

DRAFT OUTCOMES of the OTMAC meeting held on 24th & 25th August 2006.

Agenda Item	Outcome
Welcome and apologies	Members and observers were welcomed and apologies accepted from Mr Domonic Bagnato, deputy for Mr Richard Bagnato, for the first day.
Review of the outcomes of the environmental approvals for the Ocean Trawl Fishery (day 1)	<p>Recommendation to the Minister to address industry wide prawn resource issues as a priority as soon as Share Management Plans are implemented.</p> <p>Recommendation to the Minister for a 12 month period for phasing in square-mesh codends (consistent with the 12 months period for modifying the square mesh panel BRD). This proposal supersedes the timeframe for implementation of 1 October 2006 outlined in the Director-General's recommendations approved by the Minister under the EPA Act 1979.</p> <p>Recommendation to the Minister for an opportunity to meet with representatives of the department to progress as a priority a research project to test within the next 12 months the effectiveness of alternative codends proposed by industry (ie. alternative codends to the proposed square-mesh codend).</p> <p>Recommendation to the Department to establish a benchmark for determining acceptable levels of bycatch in ocean prawn trawl nets – to be addressed in connection with the proposed research project above.</p> <p>Recommendation to the Department to request SIAC to investigate the subsidies applying to bio-diesels as a means of improving industry viability.</p> <p>Recommendation to the Minister to review the decision to restrict double twine codends to waters inside the 30 fathom depth contour in light of the recent increase in leather jackets in inshore waters.</p> <p>Action - DPI to clarify the terminology to be used to restrict the circumference of codends (ie. 150 round or 3:2 joining ratio) before implementing these arrangements. The committee supports simplicity and notes fundamental differences between prawn trawl nets used in the deepwater sector and other sectors.</p> <p>Action - DPI to determine the impact that square-mesh codends at 35mm are likely to have on catches of school prawns in ocean waters.</p> <p>The committee noted:</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry will be involved in, and consulted on, implementing the Fishery Management Strategy, including the outcomes of the environmental assessment processes. • The research project mentioned above could result in more than one type of codends being approved for use in the fishery, and codends that may be used across a range of target species. • Recent industry requests to use larger bobbins (150mm) cannot be addressed until a formal review [and potentially research] into the use of bobbin gear is conducted. • The proposal in the FMS to close a substantial portion of waters south of Barrenjoey Headland (within 3nm) is of concern to fishers as it establishes a potentially unachievable target. • Changes to the management of the Commonwealth Southern Shark and Scale Fish Fishery (ie. structural adjustment and gear) may have flow-on effects for NSW fishers.
Agreement on agenda	Agenda agreed.
Outcomes for the meetings on 4 th and 5 th of August 2005.	<p>Outcomes for previous meeting approved.</p> <p>Action – DPI to replace the draft outcomes on the DPI website with the final approved outcomes.</p>
Action status list	<p>List of actions noted.</p> <p>Recommendation to review trip limits as a priority as soon as Share Management Plans are implemented, noting the issue of discarding under current arrangements.</p>
Correspondence received and sent	Correspondence received was noted.
Updates	<p>The committee unanimously supported nomination of the Ocean Trawl Fishery as a pilot for development of a thorough structural adjustment framework, noting that the opportunity could supersede the implementation of the 200 day cap.</p> <p>The committee noted advice from Mr Gordon Farrell on the outcomes of the Australian Council of Prawn Fishers Strategic Planning meeting recently held in Adelaide.</p> <p>The committee supported a proposal to further modify the fishing closure that prohibits the possession of shark fins to allow for the removal of fins whilst at sea provided the fins are stored in a particular way and remain accompanied by the carcass while onboard a boat.</p>

