groups, the TSSAC and the TSFMAC.	47.2.3	Executive Officer	Next TSFMAC	Pending TSFMAC
3	A non-technical synopsis of the report (layman's summary) be developed to be provided to the TRLRAG for their approval by the next TRL RAG meeting	47.5.3	Dr Jones Mr Tim Emery Ms R. Williams Mr Michael O'Neill		In progress
4	TSSAC to write letter to the economic development unit at TSRA indicating interest in their capacity for involvement in entrepreneurship.	48.1.3	AFMA	10 July	In progress
5	Send the TSSAC Strategic Research Plan to Pew Charitable Trusts.	48.3.3	Chair	10 July	Completed
6	Address the issue of PNG funding for research at the next Bi-lateral meeting.	48.3.3	AFMA/PNG	22 September (Next bi-lats)	
7	Include an item on employment of PNG treaty members on Torres Strait Islander vessels at the next TSFMAC meeting.	48.6.2	AFMA	Next TSFMAC	Requested TSFMAC E/O
8	Charles David to review Attachment 1.6C (Research Proposal Evaluation Form) with CFG representative to identify any gaps to their aspirations. Charles David will advise Steve Hall out of session by 31 July 2009	49.1.6.1	Charles David	31 July	



9	The TSSAC Chair to write a letter to BRS thanking them for their participation as an observer on the Committee.	49.1.7.1	Executive Officer / Ian Cartwright	10 July	Completed
10	Amend the TS Strategic Research Plan to incorporated changes agreed upon in 49.2.1	49.2.1	Executive Officer	10 July	Re- Drafted
11	Amend the TS Operational Plan to incorporate changes agreed upon in 49.2.2	49.2.2	Executive Officer	10 July	In Progress
12	Distribute the Operational plan to members (including John Pollock) out of session once amendments have been made.	49.2.2.2	Executive Officer	10 July	Completed
13	Draft the upcoming 'call for research proposals' to be broader research areas, based on the research areas/projects assessed as high priority.	49.3.1.3	Annabel Jones and Rebecca Williams	10 July	Completed
14	Several additional amendments to the information to be provided when calling for research proposals will be completed by the secretariat and provided to members out of session prior to release.	49.3.2.1	Annabel Jones	10 July	Completed
15	Calls for proposals released in public, PZJA website, Torres News, NRM Jobs.	49.3.2.1	Executive Officer	31 July	Completed
16	The Chair will liaise with Annabel Jones to source a champion for the International Indigenous Commercial Fisheries Forum out of session.	49.4.1.3	Ian Cartwright and Annabel Jones	31 July	Ongoing
17	The TSSAC secretariat will advise Dr Hamman of the Committee's decisions re. proposal and request revised full proposal by 31 July 2009	49.4.2.2	Executive Officer		Completed
18	The revised proposal <i>Population structure and genetic composition of green turtles sold in the Daru market</i> .to be circulated to members out of session	49.4.2.3	Executive Officer		PI has been in the field. Will circulate when received



19	The TSSAC RECOMMEND to AFMA for funding the research project ' <i>Population structure and genetic composition of green turtles sold in the Daru market</i> ' provided amendments are to the satisfaction of the TSSAC	49.4.2.4	Executive Officer	14 August	Pending comment from members
20	The Committee agreed to add climate change to the research priorities in the Operational Plan.	49.5.3.1	Executive Officer	10 July	Completed
21	TSSAC Chair to write to TSRA informing them of the decision of the TSSAC not to make TSSAC recommendation subject to TSRA endorsement.	49.5.4.2	Executive Officer/Ian Cartwright	10 July	Completed



Agenda Item 1.1: Chair's Opening Remarks/Apologies/Adoption of Agenda/Disclosure of Interests

Maluwap Nona acknowledged the traditional owners and ancestors of the region in which the meeting was conducted. The Chair welcomed all attendees.

Agenda Item 1.5: Minutes from the TSSAC Meeting No. 48

1.5.1 The committee **AGREED** to accept the minutes of TSSAC 48 as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Agenda Item 1.6 Action Items from Previous Meeting

The Committee noted the progress of action items from TSSAC 48.

Action items 48.2, 3, 6, 10, 19, 22 and 34 were carried over and included as ACTION ITEMS 1-7 from TSSAC 49.

The committee agreed to dismiss action item 48.7 (developing research to assess the benefit of Islander engagement in research) as this issue has been progressed through other initiatives, in particular through the forum hosted by AFMA in February 2009 which discussed overcoming impediments to Islander involvement in research activities.

The letter in action item 48.10 needs to draw attention that support and legislative framework will be needed from the PZJA. The TSSAC is running programmes and doing what it can from its limited capacity. The chair will circulate the letter before it goes to PZJA.

