

Outcomes

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| Meeting | Lobster Industry Working Group | | |
| Meeting No | May 2022 | Date | 31 May 2022 |
| Location | Sydney | Time | 9:00 – 18:15 |
| Invitees | Daniel Stewart (Industry R1) Noel Gogerly (Industry R2) Lee Monin (Industry R3) Mark Cranstone (Industry R4) Mark Horne (Industry R5) Oly Wady (Recreational) Allan Blake (Observer) Peter Evans (Observer) Steve Rosskelly (Observer) Tricia Beatty (Observer) | Nicholas Giles (DPI Chair) Damian Young (DPI Management) Geoffrey Liggins (DPI Science & Research) Drew Egan (DPI Compliance) Fletcher Mingramm (DPI Compliance) | |
| Apologies | Peter Offner and Scott Wesley | | |
| Prepared by | Damian Young | | |

| Item | Issue | Action |
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| 1. Welcome, apologies and introductory remarks | NSW DPI acknowledged the Gadigal of the Eora Nation as traditional custodians of the place now called Sydney and welcomed all members and observers to the NSW Lobster Industry Working Group meeting for 2022 | |
| 2. Confirmation of final minutes from previous meeting | The previous Lobster Industry Working Group meeting was held on 4 May 2021. The final draft outcomes were reviewed by members out of session and were confirmed as final. | Outcomes confirmed. |
| 3. Lobster Industry Working Group Terms of Reference and membership update | <p>Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Lobster Industry Working group are reviewed every 3 years and were re-approved in August 2019 following review and industry consultation. Members are appointed for 3-year terms through an Expression of Interest (EOI) process.</p> <p>The Lobster Industry Working group was advised the TOR are currently nearing the end of the 3rd year for the current TOR and DPI will be commencing a review of the TOR later this year. The working group was asked to provide any comments for consideration of the upcoming TOR review.</p> <p>A working group member stated the TOR should require the CommFish NSW Lobster fishery member be included on the LIWG, and that CommFish NSW should refer all matters specific to the Lobster fishery directly to the LIWG for their consideration and feedback in the first instance.</p> <p>DPI advised the Lobster Working Group member positions for region 2 & 5 and Recreational expire in November 2022 and the Aboriginal and Conservation members remain vacant as no EOI's were received during the last call for these members positions.</p> <p>DPI advised a call for EOI will be advertised for re-appointment to all the positions mentioned following the review of the TOR.</p> | Noted and discussed. |

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| 4. Update on the Total Allowable Catch setting program for 2022/23 | <p>The TAC meeting is scheduled for 1 June 2022. Reports have been submitted to the Total Allowable Fishing Committee from Management, Research and Compliance branches of DPI. A public call for submissions was advertised on the DPI website and offices from 8 April to 8 May 2022, with notification to all Lobster Fishery Shareholders and nominated fishers for submissions and the dates for the Industry and TAC meetings.</p> <p>The Lobster Industry Working Group was provided presentations from DPI on information submitted to the Committee for review and discussion.</p> <p>A working group member stated its time other sectors improved their reporting.</p> | <p>Members discussed fishery information for update and input to the TAC meeting.</p> <p>DPI to update shareholding report on DPI website more frequently.</p> <p>DPI to improve communication of regulatory/administrative changes.</p> |
| 5. Lobster research presentation | DPI presented the Lobster stock assessment for the 2021/22 fishing period and illustrated how the assessment performed subject to the Lobster harvest strategy. | Noted. |
| 6. Seafood Trade Advisory Group (STAG) and National Working Group | <p>Effects of COVID-19 and international trade restrictions remain evident through a reduction in exports and nominal estimated sales prices on the domestic market in the current and two previous fishing periods. Reported catch has continued to remain ahead of cumulative catch in recent fishing periods given the good biological condition of the stock.</p> <p>Members discussed estimations of gross fishery value. Members discussed options to improve GVP estimations, noting that collecting complete pricing information is complex and potentially costly. Members agreed SFM estimations were a reasonable basis for determining fishery value but questioned what percentage of the TACC was exported and what the price was.</p> <p>Members were advised STAG-sits under FRDC and that a funding application for a liaison person to assist establish markets for Australian lobsters in Korea and Taiwan is still under consideration.</p> | <p>Noted and discussed.</p> <p>DPI to draft letter on behalf of LIWG to lobster exporters requesting volumes and price information.</p> |
| 7. Trans Tasman Lobster update | The Australian Rock Lobster industry is currently working on understanding a new product screening process through a National Rock Lobster Working Group led by the | Noted. |

