

NEW SOUTH WALES TRAWL WHITING HARVEST STRATEGY WORKING GROUP

2ND, MEETING BALLINA 3/4 DECEMBER 2020

CHAIRMAN'S SUMMARY

The meeting accepted the nomination of a Queensland observer to the working group (Darren Roy) who detailed the draft Queensland harvest strategy for Stout Whiting, while the Commonwealth harvest strategy for Eastern School Whiting was also presented. It was agreed that a NSW harvest strategy could not simply be copied from another one but would have to take account of the particular characteristics of the NSW fishery. Nevertheless, it was desirable that the strategies be as similar as possible because of the jurisdictional sharing of the resources.

The meeting considered a number of presentations relevant to the construction of a NSW harvest strategy including Objectives, Indicators and Reference points; Ecological Risk Assessment; Fishery Economic and Social Performance. Discussion around Objectives of the harvest strategy concentrated on the use of Maximum Economic Yield versus Maximum Sustainable Yield. While acknowledging that maximising economic yield and returns to the community was a desirable goal, the industry felt that this was not achievable because of the lack of necessary data and information to achieve such a goal. Questions were raised as to the adequacy and current availability of data in a number of areas which underlie the development of a harvest strategy.

This applied to industry concerns about the draft ERA presentation, the current economic information and industry's own logbook data which they felt should be on a "shot by shot" basis to better reflect Catch Per Unit Effort following the introduction of quotas. Any harvest strategy developed in the timeframe would have to be considered a "preliminary draft" subject to review as data was further collected and refined. Harvest strategies often rely on "proxies" until this occurs.

The meeting was presented with a paper on the use of the "Fishpath" process to provide options around data types, assessment and management measures, as well as an example of how quota may be determined and adjusted under certain conditions. This provided the meeting with a "strawman" draft harvest strategy as an example of how one could function and how quota adjustments could be incorporated.

Some information was given around a tiered approach and developing strategies in "data poor" fisheries. The meeting noted that this fishery was multi-species, multi-jurisdiction with different fishing gear and practices in different regions.

The meeting acknowledged that the focus of this draft harvest strategy was really about providing industry input, via a harvest strategy, into the forthcoming quota decision making process in late January 2021. Further work needs to be done including provision for "breakout rules" to account for significant changes or new/better information. The next meeting will occur when the updated stock assessments became available in mid December.

Peter Neville ,

Chair TWHS WORKING GROUP 8/12/2020