Action item 48.12 regarding a second Torres Strait Islander representative on the TSSAC will be resolved by TSRA pending a review of the Community Fishery Group representatives (to be conducted by TSRA and due for completion by the end of 2009). In the meantime, Damian Miley (Land and Sea Unit Manager TSRA) has given approval for Maluwap Nona to attend the TSSAC as an observer.

Action item 48.21 need not be carried over as the call for pre-proposals will be sent to all possible funding bodies for the International Indigenous Commercial Fisheries Forum.

In response to Action Item 48.28 Charles David will advise Steve Hall of any gaps in the research proposal evaluation form identified by his constituents by 31 July 2009 (**ACTION ITEM 8**).

The Committee requested that future action items require a target date for completion to be included in the action item table

All other actions items were completed or discussed as agenda items at this meeting.

Agenda Item 1.7 Correspondence

The TSSAC noted the correspondence provided to the meeting.

The Committee requested that the TSSAC Chair write a letter to BRS thanking them for their participation as an observer on the Committee (**ACTION ITEM 9**).

Agenda Item 2 TSSAC Procedures



Agenda Item 2.1 Strategic Research Plan for Torres Strait Fisheries

The TSSAC noted that the amendments to the Strategic Research Plan for Torres Strait Fisheries have been completed; The committee requested further amendments to the Strategic Research Plan (**ACTION ITEM 10**):

- a) Amend part 1.2 of the plan to state that research is conducted in a coordinated manner with other funding agencies.
- b) Include in section 1.3.2 the points “how research will show respect for Torres Strait Island culture” and “how research will benefit Torres Strait Islanders”;
- c) Amend the title of section 2.7 to read ‘stakeholder needs to be actively included in the research process’.

2.1.1 The TSSAC **AGREED** to adopt the Strategic Research Plan for Torres Strait Fisheries following amendments detailed in 49.2.1.

Agenda Item 2.2 Operational Plan for Torres Strait Fisheries

The Committee discussed the draft Operational Plan and requested the following amendments (**ACTION ITEM 11**):

- a) acknowledge the role of PZJA consultative groups (including the Resource Assessment Group and Management Advisory Committee) in the introductory paragraph,
- b) Amend bullet two in section 1.1 to read:
 - b.1 Addresses a fundamental management information need, such as to inform towards annual survey towards stock assessment.
- c) Include the proposal evaluation form as an attachment.

The Committee requested that the amended plan be distributed to members out of session (**ACTION ITEM 12**).

2.2.1 The TSSAC **AGREED** to adopt the Operational Plan for Torres Strait Fisheries following amendments detailed in 49.2.2.

Agenda Item 2.3 Cultural Protocols

Prof Martin Nakata has been contracted to investigate and collate cultural protocols for research activities in Torres Strait as requested by the TSSAC (47.5.4.2).

Prof Nakata provided a brief presentation to the TSSAC outlining the literature review of cultural protocols currently available. Prof Nakata made the following points:

- That the TSSAC need to consider how to administer the use of any future protocols document and how adherence to the protocols will be monitored;
- Torres Strait Islanders need to ensure the protocols are efficient and enhance benefit to both Islanders and researchers;
- Protocols should be separated from principles to provide clarity to the document;
- Principles would be built on areas of common interest (eg sustainability of resources);
- The operational elements of the protocols would link to the principles (eg as ethical practice and effective communication);



- The protocols would focus on researcher conduct for best possible outcomes;
- The cultural protocols should be reviewed at agreed, regular periods of time; and
- Key issues identified in the literature review phase of the consultancies will be discussed during the upcoming visits, consultations and workshops in the Torres Strait.

The Committee discussed the appropriate place for the protocols to reside and who would be responsible for monitoring and enforcement of the protocols. The PZJA was discussed as the best entity to do this. The Committee suggested that the final protocols should be provided to the PZJA for their endorsement.

The Committee noted the early findings of Prof Nakata and indicated support for the direction that he was taking.

2.3.1 The Committee **AGREED** the scope of the Cultural Protocols would cover marine living resource researchers and their conduct and engagement in the field within the Torres Strait.

Agenda Item 3.1 2010/2011 Annual Research Priorities

The Committee discussed options for prioritising research priorities following on from discussions at TSSAC meeting no 48.

The Committee agreed to the following criteria for prioritising research areas.

