

## **MEETING 3 OUTCOMES**

### **1. Introduction by chair**

The Chair welcomed members to the third meeting.

### **2. Apologies**

Vic Levett

### **3. Register of Interests**

The Chair requested that members declare any additions to the Register since the last meeting; there were none.

### **4. Adoption of the record of the previous meeting**

The draft outcomes of Meeting 2 were accepted without change as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

The Council noted that the RFNSW Charter specifies that the outcomes of the previous meeting are adopted by Council at the following meeting and then placed on the relevant DPI webpage. RFNSW members noted that some members of the public who follow the progress of RFNSW have requested quicker access to meeting outcomes. To meet this need, Council requested that the RFNSW Charter be revised to enable the draft outcomes of a meeting to be placed on the webpage once they had been reviewed by members following the meeting and forwarded to the Minister, with the proviso that any confidential items requiring Ministerial approval could be omitted from the draft outcomes until the adoption of the final outcomes at the next meeting. The Chair advised that approval would be sought from the Minister to vary the Charter accordingly.

### **5. Future meeting schedule**

Next meeting: 3 March 2017, Narrandera Fisheries Centre

Meeting schedule: Meeting 5 – June 2017, Meeting 6 – September 2017, Meeting 7 – December 2017.

### **6. Completing the top 10 priority issues**

At the previous meeting, Council identified a priority list of the top 10 issues to be addressed by DPI to maintain or enhance recreational fishing in NSW and developed a structured work plan to address these issues with specific actions and responsibilities. Members reviewed actions for the first four issues developed at the previous meeting. They also discussed further actions needed to address the remaining six issues and made progress on a couple more of the issues. Discussions on the priority issue concerning stock assessments of key recreational species (Kingfish, Snapper, Flathead, Tailor), was aided greatly by a presentation from DPI on the process used to assess the status of fisheries resources in NSW.

The Mulloway recovery program and working group was also discussed. The working group proposes to meet at the end of January 2017.

With regard to the issue of management arrangements for recreational underwater harvesting, Council noted abalone stocks had been in a rebuilding phase in NSW and the Total Allowable Commercial Catch had increased over the years to 130 tonnes in 2015 and maintained at that level for 2016. RFNSW was supportive of an increase in the recreational bag limit from 2 to 5 and the setting up of a stakeholder working group to progress the issue. It was also decided that recreational fishing management arrangements for rock lobster should be discussed in more detail at the next meeting. Matt Poulton indicated his availability to represent RFNSW on a stakeholder working group.

### **7. An introduction to the process of improving scientific and technical research advice to the expenditure committees**

At the second meeting, RFNSW received reports from the Expenditure Committees on the operation of the Recreational Fishing Trusts, which included the proposed use of additional scientific expertise for assessing research applications and providing advice on the scientific merit of funding applications. The Chair of the Recreational Fishing Trust Expenditure Committees, Bruce Schumacher, kindly attended the meeting to provide members with more background on the reasons for seeking additional expertise to assess research applications.

Professor Robert (Bob) Kearney provided a presentation outlining issues for consideration when setting up a process for provision of expert advice to assist with review of research Trust applications. Professor Kearney drew on his experience as Chairman of the Research Committees of the Hermon Slade Foundation and the Australia Pacific Science Foundation, which provide funding support, on a competitive basis, for high-quality biological and natural resource management research by scientists in Australian national or state institutions, and universities. His presentation focused on mechanisms used to encourage quality applications, determine the scientific merit of proposals, the likelihood of cost-effective delivery of research outputs against stated objectives, peer-review of the logic and the relevance of the applications to the overall objectives of the funding scheme (i.e. the security of the future of recreational fishing in NSW).

Key points highlighted by Professor Kearney included: the need to ensure a Trust expression of interest process appeals to respected Australian scientists; advertising strategic priority areas for research based on risks/threats to fisheries resources (i.e. what do we need to know?); having a peer-review committee made up of respected scientists independent to recreational fishing interests; and encouraging funded projects to publish results in reputable journals.

RFNSW supported formation of a sub group to develop a process for independent peer review of Trust research applications and broad strategic research priorities. The sub group will consist of the Chair, Matt Hansen, Jo Starling, Dave Rae, Peter Turnell and one member each from RFSTEC and RFFTEC.

