

NSW MULLOWAY HARVEST STRATEGY WORKING GROUP

Chair's Summary – 13th Meeting – 3 December 2024

The thirteenth meeting of the NSW Mulloway Harvest Strategy Working Group was held on the 3rd of December 2024 to provide a progress update on the Draft NSW Mulloway Harvest Strategy (the draft harvest strategy).

DPIRD provided an update on work underway to progress the draft harvest strategy to consultation. It is pleasing to announce that the Commercial and Recreational Ministerial Fishing Advisory Councils have reviewed the draft harvest strategy and endorsed progression to public consultation before final review.

DPIRD provided an update on work underway through the new FRDC research project 'Laying the foundation for Mulloway stock recovery through filling critical knowledge gaps and modelling'. This is a critical piece of work which will support progressive improvements to the assessment process and its accuracy over the early stages of the harvest strategy.

The Chair of the Total Allowable Fishing Committee (the TAF Committee) provided an update on the Departments request for advice on harvest levels required to achieve the rebuilding objectives of the harvest strategy. The TAF Committee are highly valued for their expertise in setting Total Allowable Catch and Total Allowable Effort levels for NSW commercial fisheries, with this providing a valuable independent assessment to consider in finalising the rebuilding approach under the harvest strategy.

The meeting also welcomed an update on progress of an external independent review being undertaken on the stock assessment for Mulloway. The review was initiated from discussions at previous meetings and will provide the Department with an independent analysis regarding the data and modelling used in the assessment, to assist identifying any areas for improvement to future assessments.

DPIRD presented management measures to underpin operation of the harvest strategy, which have been developed by the Department based on recommendations provided by members at the previous meeting. The proposed measures have also been reviewed by the Ministerial Fishing Advisory Councils, with stakeholder feedback on approach proposed alongside the draft harvest strategy.

This is a significant body of work, and I look forward to some constructive stakeholder feedback. Following consultation, the Working Group will meet to review all submissions and revise the draft harvest strategy, if necessary, before making their final recommendations to the Ministerial Fishing Advisory Councils.

Dr James Findlay, Chair, NSW Mulloway HSWG.