



OCEAN TRAP AND LINE SPANNER CRAB SHARE LINKAGE WORKING GROUP

Outcomes meeting 1, Coffs Harbour Fisheries Office

17 June 2013

Attendees

Dallas D'Silva (DPI, Chairperson), Reala Brislane, Grahame Clarke, Gary Bordin, Craig Wraight, Andrew Goulstone (DPI), Ian Stockton (DPI), Veronica Silberschneider (DPI) and Darren Reynolds (DPI).

Apologies

Nil.

Purpose of meeting

Introduction to the 'share linkage' component of the industry reform program, including the identification of current controls for review and discussion on linkage options for further consideration by the working group and, ultimately, shareholders, the Structural Adjustment Review Committee (SARC) and the government.

General discussion

Most of the discussion emanating from the introductory presentation centred on the exit grant program and how it will operate. It was also made clear that the role of the working group is not that of a decision making body but rather that of a body that will provide guidance on linkage option development. The need for fishers to invest (and the \$15.5M adjustment fund contribution) to transition to the new arrangements, the potential relative cost of the various linkage options, joint stock assessments with other jurisdictions (Qld), and options for enforcement including the Integrated Voice Response (IVR) system recently developed were also discussed. The IVR system was demonstrated later in the day and industry was supportive of its use in the spanner crab fishery due to cost saving advantages (as cost-recovery will be implemented across fisheries) and self-service capabilities.

A presentation on fishery-specific information was provided including share distribution in both the northern and southern zones, recent total spanner crab catch and options for quota setting were discussed. There was also general agreement to have a limit of 30 dillies per boat (irrespective of number of crew) once a quota scheme is implemented and to review the dilly limit in the future.

Discussion on linkage options

It was noted that the Minister has already given a commitment to introduce an individually allocated quota system, based on shareholdings, in the spanner crab northern zone. Most of the discussion then related to options for share linkage in the southern zone and how this might be integrated with the northern zone.

Southern zone members stated the following:

- No quota
- No limit on total catch
- Remove the southern boundary at Hat Head
- Increase the dilly limit to 32 dillies per 40 shares (i.e. link shares to dilly numbers with 10 shares equal to 8 dillies).
- Impose a trip limit of 200 kg/day per endorsement
- Impose a small fishing closure prohibiting the use of a spanner crab net south of the Yamba boundary to assist in keeping the zones separate.
- If a single Individual Transferrable Quota (ITQ) system was to be implemented for the whole fishery, southern zone members do not agree to a disproportionate quota allocation (i.e. southern zone members want an equal allocation, 40 sthn zone shares = 40 nthn zone shares = same quota allocation).
- Do not agree to any linkage that devalues their current shareholdings
- Would consider a single ITQ scheme if quota allocation was equal.

Northern zone members stated the following in response:

- They prefer a global ITQ system i.e. remove the boundary line at Yamba and manage the spanner crab fishery as one share class with a quota system.
- If both share classes are to remain separate, then the southern zone should have a catch cap for their zone in proportion to their current contribution to the fishery.
- If separate share classes, northern zone fishers want to be able to buy shares/lease quota from the southern zone and catch that quota in the northern zone.
- Want equal access to waters south of Hat Head if the line is removed.
- Do not agree that 40 southern zone shares should equal 40 northern zone shares due to the different criteria used to issue shares initially.

Minimum shareholdings:

- Maintaining minimum shareholdings could be used as a tool to assist adjustment.
- Northern zone fishers would like to see minimum shareholdings removed so that all fishers under an ITQ system have the ability to catch the quota allocated to them.
- Could have a minimum shareholding for new entrants – similar to NSW lobster fishery.

Setting a TAC:

- Global TAC model with Qld using their modelling and decision rules for determining total allocated commercial catch.
- NSW set TAC independent of Qld. This option could still use the Qld modelling and decision rules.
- Either model would use NSW & Qld fishery dependent and independent data.

Extension of the transitional period for the minimum shareholding:

- General agreement to extend the transitional period given that the northern zone fishers would like to see minimum shareholdings removed once quota is implemented.
- Nthn zone members were concerned that the implementation of the ITQ scheme will be further delayed.
- UPDATE – note that the transitional period for minimum shareholdings has been extended to 30 June 2015.

Information requirements for next meeting

- Relative costs of linkage options, including costs of two separate management systems versus costs of single ITQ scheme.
- What will the management fees be per share?
- What will be an indicative TAC?
- What factors will be considered/used to set the TAC?
- What would be the proportion of quota issued to the zones (e.g. 5% to sthn zone versus 95% to nthn zone) and how will it be calculated?

End.

More information

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries

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Published by the Department of Primary Industries