

FINAL OUTCOMES (OUT08/4132) from LOBMAC meeting held on 27th February 2008.

Agenda Item	Outcome
1(a). Welcome and apologies	<p>The Chairperson introduced himself and welcomed the committee members and observers to the meeting.</p> <p>The Chairperson acknowledged Mr Barry MacBean's service and commitment to the LobMAC and the lobster fishing industry. Mr Wady and Mr Firkin were also acknowledged for chairing previous LobMAC meetings.</p> <p><u>Attendance:</u> Alan Dodds (Chairperson), Danny Stewart, Noel Gogerly, Scott Westley, Ron Firkin, Oliver Wady, Dianna Watkins.</p> <p>Amy Priestly (Secretariat).</p> <p><u>Observers:</u> Peter Offner, Lee Monin, Nathan McNamara, Tony Chen, Geoff Liggins, Marcus Miller, James McLeod and Darryl Sullings.</p> <p><u>Apologies:</u> Marine Protected Area Officer from the Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC) Michael Piontek (A/DFO, Lobster Compliance).</p>
1(b). Agreement on agenda	Agreement on agenda with the correction of agenda item 1a – remove paragraph referencing the newly appointed recreational fishing representative.
1(c). Confirmation of Draft Minutes	The LobMAC confirmed the Final Draft minutes (Appendix A) from the previous meeting as being a true and accurate record of the 28-03-2007 LobMAC meeting.
2. Correspondence received and sent	<p>Correspondence received and sent was noted by LobMAC.</p> <p>The Committee noted correspondence between Ron Firkin and the Australian Communications and Media Authority regarding the exemption to lobster trapping in submarine cable protection zones around Sydney.</p>
3. Business arising from the previous meeting	<p>The Committee noted the current status on action items with the following comments:</p> <p>(3) The apologies received from DECC.</p> <p>(4) Amend status to "complete" as it was agreed that lobster fishers use minimal rope as required. This</p>

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	<p>agreement has been placed into the Lobster COP under condition 10.</p> <p>(11) Industry representatives expressed their concern at the impact of large cargo vessels on the destruction of lobster fishing gear and requested that the letter to the Commonwealth Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government be expedited.</p> <p>(18) Amend to "complete". Compliance Officers will formally call fishers if lobster traps have been inspected.</p> <p>It was noted that completed action items would be removed from the list.</p>
<p>4. Update on TACC 2008/09</p>	<p>DPI Management, Research and Compliance provided the LobMAC with an overview of the information that is to be submitted to the TAC Committee for their 2008/09 deliberation. The LobMAC noted that figures given in the presentation may be subject to change as the reports are updated.</p> <p>The LobMAC provided comments to the following reports:</p> <p><i>Management Report Presentation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Committee recommended highlighting the estimated value (approximately \$6 million) of the lobster fishery primarily due to an increase in the TAC and average weighted beach price. - That the previous 4 fishing periods be included into the "Accumulation of Catch" graph. - That an additional curve identifying the total costs per share (incorporating the environmental assessment charge and the management charge per share) be included into the "Management Charge" graph. <p><i>Lobster Resource Assessment Presentation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Committee was provided with a paper summarising the key points that are to be included into the Lobster Resource Assessment. - Industry representatives noted the close relationship between their personal observations of the fishery, the results of analyses of logbook and survey data that were presented. In particular, the LobMAC noted another increase in CPUE during the 2006-07 season, continuing evidence of increasing abundance of spawning stock and good catch rates from the deepwater fishery on the north coast of NSW during 2006-07 fishing period and the current season. - The LobMAC also noted evidence from the survey of puerulus abundance that recruitment of lobsters to the fishery (at 104 mm CL) was likely to be less than average along the NSW coast during 2008-09. - The LobMAC underlined the importance of providing the TAC committee with up to date information about catches from the current (2007-08) season at their April meeting.

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	<p><i>Compliance Report Presentation</i></p> <p>- The Committee questioned the quantity of lobster reported as seized in 2006/07, as it was believed that an additional 450 lobsters were seized by Compliance Officers.</p>
<p>5. Proposed Regulation amendments</p>	<p>Action: It was agreed that proposed objectives, performance indicators and trigger points in the Lobster Share Management Plan will be considered out of session.</p> <p>The LobMAC supported the following proposed amendments to the <i>Fisheries Management (Lobster Share Management Plan) Regulation 2000</i> as listed in the agenda:</p> <p>Clause 2 – Definitions</p> <p>Clause 6 – Maximum shareholding to increase to 40% of total shareholding</p> <p>Clause 7 – Dealings in shares</p> <p>Clause 8 – Special provisions relating to share transfers</p> <p>Clause 10 – Nominated fishers</p> <p>Clause 13 – Nominated fisher to notify shareholders of an alleged offence</p> <p>Clause 15 – Determination of quota</p> <p>Clause 18 – Transfer of quota</p> <p>Clause 31 – Returning of unused tags within 7 days</p> <p>Clause 40 – Byproduct retention. The Committee supported the retention of byproduct species in lobster traps set in waters greater than 10 metres provided the fisher is endorsed with an Ocean Trap and Line demersal fish trap endorsement and their actions are otherwise consistent with the requirements of the OTL SMP.</p> <p>Clause 42 – Storage of live rock lobsters. The Committee also supported requiring endorsement holders to validate the weight of any lobsters that are to be "penned" (amendment to the daily catch logsheet) to uphold the integrity of the quota management system.</p> <p>Clause 47 – Limited use of unauthorised crew</p> <p>Clause 49 – Monthly reconciliation</p> <p>Proposed new clause – Prohibited implements</p> <p>Proposed new clause – Placing current licence conditions into Plan.</p> <p>Clause 40 – Trap marking - The Department to further consult with LobMAC out of session regarding the marking of lobster traps.</p>

