



Ministerial Fisheries Advisory Council

CHAIR'S SUMMARY

The Ministerial Fisheries Advisory Council held its 8th meeting in Sydney on Friday 18 December 2015. Key outcomes from that meeting were as follows:

1. Spearfishing in NSW

The Council received a presentation from Mr Adrian Wayne and Mr Mel Brown AM on spearfishing in NSW. Mr Brown gave a detailed history of the development of spearfishing in Australia including Indigenous spearfishing, methods, gear, the formation of an association to protect the rights of spearfishers, rules governing USFA members, spearfishing competitions and conservation efforts. Mr Wayne provided a presentation on the possible future of spearfishing in NSW including “where we are now”, “where we could be in the future” and “changes and assistance required”. At the conclusion of the presentation, the Chair requested that Messrs Wayne and Brown provide Council (in writing) a list of their top 5 priorities including achievable suggestions so that the Council may give further focused consideration to the issues within the Council's terms of reference.

2. Commercial Fisheries Business Adjustment Program

Council was advised the final recommendations of the Structural Adjustment Review Committee (SARC) are with the Minister and the Minister is consulting with fishers before making any decisions on share linkage.

3. Priorities and Challenges

Council reviewed the priorities and challenges facing the seafood sector in NSW, and as a result, these will be redrafted to reflect current issues identified by the 5 key sectors - Conservation, Aquaculture, Recreational, Commercial and Aboriginal Cultural Fishing - and published on Council's website. This will include the Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW paper titled 'Representing NSW Recreational Fishers – Restoring the Balance'.

4. Policy development

Council was advised that the Resource Sharing Policy, a key recommendation from the 2012 Review of Commercial Fisheries, had now been approved by the Minister and published on the Department's website on 15 December 2015. Council agreed to now turn its attention to the development of policies on Harvest Strategy and Guidelines and Co-management.

Next Meeting

Council's next meeting will be in Port Macquarie on 17/18 March 2016.

Richard Stevens
Chair
25 January 2016