

STRATEGY 2014 - 2017

Introduction

This Strategy has been prepared by the Ministerial Fisheries Advisory Council (MFAC) of New South Wales to address its terms of reference, and in particular, to establish a work program of key strategies and outcomes identified by the MFAC as the focus of its work over the next three years.

Consistent with the objectives on the Fisheries Management Act 1994, this Strategy recognises the importance of Indigenous, Commercial and Recreational Fisheries and Aquaculture to the NSW economy, the seafood consumer, the health and welfare of its citizens and the aquatic environment.

In preparing this Strategy, the MFAC acknowledges:

- (a) that good fisheries management is reliant on science (biological, social and economic) including locally based information and knowledge and quality management processes accompanied by effective engagement and consultation with stakeholders, and effective compliance;
- (b) that its advice must take account of the objectives of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*, and the *Marine Parks Act 1997* (or replacement legislation), the regulations under those Acts and any applicable Government policies, together with the terms of reference set by the Minister for Primary Industries;
- (c) that there is currently a major reform program underway in NSW commercial fisheries, including the implementation of a structural adjustment program, which will affect the timing of a number of the strategies set out below; and
- (d) that there is currently a new Marine Estate Management Authority that the NSW Government has tasked with several activities, some of which may affect some of the strategies below;
- (e) that as a result of the recognition of Aboriginal cultural fishing in the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* in 2010 there are several activities being undertaken by the Aboriginal Fishing Advisory Council in conjunction with the Department, to develop culturally appropriate approaches to and regulations for the management of cultural fisheries, relevant to the strategies below.

Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for the Council are to advise the Minister for Primary Industries, as requested, on:

1. the development of strategic policies and goals for the management of fisheries resources, including issues which impact across fisheries and sectors such as resource sharing, co-management, cost recovery and ecosystem based fisheries management;

2. issues relating to the management of Aboriginal cultural fishing, recreational / charter fishing, commercial fishing and aquaculture that are strategic in nature and have cross sectoral implications, including the processes for developing individual fishery management plans or strategies and reviewing them, if appropriate, before approval;
3. the priorities of, and challenges facing, all fisheries sectors;
4. information needs to support effective management of NSW fisheries resources; and
5. any other specific issue referred to the Council by the Minister or the Deputy Director General DPI Fisheries.

Objectives and Outcomes

1. Identify the priorities of, and the challenges facing all fisheries sectors by firstly, drafting a background Discussion Paper, and then releasing the Discussion paper for input from stakeholder groups (commercial, recreational, indigenous, and conservation sectors, Government agencies, Local Government and other relevant parties).

Outcome: MFAC to review at every quarterly meeting.

2. To provide input to an initial draft policy on Cost Recovery, and consider approaches taken to cost recovery in other jurisdictions. Provide advice to the Minister prior to public release for consultation and feedback to MFAC.

Outcome: MFAC to continue to work with the Department to develop Policy following the implementation of the business adjustment program

3. Commission a report from the Deputy Director General DPI Fisheries on the current status of individual fishery management and aquaculture plans and/or strategies, including the process and associated timeframe for developing, finalising and/or reviewing those plans. This will include a strategy for the implementation of Ecosystem based fisheries management.

Outcome: Deputy Director General DPI Fisheries to provide a plan incorporating process and timelines for discussion with MFAC in 2017.

4. Assist DPI Fisheries to identify the information needs to support the effective management of NSW fisheries resources by reviewing the research program plans provided by the Department, and other R&D plans/priorities, e.g. the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation. These research needs will be considered against the MFAC priorities for (a) the commercial fishing sector, (b) the recreational fishing sector, (c) the Aboriginal fishing sector, (d) the conservation sector and (e) any other sources.

Outcome: Provide advice to the Deputy Director General DPI Fisheries as required.

5. Develop a draft Policy on Co-management of Fisheries for consideration by the Minister prior to public release for consultation and feedback to MFAC. Draw on experience from other jurisdictions and the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation.

Outcome: Develop a first draft Policy – timeframe will be subsequent to the Government's implementation on the Commercial Fisheries Business Adjustment Program and development of the Resource Sharing Policy.

6. Review expenditure from Fisheries Trusts.

Outcome: Provide a report to the Minister annually (June) and include an updated copy of the MFAC Strategy. A report will be presented in June 2017.

7. Support the work of the Aboriginal Fishing Advisory Council in ongoing activities aimed at further development of management strategies that support Aboriginal cultural fishing under the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*.

Outcome: Council received two briefings on developments relating to Aboriginal cultural fishing, and recognised the need to adequately resource engagement on the ground with communities, along with capacity building and recognition of cultural fishing.