Ranking	Detail
<i>High</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addresses an essential management need such as the threat to sustainability • Addresses a routine management need (such as the setting of TAC) • Will strengthen and facilitate Torres Strait Islander engagement/development • A strategic project with high benefit/cost outcomes • Has strong stakeholder support
<i>Medium</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desirable information needs to address uncertainty such as for Stock assessments • A strategic project with medium benefit cost/outcomes such as those addressing the issue of Climate Change.
<i>Low</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low need and/or relevance • Low ability to take management action • Low benefit/cost outcomes • High risk of failure • Low stakeholder support • Lack of capacity to conduct research

3.1.1 The TSSAC **AGREED** to the criteria for prioritising research areas as detailed in the Annual Operational Plan for Torres Strait Fisheries.

The Committee discussed the priorities of the research areas/projects provided in Part 2 of Draft Operational Plan and prioritised the research areas/projects using the criteria in 3.1 above. The prioritised research areas/projects are provided in Attachment 3.1A.



The Committee felt that some of the research priorities provided by PZJA consultative groups were too descriptive and did not provide a suitable level of information to potential researchers in a call for research proposals. These should be broadened to indicate a research area rather than a specific project (**ACTION ITEM 13**). Only those research areas assessed as being of “high” priority by the TSSAC are to be included in the Annual Operational Plan for Torres Strait Fisheries.

Agenda Item 3.2 Pre-proposals for 2010/2011

The Committee discussed the process to be undertaken to elicit research proposals for consideration by the TSSAC for funding beginning in the 2010/2011 Financial Year.

The Committee felt that the process used in 2008 was sufficient and appropriate and the same process would be adopted for the next funding cycle. Several additional amendments to the information provided in the call for research proposals will be completed by the secretariat and provided to members out of session prior to release (**ACTION ITEM 14**).

The following time lines were agreed to by the Committee:

Amended call for proposal information provided to TSSAC members	10 July 2009
Comments from TSSAC members to secretariat	17 July 2009
Calls for proposals released in public, PZJA website, Torres News, NRM Jobs	
(ACTION ITEM 15)	31 July 2009
Pre-proposals due date	30 August 2009
Pre-proposals considered at TSSAC 50	5 October 2009
Results of TSSAC evaluation provided to Principal investigators	October 2009
Full proposals due to TSSAC secretariat	February 2010
Pre-proposals considered at TSSAC 51	March 2010

3.2.1 The Committee AGREED that the process used in 2008 to elicit research proposals was sufficient and appropriate and the same process would be adopted for the next funding cycle.

Agenda Item 4.1 International Indigenous Commercial Fisheries Forum

The Committee discussed the ‘Call for Proposals’ for funding for an International Indigenous Commercial Fisheries Forum provided by Ms Sevaly Sen.

The Committee felt that the submitted draft project proposal was appropriate to the aspirations of the TSSAC CFG representatives and there was strong support for the initiative. TSRA representatives expressed some concern that there had been little discussion with their agency in light of their proposed role as an important lead organisation for the forum.

The Committee felt that a Steering committee was required to progress the initiative made up of I. Cartwright, A. Jones, S Sen, M Nona, S Newman. In addition, it was clear to the Committee that a lead organisation would be required to act as the Champion for the International Indigenous Commercial Fisheries Forum.

The Chair will liaise with Annabel Jones to source a champion for the International Indigenous Commercial Fisheries Forum out of session (**ACTION ITEM 16**).



4.1.1 The committee **AGREED** that the submitted draft project proposal (*International Indigenous Commercial Fisheries Forum*) was appropriate to the aspirations of the TSSAC CFG representatives.

Agenda Item 4.2 Evaluation of Proposal *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 the following minor amendments are incorporated in the final proposal:

1. The provision that the interpreter (TSI assistant) included in the proposal must be able to speak and understand PNG Western Province Creole.
2. Provision of a full itemised list of all attempted communication with PNG requesting permission to conduct the work in Daru including emails, details of phone calls etc.
3. Provision of more detail regarding the workshops to be held in Torres Strait and Daru and how the workshops will communicate the outcomes of the project.

The TSSAC secretariat will advise Dr Hamman of the Committee's decision and request the revised full proposal by 31 July 2009 (**ACTION ITEM 17**).

The revised proposal is to be circulated to TSSAC members out of session (**ACTION ITEM 18**).

4.2.1 The TSSAC **AGREED** to recommend to AFMA for funding the research project '*Population structure and genetic composition of green turtles sold in the Daru market*' provided the amendments listed in 4.2 are completed to the satisfaction of the TSSAC (**ACTION ITEM 19**).

Agenda Item 5.1 Aquaculture

Nothing to report.

Agenda Item 5.2 PNG research

Nothing to report.

