

Agenda Item	Outcome
Welcome and Apologies	<p>Welcome and Apologies The Chairperson opened the meeting and welcomed all members and observers to the meeting. The Committee thanked Mr Russel Massey, Mr Paul Stanford and Mrs Shirley Massey for their contribution to EGMAC over previous years.</p> <p>Chairperson Pat Appleton</p> <p>Management Advisory Committee Representatives Mr Glenn Dawson Mr Geoff Blackburn Mr Jim Drinkwater Mr Scott Massey Mr John Hine Mr Leif Lemke Mr Malcolm Poole Mr Darren Reynolds</p> <p>Observers Mr Don Johnson Mr John Harrison Mr Peter Turnell Mr Andrew Goulstone Mr Doug Ferrell Ms Carly Goddard Mr Patrick Dwyer Mr Wayne Bennett</p> <p>Apologies: Mr Ben Markwell, Mr Peter Ragno and Mr Ted Allen</p> <p>Meeting starts: 9:00am</p>

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Agreement on agenda	Agenda agreed.
Confirmation of draft minutes	Outcomes from previous meeting approved by the Committee.
Correspondence sent and received	Correspondence received and sent was noted.
Business arising from previous minutes	<p>List of actions noted and updated.</p> <p>The Committee noted Industry's interest to pursue Recognised Fishing Grounds.</p> <p>Action - Industry to initiate the development of RFG maps.</p> <p>The Committee discussed Recreational Fishing Havens.</p> <p>Action – Industry to develop a proposal regarding commercial fisher access to RFHs.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that any proposal to implement a size limit on pipis requires further industry consultation.</p> <p>Action – Industry to consult with hand gathering fishers regarding a potential pipi size limit.</p>
Updates	<p>The Committee noted the updates provided from I&I NSW Management, Conservation and Compliance.</p> <p>A Research update will be supplied to the Committee out of session.</p> <p>I&I NSW Compliance reiterated the importance of adherence to the regulated provisions regarding the marking of crab and fish traps. I&I NSW Compliance will provide recreational fisheries compliance information at future meetings.</p>
Presentation – Habitat Makes Fish Happen: Loss of habitat along NSW estuaries	<p>A presentation from the I&I NSW Aquatic Habitat Rehabilitation unit (AHR) was provided to the Committee.</p> <p>Committee members noted the importance of habitat to the productivity of fisheries and the sustainability of fisheries resources. The Committee discussed specific AHR projects completed and underway throughout NSW.</p>
FRDC project – Empowering the Fishing & Seafood Industry	Mr Chris Calogeras presented information on the FRDC funded project - Empowering Industry R&D: Developing an Industry driven R&D model for the Australian fishing and seafood industry.

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	<p>The Committee encouraged industry involvement in the project.</p> <p>The Committee was advised that information on this project can be found at www.fishwell.com.au, or by contacting Chris Calogeras, info@c-aid.com.au or Ian Knuckey, fishwell@datafast.net.au.</p>
Introduction and overview of the new FishOnline System	<p>I&I NSW gave a presentation on the Systems Reform Project.</p> <p>EGMAC noted and supported the overall objectives of the project. The Committee noted ongoing concern from some fishers regarding the new catch and effort logbooks.</p>
Industry Reform Program for NSW Commercial Fisheries	<p>I&I NSW updated the Committee on the Industry Reform Program for NSW Commercial Fisheries and sought the Committee's views on options for linking shares to tradeable units and on SIAC's recommendation for a \$500 Industry contribution for an exit grant scheme. The Committee discussed potential strategies that could assist to restructure the fishery, including exit grants and linking shares to tradeable units e.g. gear. A potential strategy to manage the trapping component of the fishery was tabled by Industry and discussed by the Committee.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that exit grants should be available for fishers who want to exit the fishery, however industry members needed to consult more with fishers about the amount and how it should be used (i.e. a broad or EG specific approach).</p> <p>I&I NSW reiterated that having regulated provisions that enable the linking of shares to catch and/or effort does not, by itself, commit any fishery to use those tools.</p> <p>Action – Industry to consult with fishers regarding Industry contribution for an exit grant scheme.</p> <p>Action – I&I NSW to investigate alternative options to manage the trapping component of the EG fishery.</p>
Review of draft prawn net (set pocket) rights of priority legislation	<p>I&I NSW presented the Committee with an outline of possible provisions relating to priority in the use of nets in the fishery. The Committee noted that similar to the current legislation governing prawn net (set pocket) priority determinations, each region may require specific Director-General approved guidelines.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to review priority determination provisions out of session.</p> <p>Action – Industry to review draft priority provisions and provide advice to I&I NSW.</p>
Other business	The Committee supported a proposal to amend the Estuary General Share Management Plan to authorise the use of 63-

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	<p>mm mesh in the bunt of the hauling net (general purpose).</p> <p>The Committee identified what they believe are the top 3 priorities for the Estuary General Fishery. These include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive review of fishing closures; • A comprehensive review of legislated input controls (e.g. net registrations, boat licenses, species authorised to be retained in specific gears); and, • Investigation of alternative options to manage the trapping component of the Estuary General fishery. This should include the potential to amalgamate trap share classes, resolve trap marking, link shares to effort and mitigate the threat to the fishery from illegal fishers and black marketing. <p>Action - Industry to identify specific closures for potential amendment and provide advice to I&I NSW.</p>
Chairperson summary and next meeting date	The Chairperson thanked all members and observers for their attendance and contributions to discussions during the meeting and advised that the date for the next meeting would be determined out of session.