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	<p>Action – DPI to review the ‘shark fining’ fishing closure.</p> <p>Action – DPI to provide advice to the MAC on how a trip limit can be enforced if the trip limit (eg. 1 tonne limit on sharks) applies per 24hr period.</p> <p>The committee supported renewal of the fishing closure for the Bouddi NP Marine Area Extension.</p> <p>Action – DPI to provide region 5 industry representatives co-ordinates for the Bouddi NP Marine Area Extension.</p> <p>The committee noted updates by the Department’s Science and research Branch on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The commercial monitoring project (and proposed resource assessment summary to be published 2007) • The Commonwealth stock assessments (and proposed listing of Gemfish as endangered) • Research by Ken Graham on fish trawl gear for harvesting whiting (report available next meeting) • Development of a model for the eastern king prawn population, and building a model for school prawns • The FRDC funded project to quantify the growth and mortality of school prawns (available Sept 2007) • Monitoring school prawn sizes in landings at Ballina, Iluka and Coffs Harbour fishermen’s cooperatives. <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Day 1 meeting closed: 1700hrs</i> <i>Day 2 meeting opened: 0830hrs</i></p>
Development of share management plans	<p>The committee noted the proposed content of the Ocean Trawl Share Management Plan, and that there will be further consultation with industry on the content of the plan over the next 6 months. The committee also noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed contour line separating the offshore and deepwater trawl zones can be moved, provided it still serves the purpose of separating the sectors, and can be better defined (eg. GPS co-ordinates) in the future.
Share trading on commencement of plans	<p>The committee supported the proposed share trading rules (and associated minimum shareholdings). The committee also noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The minimum shareholding of 34 appearing in the agenda should have read 32 • The freeze on amalgamations cannot be maintained under the share management plans • The Ocean Trawl plan proposes a requirement for all fishers to hold the minimum shareholding to remain endorsed after 2.5 years. After some discussion on economic and ecological issues it was agreed to leave this proposal in the draft plans for the purpose of public exhibition.

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	<p>Recommendation to adjust the minimum shareholding for deepwater prawn trawling endorsements from 32 deepwater prawn trawl shares to 20.</p> <p>Action - DPI to adjust the minimum shareholding for deepwater prawn trawl endorsements appearing on the draft plan prior to the plan being placed on public exhibition, if possible.</p> <p>Action – DPI to determine the number of ocean trawl fishing businesses that have less than the proposed minimum shareholdings (eg. 32 shares) and are active in the fishery, prior to the plan being placed on public exhibition. This information will assist the committee identify the number of fishers that may be affected by the proposal for all fishers to satisfy the minimum shareholdings to remain endorsed after 2.5 years.</p> <p>Action – DPI to consider the potential for fishing effort to increase as a result of the proposal to allow boat licences [of varying capacity] and shares to transfer between fishing businesses, and the options available to address potential increases in fishing effort.</p>
Proposed changes to licensing arrangements	The committee supported the proposed changes to the licensing arrangements and will continue to work with DPI to further streamline the process for nominating skippers once the Share Management Plans have been implemented.
Marine Parks	<p>Recommended for a number of important changes to the Marine Parks buyback programs to improve efficiency and to respond to issues of concern raised during previous buyback programs, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that sufficient fishing capacity is removed to adequately offset the risk of fishing effort transferring into waters outside the marine parks. That is, by considering the economic and biological issues that will arise [at the fishery level] if insufficient capacity is removed, rather than simply removing the cheaper and or inactive businesses. • Ensure fishing business owners who accept a buy-back package are prevented from reinvesting back into the commercial fishing industry.
Grey nurse sharks	The committee noted the harm that ropes remaining attached to grey nurse sharks can cause and agreed to encourage fishers to remove the entire rope from grey nurse sharks as they are released.
Submarine cable protection legislation	The committee noted a meeting to be held by the Australian Communications and Media Authority Friday on 8 September and resolved to prepare a letter supporting any outcomes of mutual benefit to Industry and government (eg. funding a VMS). The committee also supported the issue of discs to ocean trawl fishers so that they may download the co-ordinates for the exclusion zones and cables onto their navigational equipment.
Next meeting	The Chairperson thanked all members, deputies and observers for attending the meeting and advised the date

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	for the next committee meeting would be determined out of session, noting the joint MAC meeting proposed for mid September.