### **8. Strengthening the social licence for recreational fishing in NSW**

Members discussed the need to strengthen the social licence for recreational fishing in NSW. Members agreed that social licence can be best described as “the level of acceptance or approval continually granted to an organisation’s or industry’s operations or project by the

local community and other stakeholders”. The recreational fishing sector has significant opportunity to actively promote its social licence agenda by highlighting the many and varied positive socio-economic benefits generated by angling activity. Council member Jo Starling has professional experience in this field and will lead the Council in a workshop session during Meeting 4 to consolidate a list of social licence priorities, develop principles and identify some relevant case studies. This will set the scene for the development of a strategy to strengthen the social licence for recreational fishing in NSW.

### **9. Recreational Fishing Trust funding recommendations from RFSTEC and RFFTEC**

RFNSW reviewed funding recommendations from the Recreational Fishing Saltwater and Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee meetings held on 16-17 November (see Annex 1). Council endorsed the recommendations with the following amendments:

- a) New high capacity fish cleaning station Port Kembla boat ramp - Change ‘request’ to ‘conditional’.
- b) Talmalmo, survey of legal access – defer the project application to enable DPI to request Crown Lands to undertake the survey. If unsuccessful, the Chair will write to the Minister to request assistance with the relevant survey requirement.

To ensure overlap in membership between the Expenditure Committees and RFNSW, Council members were requested to express their interest in being on the freshwater expenditure committee by 24 December 2016.

### **10. Strategic plan and vision for recreational fishing in NSW**

One of Council’s top ten priority issues identified under agenda item 6 was development of a strategic plan and vision for recreational fishing in NSW. A strategic plan would set out the priorities and common goals for the sector that government and stakeholders are working towards, foster agreement around intended future outcomes, identify time lines for completion of key initiatives that can be tracked by monitoring and assessment. Other benefits of a strategic plan include creating a unified and coherent approach to recreational fishing management and advocacy. RFNSW discussed progressing development of a strategic plan and supported engagement of a specialist to run a planning session at a Council meeting in the near future.

### **11. Snowy Mountains lakes rainbow trout fishery**

DPI provided an update on proposals to address a decline in the Snowy Mountains lakes rainbow trout fishery. The Committee noted the update and supported the research and stocking proposals.

Steve Samuels presented a proposal for development of a NSW trout strategy to address declining trout fisheries due to pest species such as redfin and climate change. These declines have had flow-on impact on the economies of some local communities. There is also the issue of limited resourcing for management of the fishery. RFNSW supported development of a NSW trout strategy by a RFNSW sub group as part of the broader strategic plan described in Agenda item 10. This does not infer that implementation of the trout strategy depends on completion of the strategic plan, only that it has to be an integral

part of the strategic plan. The Chair requested formation of the sub group to develop a NSW trout strategy and that this issue be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

### **12. Port Stephens trial of modified crab catching gear**

DPI provided an update on the trial of revised recreational fishing crab gear rules implemented in Port Stephens last year to reduce interactions with turtles. Since the new rules came into effect, no further turtle drownings have been recorded. Following local consultation with local DPI Marine Park and Compliance staff and local fishing tackle shops, the trial has been described as a success and there is a high level of acceptance of the new rules by local fishers. DPI is proposing to continue with the new crab gear rules in Port Stephens for the remaining term of the closure.

### **13. Other business**

#### **i) NSW Gone Fishing Day 2016**

DPI provided a summary on the outcomes of the successful NSW Gone Fishing Day on 16 October. Snapshots of some major events and club events are given below.

#### Six major events

- Highly accessible locations chosen in the middle of town/city at Botany Bay, Port Macquarie, Lake Illawarra, Dubbo, Wagga and Newcastle to promote attendance.
- Wide range of fun fishing activities to create a festival type atmosphere which could occupy a family for a couple of hours with activities for new entrants to the sport but also experienced fishers.
- Many partnerships with various organisations to promote lots of different activities
- Over 15,000 people estimated to have attended the six locations.
- No recreational fishing licence required in NSW on Gone Fishing Day.
- Over 50 Fishcare Volunteers involved on the Day.
- The most popular activities were fishing workshops (over-subscribed), cooking & filleting demonstration, fishing expert talks, giveaways (goodie bags), compliance boat stands, casting comp, touch tank and fishing tips area.

