

CHAIR'S SUMMARY

The Council met in Port Stephens on 11 December 2020 and the following sets our key issues discussed:-

1. Draft Harvest Strategy Policy and Guidelines

The Council noted that the draft Harvest Strategy Policy and Guidelines prepared by DPI have now been released for public consultation. Council will further review the draft Policy at its next meeting taking into account comments from the public consultation process with a view to recommending the Policy to you for approval.

2. Draft Co-management Policy

The Council noted that the draft Co-management Policy prepared by DPI has been referred to CommFish, Recfish NSW and the Aboriginal Fishing Advisory Council for comment. Council will consider comments provided at its next meeting.

3. Draft Aboriginal Cultural Fishing Policy

Council agreed that the present document entitled "Draft Aboriginal Cultural Fishing – Discussion Paper" contained some useful information but needed to be reviewed to incorporate a clear set of principles and provide direction or strategy to guide cultural fisheries and the management arrangements that support them. MFAC noted that the restructure of DPI Fisheries which brought together the resources focusing on Aboriginal Cultural management and engagement, provided a good opportunity to carefully review this document. MFAC also noted the appointment of new AFAC membership in early 2021 provided an additional opportunity to draft a document via a collaborative approach between AFAC and DPI. MFAC therefore supported engagement between AFAC and NSW DPI to draft a strategy roadmap for Aboriginal fishing which would provide the basis for a revised policy on Aboriginal Cultural Fishing.

4. Gin Gin Re-Regulation Weir

Matthew Hansen spoke to a power point presentation provided to all members outlining significant issues in the Gin Gin Re-Regulation Weir. Council agreed that the Chairs of MFAC, RFNSW and the Fish Passage Taskforce together with the DDG DPI Fisheries meet and discuss the issues and options to be put to you for consideration.

5. Presentations

Council received presentations on the Marine Estate's education and awareness program and the current state of NSW Aquaculture developments. The Deputy Director-General, Fisheries, Sean Sloan, provided a comprehensive update on key issues currently being considered by the Department.

MFAC plans to meet next on 12 March 2021 in Sydney.

Richard Stevens OAM
Chair
7 January 2021