

Draft Outcomes

Meeting	Lobster Industry Working Group		
Meeting No	May 2021	Date	4 May 2021
Location	Sydney	Time	9:00 – 17:15
Invitees	Daniel Stewart (Industry R1) Noel Gogerly (Industry R2) Lee Monin (Industry R3) Peter Offner (Industry R4) Mark Horne (Industry R5) Oly Wady (Recreational) Allan Blake (Observer)	Heath Folpp (DPI Chair) Nicholas Giles (DPI Management) Geoffrey Liggins (DPI Science & Research) Jai Settree (DPI Compliance) Matt Cartwright (DPI Compliance) Josh Cansdell (DPI observer)	
Apologies	N/a		
Prepared by	Nicholas Giles		

Item	Issue	Action
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1. Welcome, apologies and introductory remarks	NSW DPI acknowledged the Gadigal of the Eora Nation as traditional custodians of the place now called Sydney and welcomed all members and observers to the NSW Lobster Industry Working Group meeting for 2021	
2. Confirmation of final minutes from previous meeting	The previous Lobster Industry Working Group meeting was held on 19 May 2020. The final draft outcomes were reviewed by members out of session and were confirmed as final.	Outcomes confirmed.
3. Lobster Industry Working Group Terms of Reference and membership update	<p>Terms of Reference for the Lobster Industry Working group are reviewed every 3 years and were re-approved in August 2019 following review and industry consultation. Members are appointed for 3-year terms through an Expression of Interest (EOI) process.</p> <p>EOI's were sought for re-appointment of Region 2 & 5 members and Recreational, Aboriginal and Conservation members in late 2019. Region 2 & 5 members and the Recreational member were reappointed for 3 years in December 2019, with no EOI's received for Aboriginal or Conservation member positions.</p> <p>Region 1, 3 & 4 member appointments were extended for 18 months to re-establish staggered fisher appointments, with current appointments expiring on 30 June 2021.</p> <p>Expression of interest for appointment to expiring and vacant positions will be advertised in early June 2021. Members recommended approaching the Aboriginal Fishing Advisory Council to express support for nomination to the Aboriginal member position.</p>	<p>Noted and discussed.</p> <p>Executive Officer to write to AFAC to advise of pending EOI process.</p>
4. Update on the Total Allowable Catch setting program for 2021/22	The TAC meeting is scheduled for 5 May 2021. Reports have been submitted to the Total Allowable Fishing Committee from Management, Research and Compliance branches of DPI. A public call for submissions was advertised on the DPI website and offices from 19 March to 19 April 2021, with notification to all Lobster Fishery Shareholders and nominated fishers for submissions and the dates for the Industry and TAC meetings.	Members discussed fishery information for update and input to the TAC meeting.

	The Lobster Industry Working Group was provided presentations from DPI on information submitted to the Committee for review and discussion.	
5. COVID-19 and trade issues	<p>Effects of COVID-19 and international trade restrictions have been evident through a reduction in exports and nominal estimated sales prices on the domestic market in the current and previous fishing period. The NSW Government has implemented assistance measures including fee waivers and industry stimulus programs. Reported catch has remained ahead of cumulative catch in recent fishing periods given the good biological condition of the stock.</p> <p>Members also discussed estimations of fishery value. Gross fishery value is determined through SFM sales, with information confirmed to include all SFM sales post meeting. Members discussed options to improve GVP estimations, noting that collecting complete pricing information is complex and potentially costly. Members agreed SFM estimations were a reasonable basis for determining fishery value.</p> <p>Members received an update on export and domestic market conditions from a key NSW exporter, noting potential continuation of trade issues into the next fishing period/s.</p>	Noted and discussed.
6. STAG Survey and Association update	<p>The Australian Rock Lobster industry is currently working on understanding a new product screening process through a National Rock Lobster Working Group led by the Seafood Trade Advisory Group (STAG). Representation to the national working group includes a NSW Working Group member, a key exporter and the PFA.</p> <p>A sampling program is being undertaken to demonstrate that rock lobsters from all fishing areas are safe to eat. The NSW component of the program has been undertaken by the commercial fishing sector with assistance from DPI.</p>	Noted and discussed.
7. Lobster Harvest Strategy	<p>Members are in the process of developing a harvest strategy for the lobster fishery through the Lobster Harvest Strategy Working Group.</p> <p>DPI is considering extension material including developing a short promotional video to showcase the success of the lobster fishery, and support extension and engagement</p>	<p>Members supported production of the promotional video.</p> <p>DPI to request members nominations for participants post meeting.</p>