8. Consider a Recreational Fishing Policy framework.

Outcome: This will be driven through the new Recreational Fishing NSW Council. The next meeting of the Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Council is on the 2nd December 2016.

9. Consider evidence based advice and options relating to issues impacting on fish habitat.

Outcome: The Deputy Director General DPI Fisheries and Aquaculture member Mr Mark Bulley to keep Council updated on progress. Mr Bulley to provide a report at each quarterly meeting. MFAC members to provide input as appropriate.

Council received a presentation on the draft NSW Fish Habitat Action Plan 2017 – 2027 and will follow up on progress at the next meeting.

Appendix A – Completed Objectives & Outcomes

Policy on Resource Sharing in NSW

Objective: Develop a draft Policy on Resource Sharing for consideration by the Minister prior to public release for consultation and feedback to MFAC, taking account of approaches to resource allocation and access in other jurisdictions.

Outcome: Initial draft of a Policy on Resource Sharing submitted for the Minister's consideration in December 2014. The Director General DPI Fisheries and the Minister approved the policy and its release. Policy published on DPI's website on 15 December 2015.

Appendix B – Recreational Fishing Alliance – Restoring the Balance

Representing NSW Recreational Fishers – Restoring the Balance



The RFA is proactively seeking commitments from the major NSW political parties to improve and enhance recreational fishing in NSW. We urge all recreational fishers to review our final policy documents that will be provided before deciding which policies they support.

1. RECOGNISE

RECOGNISE the importance of recreational fishing to the NSW economy, the health and welfare of its citizens and the custodianship of the fisheries resources and the aquatic environment.

- *Amend the Fisheries Management Act 1994 to recognise the right to fish recreationally.*
- *Provide in legislation for compensation to be paid for the removal of access for recreational fishing.*

2. REVIEW

Partner with recreational fishers to REVIEW the current recreational fishing access fee and redefine the way funds are spent, driving a new direction for recreational fishing in NSW and restructuring the way the NSW Government consults with fishers.

- *Respond to the need to formally recognise the value of recreational fishing in the FMA and give fishers rights, direction and vision in NSW for 2015-2025.*
- *Respond to the need to review the outdated FMA and its various parts such as the Threatened Species and Conservation Sections.*
- *Respond to the need to simplify the Regulations and recreational fishing rules.*
- *Respond to the concerns of recreational fishers and stop the cost shifting of core government activities to the recreational fishing trusts.*

3. REVITALISE

Partner with recreational fishers to REVITALISE recreational fishing in NSW, to make it a premier recreational fishing destination and promote the health and wellbeing benefits of fishing for communities and families.

- *Respond to the need by promoting recreational fishing in NSW through Statewide fishing days*
- *Respond to the need to promote NSW as a premier tourist destination through the establishment of fishing trails in the salt and freshwater.*

4. REFORM

Assist with the REFORM of commercial fishing to deliver an efficient, profitable and sustainable industry valued and respected by the community.

- *Support funding for the dignified retirement of excess fishing effort.*
- *Negotiate for the removal of inefficient or unsustainable fishing methods with fair compensation.*
- *Work with the commercial fishing industry to optimise the social and community benefits derived from sustainable fishing in every area of the state.*
- *Contribute to funding the reallocation of resources and access between sectors with fair compensation.*

5. RETAIN

Partner with recreational fishers to RETAIN access to our current and potential fishable waters and fish stocks within NSW.

- *Respond to the need for State waterways to be better serviced by boat ramps, jetties, fishing platforms and in conjunction with local councils respond to the need for development of off street permanent storage facilities for boats / boat trailers in high density residential areas.*
- *Stop any further closures to any jetty, fishing platform, beach, rock platform or shore based access point in both fresh and salt unless reasonable alternatives are negotiated including vehicular access.*

- *Respond to the need to retain safe public fishing access points in areas like Crown Reserves, National Parks, Marine Parks and utilising the remaining Crown Roads network.*
- *Respond to the need to access our current water storages like Prospect, Cataract and Warragamba Dams to enhance the economic stability within the local communities surrounding these areas.*
- *Respond to the need to maintain fishing recreational access rights to our current Recreational Fishing Havens and improve recreational fishing access to any proposed new Recreational Fishing Havens like the Hunter, Macleay, Pittwater and Shoalhaven Rivers.*

6. REHABILITATE

Partner with recreational fishers and commercial to REHABILITATE and protect valuable fish habitat across NSW for our fishing future.

- *Respond to the need to protect, regenerating and enhancing natural fish habitat to support diverse healthy fisheries and fish populations, where appropriate enhance habitat and protect forage and baitfish stocks as part of the critical food web in the salt and freshwater.*