Action Status List for the EGMAC 27 November 2009

	Action	Meeting	Responsibility	In Progress	Pending	Complete	Ongoing
1	Industry to initiate the development of RFG maps.	November 2009	Industry		✓		
2	Industry to review draft priority provisions and provide advice to I&I NSW.	November 2009	Industry		✓		
3	Industry to consult with fishers regarding Industry contribution for an exit grant scheme.	November 2009	Industry		✓		
4	I&I NSW to investigate alternative options to manage the trapping component of the EG fishery.	November 2009	I&I NSW		✓		
5	Industry to develop a proposal regarding potential commercial fishers access to RFHs.	November 2009	Industry		✓		
6	Industry to identify specific closures for potential amendment and provide advice to I&I NSW.	November 2009	Industry		✓		
7	I&I NSW to update Industry on the DECC Beach Access policy	November 2009	I&I NSW		✓		
8	Industry to liaise with stakeholders and DPI regarding the potential to limit access to the EG fishery to licensed commercial fishers only.	December 2007	Industry		✓		

	Action	Meeting	Responsibility	In Progress	Pending	Complete	Ongoing
9	DPI to increase the maximum mesh size in eel traps from 40mm to 50mm.	December 2007	I&I NSW	✓			
10	Industry to provide comment on any proposed amendments to the EGCoP.	March 2009	Industry		✓		
11	Industry to consult with hand gathering fishers regarding a potential pipi size limit.	November 2009	Industry		✓		

RESEARCH REPORT

Dr. Steve Montgomery

Growth and mortality in school prawns

The draft final report for the FRDC funded project to quantify growth and mortality in school prawn populations has been submitted for internal review. School prawn rates of growth are linear for much of the species life and female prawns die before they reach the longest mean maximum length predicted by growth models. Males grow faster but to a smaller size than females.

Estimates of natural mortality are consistent with that of other prawn species. Rates of exploitation are also comparable to other prawn fisheries, but at times of high river discharge fishing mortality increases dramatically. This is probably caused by an increase in the catchability of prawns as school prawns become more active in the turbid water that accompanies high levels of river discharge. Results from modelling the school prawn populations suggest that at these high rates of fishing mortality there is a risk that recruitment to the fishery in subsequent years may be affected.

Information on the size at maturity and abundance of spawners and recruits needs to be collected to ascertain whether recruitment to the school prawn populations is affected.

Mud Crab workshop

Currently there is a prohibition on the taking of female mud crabs in Queensland waters. A workshop was hosted by the Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries (QDPI&F) and the FRDC to discuss the consequences of lifting this prohibition. The workshop was attended by delegates from different stakeholder groups in Queensland, QDPI&F scientists and managers and scientists from the Northern Territory and New South Wales. The implications for NSW of any decision to retain female mud crabs in catches in Queensland are not known.

Proposed research on cephalopods

Cephalopods (squid, cuttlefish and octopus) contribute around \$3.5million (at point of first sale) per annum to seafood production. This production is predominantly through the Ocean Prawn Trawl fishery (65% by weight) with relatively minor contributions from Ocean Fish Trawl (13%), Estuary Prawn Trawl (13%) and Estuary

General (9%) fisheries. Many species comprise the commercial catch of cephalopods off NSW (Nottage et al. 2007), but of these *Sepia rozella*, *S. Hedleyi* (cuttlefish), *Octopus australis*, *O. tetricus* (octopus) and, *Uroteuthis etheridgei*, *Sepioteuthis australis*, *Nototodarus gouldi* (squid) make up the bulk of the catch.

Of particular concern is that the catch rates of these animals except *U. etheridgei* have fallen since 2003-04. Successive Resource Assessment Workshops (RAW) and meetings of the Resource Assessment Review Committee (RARC) have been unable to find reasons for this decline. With the exception of the squids, little is known about the biology of these species. This lack of knowledge, coupled with the decline in catch rates led RAW and RARC to recommend cephalopods as a priority for research. An application has been made to FRDC for the 2010 round of funding to study age, growth and maturity of the main species of octopus and cuttlefish.

Proposed research on pipis

Catch rates of pipis have fluctuated but with an overall declining pattern since 1988-89 and landings have declined since 2003-04. This may in part be because of declines in fishing effort but declines in landings have also been experienced in zones where effort has not changed appreciably. Also, similar declines in pipi landings have been experienced in South Australia where there is no associated decline in effort. It is proposed with the MAC's endorsement to apply in 2010 for funding from the Tactical Response Fund of FRDC to host a one day workshop to discuss pipi fisheries. Representatives from stakeholder groups in NSW and South Australia will be invited together with researchers and managers. We will be asking the MAC for a letter of support for this proposed project.