

NSW MULLOWAY HARVEST STRATEGY WORKING GROUP
Chair's Summary – 9th Meeting – 15th and 16th of May 2023

The ninth meeting of the NSW Mulloway Harvest Strategy Working Group was held on the 15th and 16th of May 2023. This meeting proposed to continue review and development of the draft harvest strategy, including discussing the decision rules (or management actions) to manage the rebuilding and future health of Mulloway.

Following review of the ongoing Mulloway harvest strategy support measures, the Working Group considered recommendations to the Deputy Director General, DPI Fisheries to assist protection of juvenile Mulloway currently present in estuarine and inshore ocean waters.

The Working Group agreed to provide a package of recommendations including an immediate communication and education package to all fishing sectors to promote the current stock status and responsible fishing practices, short-medium term investments in science and compliance, as well as providing a pathway to the completion of the harvest strategy.

DPI presented information on spatial and temporal distribution of reported Mulloway catch from the four main NSW commercial fishing sectors. This provided good insight and further discussion into potential regional management of the fishery under the developing harvest strategy.

Members again demonstrated commitment to support robust fishery data to ensure assessments effectively monitor the health and performance of the fishery, recognising the benefits a better understanding of the stock will contribute to the operation of the harvest strategy.

This meeting saw agreement on several elements of the draft harvest strategy with members seeking the most viable solutions to manage catch appropriately to support the rebuilding stage of the harvest strategy. This meeting also further considered potential long-term biomass target levels and various advantages and disadvantages of the range of values that may be deemed desirable to maximise benefits for all fishing sectors.

The next meeting is set for the 6th and 7th of July 2023 where the working group is required to further develop the potential decision rules and consider and refine the draft strategy.

Dr James Findlay, Chair, NSW Mulloway HSWG.