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6. Marine Park Issues	<p>The LobMAC noted the apologies received from DECC regarding their attendance at this meeting. The meeting discussed the ongoing difficulty with regard to attendance of a Marine Park representative at a LobMAC meeting despite multiple requests from LobMAC.</p> <p>The LobMAC noted that the Jervis Bay and Solitary Islands Marine Parks are due to be reviewed shortly and input from LobMAC was essential.</p> <p>Action: The Chairperson to send a letter to DECC expressing disappointment with the lack of direct consultation with LobMAC in relation to the development of marine parks in NSW. Furthermore, it will be requested that a DECC officer attends the next LobMAC meeting to explain and clarify the numerous processes associated with implementation of a Marine Park.</p>
7. Updates:	<p>The LobMAC noted updates from Research, Management, Compliance</p> <p>(a) Research The LobMAC supported the ongoing value of the current research and monitoring projects, which is the fishery-independent surveys of the abundance of pueruli and spawning stock, an observer survey of the catch and by-catch of the commercial fishery, the analyses of logbook catch and effort, and modelling assessment of the fishery.</p> <p>(b) Management The 2008/09 draft budget was presented at the meeting. The Committee supported in principle the proposed level of resources in the 2008/09 draft budget and proposed management work program. Industry representatives again noted their dissatisfaction with the current policy on cost recovery and the subsequent impact on their overall viability. The Committee was advised that DPI are currently considering revised economic indicators to be included in the Plan and a cost effective mechanism for obtaining and analysing economic information.</p> <p>Action: The Minister be advised of Industry's concern with regard to the current cost recovery policy and their request for further subsidies to alleviate the impact on viability.</p> <p>(c) Compliance The Committee was advised that some fishers are not completing their logbooks correctly and this may have an impact on the quality of advice used in the stock assessment process.</p>

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(d) Industry	<p>Action: In June 2008, when the initial quota allocation notices for the 2008/09 fishing period are being issued, the Department is to include a notice reminding fishers to amend all references in their catch reporting logbooks from 200mm to 180mm.</p> <p>Compliance highlighted the timeframes requirements (7 days) for submitting daily catch records. All Lobster share and endorsement holders have been reminded via recent correspondence of catch reporting requirements.</p> <p><i>Tags</i> A potential new supplier has provided tags for consideration. Action: Industry to trial tags (including cooking lobsters) and advise Lobster Management ASAP.</p> <p><i>Habitat Protection and Impacts of Trawling</i> Concerns were raised from LobMAC industry representatives regarding the impacts of trawling on the benthic ecosystem and how trawl operators are expanding their grounds. It was noted that the EIS and FMS process for the trawl fishery has been approved and requires the trawl fishery to map trawling grounds. Similarly the lobster FMS requires the mapping of major lobster grounds. When maps have been prepared for both fisheries, specific areas of concern can be addressed appropriately. In the interim it was suggested that fishers work together at the local level to resolve issues as has worked in the past. DPI is available to facilitate such meetings.</p> <p>Action: LobMAC to consult with shareholders with the aim of mapping grounds.</p> <p>Action: LobMAC and/or shareholders to develop communication lines with local Trawl Operators to resolve conflict issues.</p> <p><i>Compliance concerns</i> Industry representatives highlighted the importance of continuity of a dedicated compliance officer in the lobster fishery in order to build and maintain professional relationships between the compliance branch and industry.</p> <p><i>Report on Cairns Lobster Congress</i> LobMAC representatives attending the Lobster Congress in Cairns last year provided a verbal update. It was noted that the current management charges issued under the NSW Government policy on cost recovery are deterring industry representatives from holding future congresses in NSW.</p>

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	<p><i>Electronic release mechanism for lobster traps</i></p> <p>A verbal update was provided on potential new technology for releasing trap floats. It was noted that the acoustic electronic release mechanisms could help mitigate theft and ghost fishing in lobster operations. Currently, costs of purchasing the release mechanisms are obstructing investment from industry. Industry representatives advised that they would offer increased support to the FRDC project on ghost-fishing if it included a component in which the utility of electronic acoustic release devices was examined. Industry representatives suggested that a meeting consisting of Industry, DPI and FRDC representatives be arranged to discuss modification of the existing FRDC proposal.</p> <p>Action: Letter from Industry representatives to FRDC requesting a meeting with a FRDC representative (and DPI representatives) to discuss variations in the existing FRDC “ghost fishing” proposal to include appraisal of electronic acoustic release mechanisms as a means of mitigating ghost fishing and theft of traps.</p> <p>Action: Industry representatives to invite representatives of FIOMarine to a meeting with representatives of Industry and DPI to discuss future use of the release mechanism they are developing.</p> <p><i>SIAC</i></p> <p>The LobMAC was verbally advised of agenda items for the SIAC meeting scheduled for 29 February.</p>
8. Other business	Background information on the MAC election and nomination process was provided to the LobMAC. The LobMAC requested that for future ballots, a short profile on nominees is prepared for Industry to assist shareholders in determining their preferred candidate - this could be included in the RIC newsletter.
9. Chairperson’s summary	The Chairperson thanked all members and observers for attending and contributing to the meeting. Meeting closed 4pm.