#### Club events

- 37 grants (up to \$2,000) provided from the Recreational Fishing Trusts to fishing clubs and organisations to run community fishing events and activities on Gone Fishing day.
- The size of events varied with an average of 110 people per club event.
- Most clubs held fishing workshops, barbeques, casting demonstrations, prize giveaways etc.
- More lead in time required for clubs to get involved noting limited resource capacity and experience of some clubs.
- More flexibility with grants to be considered next year for fishing club events (multiple days, flexible dates).

#### **ii) Recreational fishing around aquaculture leases**

DPI advised that work has commenced with a sub group of leading oyster farmers, Roads and Maritime Services and Oceanwatch to develop a communications strategy for promoting responsible fishing and boating around lease areas. Some positive key messages about boating activities around oyster leases have been developed by the sub group for promotion over the next 12 months, including the lead up to Christmas via social media and aquaculture industry media releases.

### iii) Eel trapping in recreational fishing havens

RFNSW acknowledged notice from the Professional Fishermen's Association (PFA) that it proposes to present a background paper for eel trapping in Recreational Fishing Havens (RFH) at the next meeting in line with the Fisheries Resource Sharing Policy in NSW.

### iv) NSW digital licence

DPI advised NSW has become the first state in Australia to introduce digital recreational fishing licences available on mobile phones and tablet devices. Customers are now able to access digital versions of their licences through the Service NSW app. Members identified online access issues which complicated downloading the licence. DPI will refer these problems to the developers.

### v) Correspondence from Ballina Fishermen's Cooperative

DPI has advised that this Cooperative has requested a one-month extension to the 3-month provision (i.e., to 4 months) allowing commercial sea mullet hauling within the RFH adjacent to Shaws Bay below the Missingham Bridge from 1 April to 31 July each year. This is because over the last three years, the mullet season has started late and run through July at this location. RFNSW requested that DPI seek local feedback from fishing tackle stores and fishing clubs prior to Council reviewing the proposal,

### vi) Development of the agenda for future meetings

Members requested a formal opportunity to put forward potential items for future meeting agendas. The Chair proposed that the Executive Officer should send out a call for agenda items at a set time (e.g., 5 weeks) before each meeting to enable this to happen. A template to assist members with preparing agenda items and background papers will be developed and provided to members.

### vii) Update on renewal of a current fishing closure which restricts commercial harvesting of Australian salmon using trip limits in the Ocean Hauling and Estuary General Fisheries

DPI advised the fishing closure was renewed in its current format on 11 November for a further five years. During the renewal process, it was noted that the annual catch trigger limit had not been reached in the last five years (average 80 tonnes per year) and review of the trigger limit is not proposed. Additionally, it was noted that the Ministerial Fisheries Advisory Council developed the Fisheries Resource Sharing policy in NSW to assist decision making on resource re-allocation proposals of this nature, and that this policy should dictate major revisions to arrangements.

### viii) Update on the proposal to amend a fishing closure to change the NSW commercial fishery (trawl and trap and line) trip limits in primarily Commonwealth waters



## Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Council

At its last meeting, RFNSW recognised the complexity of the proposal to change the trip limits and made a decision not to support the proposal at that stage. At Meeting 3, DPI advised that no decision on the proposal had been made yet and that the RFNSW advice had been provided to the Minister.

### vii) Correspondence from Bruce Schumacher, Chair of RFSTEC/RFFTEC

The RFNSW Chair advised that a letter had been received from Chair of RFSTEC/RFFTEC outlining: a) a proposal from Melven Brown to establish a recreational fishing and diving museum in NSW, and b) a request from RFFTEC for RFNSW to be consulted on the current total fishing closure between Yarrowonga Weir and Tocumwal between September and November during the review of the Trout Cod Recovery Plan. The Chair advised that both issues will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

