

OCEAN TRAP AND LINE SPANNER CRAB SHARE LINKAGE WORKING
GROUP

Outcomes meeting 2, Coffs Harbour Fisheries Office

13 November 2013

Attendees

Darren Reynolds (DPI, Chairperson), Veronica Silberschneider (DPI), Ian Stockton (DPI), Reala Brislane, Grahame Clarke, Gary Bordin and Craig Wraight.

Observers

Andrew Goulstone (DPI) and Nick Giles (DPI).

Welcome and apologies

Professional Fishermens Association (PFA).

Confirmation of previous meeting outcomes

The draft outcomes of the first WG meeting were confirmed as final.

Review of action items

- WG raised concerns about the potential costs that will be borne by shareholders of the new management arrangements.
- Also raised concerns about enforcement of an ITQ system around the NSW/Qld border and possible interactions with the Qld fishery.
 - DPI advised that the use of the IVR system and mandating single jurisdiction trips would strengthen compliance.

Action 1: DPI to discuss compliance issues with Qld.

Opportunity for members to raise issues/thoughts since first meeting

WG member comments included:

- Nthn reps – want south to go to quota so that one simplified system is in place. If this doesn't occur, then sthn zone should pay for their own system independent of the nthn zone and the Hat Head line should be maintained.
- Willing to consider the sthn zone receiving >3% of the ITQ (in a whole of fishery ITQ model) if sthn zone can provide satisfactory details about why they should get it.
- Sthn zone want to stay as a separate fishery.

Further shareholder submissions on share linkage and current controls

- Sthn zone tabled an alternative proposal for the sthn zone (see below).

SARC feedback

- Issues raised by SARC noted by WG.

Review of the share linkage options paper

- ITCAL – Nthn zone thought the 168t ITCAL was appropriate since it will allow those fishers who need to increase their shareholding to have the ability to do so rather than to exit the industry. Nthn zone members provided the following reasons as to why this tonnage hasn't been reached in the last 10 years:
 - Decrease in the amount of available grounds due to implementation of Marine Parks,
 - Decrease in the number of fishers due to multiple Marine Parks buyouts and consolidation of shares.
 - Market restrictions – Queensland product taking some of market share,
 - Fishers used to fish longer hours and pull more dillies in a day as there was a greater access to markets. Now, fishers need to have product in at co-ops by the middle of the day so product can get to market.

Sthn zone fishers provided the following advice as to why their catch has been low in recent years:

- Fishing businesses that hold sthn zone shares are diversified and so other endorsements are being used.
- Economics – fishers can get more \$\$ for other species and the distance to grounds often makes targeting of spanner crabs unviable.
- Sthn zone did not think the 168t ITCAL was appropriate given that it hasn't been reached in recent years.
- Sthn zone representatives allege that a 3% allocation to that zone will devalue their shares. They mentioned it should be taken from the 3 best years rather than the average. They want equal allocation or at least 10% of the total ITCAL.
- During the meeting it was calculated that averaging the best 3 years total catch from the sthn zone increased the % allocation to 4%. Nthn reps offered to take this figure to nthn zone fishers for comment but sthn zone reps rejected a 4% allocation.
- Sthn zone want the Hat Head line removed. DPI clarified that if the line is removed the additional waters that would be open to spanner crabbing would be available to all spanner crab shareholders.
- WG supported removing option 2 from the options paper.
- WG supported amending option 3 to reflect the new sthn zone proposal - *see below*.
- DPI noted that many of the sthn proposals (ie implementing further controls) can be done voluntarily now.

Amended Sthn zone proposal

Sthn zone members proposed the following option for the management of spanner crabs in the southern zone which is to be put to shareholders for consultation:

1. Decrease the dilly size from 1.6m² to 1m²
2. Apply a spanner crab fishing closure from Sandon River to Yamba.

3. Apply a daily spanner crab catch limit of 150kg.
4. Apply a 2 tonne cap per 40 shares per year for 2 years (in addition to the daily limit). After 2 years this would be reviewed at the same time as the quota review.
5. Move the southern line from Hat Head to the Victorian border.
6. Increase the minimum size of spanner crab to 100mm.

Fishing period

- WG supported the cheapest option for the fishing period (ie if 2 years is more cost effective than one year then they support a 2 year fishing period).
- The following options for starting dates for the fishing period were suggested: (i) 1 July, (ii) 1 August, or (iii) 1 Feb for any given year.

Quota – transfers & monitoring

- WG supported unrestricted quota transfers and the use of IVR pre-fish, pre-land & post land reports to monitor quota usage.

Minimum shareholdings:

- WG supported 40 share minimum for new entrants in the nth & sth and 5 and 25 share minimum shareholding to be eligible for an endorsement in the nthn and sthn zones respectively.

Action 2: DPI to check the transitional period arrangements that currently apply– ie does a 40 share minimum apply to new entrants currently?

Boat restrictions

- WG supported removing the boat length restrictions for the spanner crab component of the OTLF only.

Meeting closed – 3pm

End.

More information

Veronica Silberschneider, A/Industry Liaison Manager (02) 9435 4679 or go to <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/commercial/consultation/commercial-fisheries-working-groups/spanner-crab-share-linkage-working-group>

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