



Ministerial Fisheries Advisory Council

CHAIR'S SUMMARY

The Ministerial Fisheries Advisory Council held its 7th meeting in Ballina, NSW on Friday 4 September 2015. The following is a summary of the key matters considered:

1. Fish Habitat and Water Quality issues

Mr Craig Copeland, Manager Aquatic Habitat Rehabilitation, DPI Fisheries, provided Council with a presentation on the 'Murray Darling Basin Fish Outcomes' including: information on flows in NSW, flow deprivation, seasonal flow reversal, rate of fall and environmental flows, fish stocking evaluations, barriers to fish migration and generally what is needed to improve fish outcomes and the health of the Murray Darling Basin.

The Council also identified issues related to dredging activities in north coast rivers, along with water quality issues affecting the Richmond River. Council agreed that these issues be brought the attention of the Minister, including Council's preparedness to work collaboratively with the Minister and his Department to consider solutions and funding proposals to address some of the adverse impacts on fish habitat and fish populations in the Murray Darling Basin, the impacts of dredging on the environment and fish habitat, and water quality issues in the Richmond River.

2. Commercial Fisheries Business Adjustment Program

DPI Fisheries provided Members with an update on the Commercial Fisheries Business Adjustment Program. It is anticipated the Structural Adjustment Review Committee will finalise its recommendations to the Minister by the end of September 2015. Council reiterated its earlier position that the adjustment program remains critical to securing a stronger, more viable and sustainable future for the NSW commercial fishing sector.

3. Review of Council's 2014-17 Strategy

Council discussed the progression of the Policy for Fisheries Resource Sharing in NSW noting the approved Policy will be available on the DPI website in the near future. The finalisation of the Policy addresses one of the principal findings of the Independent Review of Commercial Fisheries Policy, Management and Administration completed in 2012, and follows an extensive consultation process undertaken during 2014-15.

Council agreed to support the work of the Aboriginal Fishing Advisory Council in ongoing activities aimed at further development of management strategies that support Aboriginal cultural fishing under the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*.

Council also reviewed the balance of the content of the current Strategy to ensure it remains relevant to the current operating environment in NSW, that it picks up the challenges and priorities identified by Council Members, and that appropriate resourcing is available to achieve sound outcomes. The current Strategy is on the DPI website.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council will be held in Sydney on Friday 18 December 2015.

Richard Stevens
Chair
9 October 2015