## ANNEX 1.

**RFSTEC saltwater applications**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
<p><b>New high capacity fish cleaning station Port Kembla boat ramp</b> As part of the NSW Boating Now program, Transport for NSW and RMS have committed \$500,000 towards improving the boating experience at the Port Kembla Boat Ramp. This funding will deliver a significant upgrade to the car and trailer parking as well as a new pontoon to improve the safety and accessibility at the site. RMS would like to request funding for a high capacity fish cleaning station to compliment the upgraded facilities. <b>RFSTEC recommendation:</b> Supported. Request to re-locate station to northern end of carpark.</p>	Roads and Maritime Services	SW \$30,550	\$0
<p><b>Disabled Access Recreational Fishing Platform on Ironbark Creek at HWCA Shortland</b> Provide a quality fishing experience on a tidal creek at the Hunter Wetlands Centre for manual and powered wheel chairs, mobility scooters and walking frames. A single purpose fishing platform 4m X 7m will provide access. <b>RFSTEC recommendation:</b> Supported.</p>	Hunter Wetlands Centre Australia	\$6,170	\$0
<p><b>Maximising the benefits of offshore artificial reefs: monitoring multiple reefs to establish best-practice guidelines</b> To monitor angler usage and fish biomass at multiple NSW offshore artificial reefs using innovative techniques, to measure reef cost-effectiveness and develop best-practice guidelines for reef deployment. <b>RFSTEC recommendation:</b> Not supported. Considered low priority given similar previous work completed on effectiveness of reefs.</p>	The University of New South Wales	\$0	\$175,747

**RFFTEC freshwater applications**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
<p><b>Assessing the interactions of threatened frog species and trout in the Central Tablelands of NSW</b> To evaluate the distribution of threatened frogs in the Turon River catchment relative to available habitat and trout-stocking, including the relative abundance of threatened frogs in areas where fish stocking occurs versus non-stocked areas. <b>RFFTEC recommendation:</b> Supported.</p>	OEH	\$10,000	
<p><b>Coarse fishing infrastructure – fishing platform creation</b> To construct 10 pole fishing platforms (“pegs”) around a private lake off Argyle Reach Road, Wilderforce. Fishing access to the lake for Match Fishing” is provided with permission via the Sydney Coarse Angling Club Inc. <b>RFFTEC recommendation:</b> Not supported. No general public access (club member access only).</p>	Sydney Coarse Angling Club Inc.	\$2,875	
<p><b>Eucumbene River – Vehicle Management Project</b> To manage vehicle access to the Eucumbene River at the Denison campground area. The project will construct a car</p>	Snowy Hydro Pty Ltd	\$44,295	

<p>park, install a gate and bollards and erect advisory signage to prevent vehicles from entering the lake bed, while still maintaining access for recreational fishers.  <b>RFFTEC recommendation:</b> Supported.</p>			
<p><b>Talmalmo - Survey of legal access</b>  To formally identify the location of an important unidentified public road by having the road surveyed, signposted and a new gate installed allowing angler's access to the Murray River. This road leads angler to an area of over 500m of public land that can be used by anglers.  <b>RFFTEC recommendation:</b> Supported.</p>	South West Anglers Association	\$4,800	
<p><b>Monitoring Murray cod populations in the Dumaresq River, northern NSW</b>  Undertake two tag-and-recapture events in the Dumaresq River; one each in March-April 2017 and 2018. Additional data will strengthen estimates of population size and structure of Murray cod populations across the region.  <b>RFFTEC recommendation:</b> Supported.</p>	Glenlyon Dam Fish Restocking Group Inc	\$10,000	

#### Joint freshwater/saltwater application

Project	Organisation	2016/17	2017/18
<p><b>Gone Fishing NSW Day 2017 – promoting fishing as a healthy, fun, outdoors activity</b>  Following on from the success of NSW Gone Fishing Day, it is proposed to again run the third NSW Fishing Day partnered with the national event on the 15 October 2017. The day will recognise and promote the importance of recreational fishing as a healthy, fun, outdoors activity. The NSW event has grown significantly in the past 2 years and early planning of the many coordinated fishing activities, including fishing club involvement, is now required.  <b>RFFTEC/RFSTEC recommendation:</b> Supported.</p>	NSW DPI	SW \$240,000 FW \$60,000	