	<p>with this strategy and other strategies. This can also improve understanding of assessment and TAC processes.</p> <p>Members also discussed benefits of improving recreational harvest estimates, noted that the recreational fishery is likely to have seen benefits of significant increases to inshore lobster biomass, and agreed that review of recreational harvest limits is considered appropriate and is being discussed through development of the lobster harvest strategy.</p>	
8. Code of Practice update to address risks of whale entanglements	Best practice methods to reduce risks of whale entanglements are available to fishers under the lobster fishery management framework. Update of the Code of Practice to recognise and include risk mitigation for entanglements was completed in late 2020, with hard copy versions distributed to shareholders and fishers in early 2021. Members noted and recognised support of MEMS funding to this project.	Noted.
9. Online reporting development	<p>Online reporting was partially implemented in December 2017, with validated weights being reported through FisherMobile. The working group and DPI agreed on reporting amendments for development and wider consultation at a September 2018 workshop.</p> <p>Development has progressed to streamline reporting for the fishery by providing a single reporting process. DPI is working to resolve system integration issues to allow deployment of the reporting enhancements and seek working group review, anticipated during the 2021/22 fishing period.</p>	<p>Noted and discussed.</p> <p>Members supported finalising reporting enhancements to support implementation of full online reporting for the lobster fishery.</p>
10. Management charge for the Lobster Fishery 2021/22 financial period	Reconciliation of lobster budgets are underway. A draft budget to determine the management charge will be provided to members when completed.	Noted.
11. Tags for the 2021/22 fishing period	<p>A total of 260,000 tags were ordered for the 2020/21 fishing period TACC of 180 tonnes. Tags for the 2021/22 fishing period will be yellow with laser engraved black text and a red NSW waratah.</p> <p>10,000 tags with a food safe biodegradable additive were trialled during the 2020/21 fishing period, with intention to assess function and potential to provide biodegradable tags for the fishery to improve environmental performance. This would also reduce risks</p>	Noted and supported by members.

	<p>of negative perception of the fishery on the small number of occasions tag tails have been found by the public.</p> <p>Trial outcomes identified that tags were easier to use as the tail was more easily pulled through, and no impacts on security were identified. Members agreed out of session to provide biodegradable tags moving forward, noting a price increase of \$8/1000 tags.</p> <p>The current 3-year contract expires this fishing period, DPI will call for tenders for a further 3-year period late 2021.</p>	
12. MSC Pre-assessment	<p>The Professional Fisher's Association undertook pre-assessment for five NSW commercial fisheries under the MSC framework. The PFA proposed funding and undertaking assessment for the lobster fishery for a five-year period. LIWG members met with the PFA on two occasions and undertook additional discussion throughout 2020 and 2021.</p> <p>Members have advised the PFA that they had not determined significant support to recommend pursuing wider consultation for proposing certification to date, and noted meetings held by PFA and MSC staff to engage all shareholders and fishers to the pre-assessment and potential for certification.</p> <p>Members discussed independent assessments in context of potential supply of products to major markets and agreed to discuss MSC further with the PFA and MSC staff.</p>	Member Mark Horne to coordinate further engagement with the PFA and MSC staff for further assessment of potential benefits.
13. Administrative sanction review	<p>Consultation has been undertaken with industry and CommFish NSW to support a proposed new Demerit point scheme to apply across commercial fisheries. Implementation is currently being pursued.</p>	Noted and discussed.
14. Reporting of quota and share trading price	<p>Average quota and share trading prices are key economic indicators used to track changes in the lobster fishery over time. Reporting of price is not compulsory, however is strongly encouraged by the Department and the TAC Committee to support the TAC assessment process and track changes in fishery values over time.</p> <p>In the 2020/21 fishing period, approximately 66% of share transfers (sold only) (up from 30% for 19/20) and 17% of quota kilograms traded (down from 18% for 19/20) included</p>	<p>Noted and discussed.</p> <p>Members supported the importance of reporting price information for share and quota trades. Members to discuss and</p>

	<p>price information. Improving reporting rates would provide improved information to track economic performance of the fishery.</p> <p>DPI has followed up share trade data to request information to improve data. Follow up of higher numbers of quota trades is not practical.</p>	encourage fishers in their region to report price information.
15. Economic & Social Indicator Framework Update	<p>BDO EconSearch has been engaged to produce an annual time series of economic and social indicators for NSW commercial fisheries and a report will be produced for each fishery for three financial years (Financial Years 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22).</p> <p>BDO EconSearch is an independent group of researchers with experience monitoring economic and social indicators for fisheries in South Australia, Queensland and other states. Economic and social indicators provide valuable information for the fishing industry, fisheries managers and other stakeholders.</p> <p>BDO EconSearch and their collaborators at Action Market Research will soon be contacting commercial fishers seeking participation in a voluntary interview to collect economic and social information. The participation of fishing business owners in the BDO EconSearch survey is crucial to the production of reliable indicators and results.</p>	<p>Noted and discussed.</p> <p>Members recommended DPI to recognise potential for limited understanding of the survey and benefits of having economic and social indicators.</p> <p>Members recommended DPI to work to increase understanding of the survey and associated benefits of availability of these indicators in assessing and tracking economic performance of NSW commercial fisheries.</p>
16. Other business	<p>Availability of information for TAC submissions</p> <p>Members discussed a submission recommending improving information available to support submissions to the TAC process. DPI advised that it is considering information available for all TAC processes, and has identified provision of appropriate and consistent information as a process enhancement to be available for 2022 determinations.</p> <p>Communications</p> <p>Members discussed that fishers may not notice emails and supported sending a notification text to identify important emails distributed.</p> <p>Lobster size limits</p>	Members supported improving availability of fishery information so support submissions to the TAC process.

	Members discussed risks and benefits of recommending changes to current minimum and maximum size limits. Members agreed any potential change should be thoroughly investigated and agreed this is not recommended as a current priority.	
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Next meeting

2022 formal meeting to be confirmed