

NEW SOUTH WALES TRAWL WHITING HARVEST STRATEGY WORKING GROUP

4th MEETING VIDEO MEETING 21 JANUARY 2021-01-21

CHAIRMANS SUMMARY

The meeting's focus was on drafting a letter to the Total Allowable Fishing Committee to advise the TAFC of progress towards the development of the interim harvest strategy and related advice concerning key elements including fishery indicators, target and limit reference points and change limiting rules.

The Group revisited some concerns that elements of the draft Objectives may be in conflict. This necessitated a change in wording to remove any doubt by reference to the wording contained in the Department's draft Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy document. It was noted that as the harvest strategy is developed it may involve an iterative process of reference back to the Objectives.

The issue of the need for the collection of economic data prior to consideration of MEY as a possible target was debated at length. Industry has consistently put forward the view that the complex nature of the fishery – multi-species, multi gear, multi jurisdiction and different effort efficiencies – as well as the lack of species specific data collection, render MEY targets impractical at the moment. Scientific advice, including advice on practices in other fisheries, demonstrated that proxies for MEY (eg. BMEY) can be used in some cases prior to the collection of economic data.

This issue again concentrated debate on MSY versus MEY as possible targets in the harvest strategy. Also, both the recreational and indigenous members raised the issue of where and how their groups would be accounted for in either target.

The final target reference points have not yet been decided and further discussion will continue with the group. To facilitate this, it was agreed that that a clearer picture was needed of what the two alternative targets would look like in terms, not only of the commercial sector, but also of other sectors, the management and research bodies as well as the flow-through impacts to the economy and the community itself.

It was agreed that the Department would lead the development of these scenarios with assistance from the group's expert members and input from other interested parties as necessary. It was expected that the further development of the harvest strategy would be informed by these scenarios.

Finally, the group briefly discussed the possible impact of the harvest strategy on the other jurisdictions sharing the fishery.

The next meeting will follow the TAFC's consideration of the coming season's quota determination.

PETER NEVILLE

CHAIR, TWHSWG

21 October 2021