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| | <p>Seafood Trade Advisory Group (STAG). Representation to the national working group includes a NSW Working Group member, a key exporter and the PFA.</p> <p>A sampling program is being undertaken to demonstrate that rock lobsters from all fishing areas are safe to eat. The NSW component of the program has been undertaken by the commercial fishing sector with assistance from DPI. Members were advised testing of samples is ongoing.</p> <p>Members were advised the NSW lobster fishery performing well price/kg compared to other states and that the current market issues affecting commercial lobster fisheries are similar in all jurisdictions across Australia.</p> | |
| 8. Lobster Tagging | A shareholder presented their concerns to the LIWG with the current regulatory requirements when tagging a lobster. | DPI to investigate amendment of the regulation to remove the word 'flush' and replace with 'trimmed to within 3mm'. |
| 9. Lobster Harvest Strategy | The LIWG noted the approval of the Lobster harvest strategy and congratulated the participants. The group advised they would now like to see DPI improve recreational and cultural catch data estimates and implement the plan for the strategy, extension material and milestones and timeframes. | Noted. |
| 10. Online reporting development | <p>Online reporting was partially implemented in December 2017, with validated weights being reported through FisherMobile. The working group and DPI agreed on reporting amendments for development and wider consultation at a September 2018 workshop.</p> <p>DPI advised the group these changes will be delivered through DPI's current review of reporting system for all fisheries and that DPI is working to resolve system integration issues to allow deployment of the reporting enhancements and anticipate seeking working group review during the 2022/23 fishing period.</p> | Noted. |
| 11. Management charge for the Lobster Fishery 2022/23 financial period | <p>A draft budget for the 2022/23 management charge was presented to members.</p> <p>Members questioned why shareholders can't keep left over lobster tags from the previous year and use them at the commencement of the following season to reduce</p> | Management charge supported and approved. |

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| | management fee costs, as integrity would be maintained given tags are all individually numbered. | DPI to review current practice of destroying unused tags and investigate options to allow unused tags to be used by the shareholder across fishing periods. |
| 12. Tags for the 2022/23 fishing period | <p>A total of 260,000 tags were ordered for the 2021/22 fishing period TACC of 180 tonnes. Tags for the 2022/23 fishing period will be blue with laser engraved black text and a red NSW waratah.</p> <p>Tag orders now contain the food safe biodegradable additive to assist to enhance environmental performance of the fishery and also reduce risks of negative perception of the fishery on the small number of occasions tag tails have been found by the public.</p> <p>Members were advised Mega Fortris has been awarded a further 3 year contract to supply tags for the Lobster fishery.</p> | Noted and supported by members. |
| 13. MSC Pre-assessment | <p>The Professional Fisher's Association (PFA) informed the group the Lobster fishery scoring indicates the fishery will achieve MSC accreditation. The PFA also advised they have funding for both the assessment and the next 5 years accreditation and are happy to hold the accreditation given its unlikely 100% of lobster shareholders will agree to sign on for the accreditation (which is requirement).</p> <p>PFA advised that after these 5 years, benefits will be assessed by PFA and at this stage industry will need to decide if they wish to continue to fund the certification.</p> | <p>Members unanimously support pursuing MSC accreditation and for it to be held by PFA.</p> <p>DPI to investigate if including branding on top of the lobster tags will result in compliance issues.</p> |
| 14. Administrative sanction review | Consultation has been undertaken with industry and CommFish NSW to support a proposed new Demerit point scheme to apply across commercial fisheries. Implementation is currently on hold. | Noted and ongoing. |
| 15. Landing Lobster using a lighter | CommFish NSW referred increasing the penalty notice amount for breach of rules relating to the use of lighters in the Lobster fishery to the LIWG. The current penalty notice is \$200. | Members recommended increasing the penalty notice to \$1000 minimum. |

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| 16. Reporting of quota and share trading price | <p>Average quota and share trading prices are key economic indicators used to track changes in the lobster fishery over time. Reporting of price is not compulsory, however is strongly encouraged by the Department and the TAC Committee to support the TAC assessment process and track changes in fishery values and economic performance of the fishery over time.</p> <p>Members discussed the share price and quota leasing price and agreed both estimates used in the management report were indicative of the actual values.</p> | <p>Noted and supported</p> <p>Members to discuss and encourage fishers in their region to report price information.</p> |
| 17. Economic & Social Indicator Framework Update | <p>BDO EconSearch has been engaged to produce an annual time series of economic and social indicators for NSW commercial fisheries and a report will be produced for each fishery for three financial years (Financial Years 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22).</p> <p>BDO EconSearch is an independent group of researchers with experience monitoring economic and social indicators for fisheries in South Australia, Queensland and other states. Economic and social indicators provide valuable information for the fishing industry, fisheries managers and other stakeholders.</p> <p>BDO EconSearch and their collaborators at Action Market Research will soon be contacting commercial fishers again seeking participation in a voluntary interview to collect economic and social information for the 2020/21 season. The participation of fishing business owners in the BDO EconSearch survey is crucial to the production of reliable indicators and results.</p> | <p>Noted and ongoing.</p> |
| 18. Other business | <p>Members questioned support amongst the group for increasing the maximum shareholding to 40% in the lobster fishery.</p> <p>Members discussed if changes to the maximum leasing arrangements for the fishery should be implemented.</p> <p>A CommFish NSW member sought advice from the group regarding a Business Efficiency Program (BEP) proposal, seeking to allow lobster shareholders to retain lobsters taken when using a fish trap against their quota.</p> <p>Members discussed access to harvest some oversized lobsters i.e., greater than 200mm, noting they may potentially be infertile at this larger size and there is a market niche for</p> | <p>DPI to investigate when the LIWG was approached re: maximum shareholdings and report back to group.</p> <p>No consensus amongst group on changes to leasing arrangements.</p> <p>Members recommended the BEP proposal be referred directly to the LIWG for consideration.</p> |

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| | <p>them. It was also noted that it may encourage smaller lobsters to migrate back areas now dominated by oversized Lobsters.</p> <p>Members thanked Nicholas Giles for his time and performance as the Lobster fishery manager and congratulated him on his promotion to the harvest strategy team.</p> | <p>DPI to investigate if oversize ERL remain fertile at all sizes</p> |
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Next meeting - 2023 formal meeting to be confirmed