Agenda Item 5.3 Climate Change

Dr Jones advised the group that there had been discussion with CSIRO and TSRA regarding potential community adaptation/resilience to climate change. The CSIRO researchers had been advised of the inclusion of direct impacts of climate change on fisheries as a priority research area in the Torres Strait Operational Plan.

Agenda Item 5.4 TSRA Board research approval request

The TSRA board wish to have the option to give their approval for all research projects conducted in Torres Strait as part of the research approval process. The Committee discussed the implications this process would have on the role of the TSSAC to guide



fisheries research in Torres Strait and to provide research advice to the PZJA. TSRA is represented on the TSSAC as a permanent observer and therefore has input into assessing proposals.

The TSSAC will continue to provide pre-proposals and full proposals to TSRA through the TSRA permanent observer on the Committee to inform them of research being considered by the TSSAC. TSRA input will be considered as part of the current, agreed TSSAC assessment procedures. The TSSAC Chair will write to TSRA informing them of the decision of the TSSAC (**ACTION ITEM 21**).

Annabel Jones noted that the TSRA is developing a web page on Torres Strait research that could provide links to other research agencies and funding agencies.

5.4.1 The Committee AGREED that the TSSAC is an expert independent committee and it would not be appropriate for TSSAC recommendation to be subject to TSRA endorsement.

Agenda Item 5.5 TSSAC 50

TSSAC 50 meeting to be held on 5 and 6 October 2009 in Cairns



ATTACHMENT A

	RESEARCH NEED	THEME	Priority
Prawns	i) Research to complete stock assessments for the main target species, tiger and endeavour prawns ii) Determination of current Bycatch Reduction Device efficiency iii) Determination of appropriate level of observer coverage in the fishery	2, 3 2 2, 6	L L L
Rock lobster	i) Continuing the surveys to inform TAC setting ii) An expanded pre-season survey to better estimate the age 2+ population of lobster for the purpose of improving the accuracy of each year's TAC iii) Testing the GPS tracking system in both TIB and TVH sectors to get better data on effort iv) Ensure continuation of length frequency monitoring to have accurate data for undertaking stock assessments and determine the population composition v) Research in the bifurcation point of post-settlement lobsters between the east coast and Torres Strait vi) Annual stock assessments vii) Migration of lobsters across the different jurisdictions viii) Level of non-commercial take in the Torres Strait Lobster Fishery	2, 3 3, 6 2, 6 2, 6 2 2 2, 5 1, 2	M H H H M L M L
Finfish (reef line and Spanish mackerel)	i) Development of a long term monitoring program for all sectors in the Spanish mackerel fishery. Comprehensive information on population dynamics of Torres Strait Spanish mackerel, including growth, maturity, fecundity and spawning ii) Assessment of the historical and current impact of neighbouring Spanish mackerel fisheries, particularly the Indonesian, Taiwanese and PNG gillnet and longline fisheries	2 1, 2	M L

FISHERY	RESEARCH NEED	THEME	Priority
Finfish (reef line and Spanish mackerel)	iii) Confirmation of the single stock assumption for Torres Strait Spanish mackerel iv) Periodic review and update of the Spanish mackerel assessment as determined by the requirements of AFMA. Operational management objectives, performance measures and decision rules need to be defined for future management strategy evaluation A systematic and transparent stock assessment review process for the Spanish mackerel fishery v) Live reef fish fishery– Monitoring of fishery changes if live fishery is introduced.	2 2 2	M M L

	vi) Development of harvest strategy frameworks for a live reef fish fishery		H
Hand Collectable Fisheries	i) Research to address uncertainties regarding trochus stocks	2	L
	ii) Options for the recovery of overfished beche-de-mer stocks	2	H
	iii) Beche-de-mer stock assessment research	2	M
	iv) Development of community based Hand Collectable harvest strategy	2	H
	v) Habitat assessment for trochus using Indigenous Community knowledge and remote sensing data (satellite imaging)	2	L
Traditional fisheries	Determining methods of estimating traditional take and fishing practices to protect and improve traditional fishing	1	L
Torres Strait Islander development	i) Identification of parallels with other fisheries internationally with respect to leasing of fisheries resources in Torres Strait and learning opportunities for Torres Strait peoples	4	H
	ii) A live reef fish fishery business study	3, 4	H
	i) Areas of scientific endeavour and data collection that could be shared between Australia and Papua New Guinea to build a better, more integrated assessment for rock lobster. Review areas where opportunities exist for possible collaborative research between Papua New Guinea and Australia for lobster, turtle and dugong, including traditional fisheries management ii) Turtle and dugong research	5, 6 1, 2	H H
Climate Change	1) Potential changes to key species due to habitat change in the Torres Straits (including PNG mining operations runoff effects) – Desktop study		H