



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Southern Bluefin Tuna Management Advisory Committee SBTMAC 45 Teleconference

Meeting Minutes

15 September 2021

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1. Preliminaries

1.1 Welcome/apologies/acceptance of agenda

1. The Chair opened the 45th meeting of the Southern Bluefin Tuna Management Advisory Committee (SBTMAC) and delivered an acknowledgement of country. SBTMAC 45 was a shortened teleconference via Microsoft Teams due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The primary objective of the meeting was to discuss the short and long term undercatch requirements in the SBT Fishery.
2. Apologies were received from Mr David Ellis and Mr Justin Nelligan. The Chair welcomed members, in particular, Mr David Galeano as the new Scientific member on SBTMAC and also the observers including Mr Richard Stevens, Mr Neil Hughes, Mr James Van Meurs and Ms Kylie Petherick.
3. Participants on the SBTMAC 45 teleconference included:

Table 1 Members, invited participants and observers in attendance at SBTMAC 45

Members	
Mr Max Kitchell	Chair
Mr Trent Timmiss	AFMA Member
Mr Terry Romaro OAM	Industry Member (Longline)
Mr Andrew Wilkinson	Industry Member (Farm industry sector)
Mr Marcus Stehr	Industry Member (Farm industry sector)
Mr Phil Turner	Industry Member
Mr David Galeano	Scientific Member
Mr Brett Cleary	Recreational/Charter Fishing Member
Mr Glenn Sant	Environment Member
Invited Participants	
Mr Brian Jeffriess AM	Australian SBT Industry Association
Prof Gavin Begg	State Government
Observers	
Ms Ann Preece	Employee of CSIRO
Dr Campbell Davies	Employee of CSIRO
Mr Matt Daniel	AFMA
Mr Richard Stevens	Tuna Australia
Ms Kylie Petherick	Industry
Mr Neil Hughes	Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE)
Mr James Van Meurs	DAWE
Executive Officer	
Ms Sarah Kirkcaldie	AFMA

Adoption of agenda

4. The agenda (Attachment 1) was adopted by SBTMAC with the addition of Agenda item 7.1 - southern rocket launch in Port Lincoln to the agenda.

1.2 Pecuniary interest declaration

5. The Chair stated that as outlined in the *Fisheries Administration Act 1991* and Fisheries Management Paper 1, all members and invited participants of SBTMAC must declare any interests, not limited to just pecuniary gain, in the Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery as they relate to specific agenda items at the commencement of the meeting (Table 1). SBTMAC noted that if a member or invited participant discloses an interest in an agenda item, the person must absent themselves from the meeting while SBTMAC makes a decision as to whether they can participate in the discussion and in the making of recommendations, or remain absent from the meeting for the agenda item. The attendees declared their conflict of interests as follows:

Table 2 Declared interests of members, invited participants and invited observers at SBTMAC 45

Name	Declared Interests	Agenda Items Relevant to Declared Interests
Members		
Mr Max Kitchell	Employed as the SBTMAC Chair. No pecuniary interest in the Fishery.	Nil
Mr Trent Timmiss	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interests in tuna fisheries.	Nil
Mr Terry Romaro OAM	Director of a company that owns SBT, ETBF & WTBF quota SFR's & a Fish Processing factory & a factory that recycles SBT waste in Pt Lincoln. Mr Romaro further advised he is also a member of Squid Resource Assessment Group and Tropical Tuna Management Advisory Committee (TTMAC) and an invited participant on the Tropical Tuna Resource Assessment Group (TTRAG). Mr Romaro attends Indian Ocean Tuna Commission & CCSBT meetings representing Industry & is a Director of Tuna Australia P/L.	6.1, 6.2
Mr Andrew Wilkinson	No pecuniary interest	6.1, 6.2
Mr Marcus Stehr	Board member of Clean Seas, Member seafood advisory Board. Board member of Australian Maritime and Fisheries Academy and Board member of Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Industry Association. Mr Stehr is also a Board member of the Seafood Industry Association. Mr Stehr is also an SBT quota holder.	6.1, 6.2
Mr Phil Turner	Board member of the Sarin Group and represent Sarin Group who are quota holders.	6.1, 6.2
Mr David Galeano	Employee of ABARES, no pecuniary interest in SBT fishery, noting that ABARES conducts research on a range of fisheries issues.	Nil
Mr Brett Cleary	Trustee International Game Fishing Association and Life Member of Game Fishing Association of Australia [GFAA]*. Mr Cleary has no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery. *Have or are funding research into SBT.	Nil

Name	Declared Interests	Agenda Items Relevant to Declared Interests
Mr Glenn Sant	Employee of Traffic Oceania, which has a collaboration agreement with the University of Wollongong, no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery.	Nil
Executive Officer		
Ms Sarah Kirkcaldie	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interests in the Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery.	Nil
Invited Participants		
Mr Brian Jeffriess AM	CEO of Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Industry Association.	Nil
Prof Gavin Begg	Executive Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture, PIRSA. No pecuniary interest in SBT fishery.	Nil
Observers		
Mr Matt Daniel (Observer)	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery	Nil
Ms Ann Preece	Employee of CSIRO, undertake research in SBT Fishery.	4.1, 4.2
Dr Campbell Davies	Employee of CSIRO, undertake research in SBT Fishery.	4.1, 4.2
Mr Richard Stevens	Chair, Tuna Australia. Chair NSW Ministerial Advisory Council, no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery	Nil
Ms Kylie Petherick	Chief Financial Officer, Stehr Group	Nil
Mr Neil Hughes	Employee of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery	Nil
Mr James Van Meurs	Employee of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery	Nil

6. The following members declared interests under Agenda Item 6.1 and 6.2: Mr Terry Romaro OAM, Mr Andrew Wilkinson, and Mr Marcus Stehr.
7. As per requirements, the above MAC members, left the teleconference, and the remaining SBTMAC members agreed that the members should be allowed to return to the teleconference for all discussions and recommendations made under Agenda Item 6.1 and 6.2.

1.3 Final minutes from SBTMAC 44

8. SBTMAC noted the SBTMAC 44 minutes from 17 September 2020 meeting as a true and accurate account of the discussions. Members noted that the comments received on the draft minutes circulated in September 2020 were incorporated.

1.4 Action arising SBTMAC 44 and intersessional work

9. Members noted the status of the actions arising from SBTMAC 44 as outlined below:

Table 3 Actions arising from SBTMAC 44

	Action arising	Status
1	<p>Proposed design study to examine potential future electronic tagging programs to understand implications of changes in migration of SBT– The recreational member stated that the recreational sector has enormous expertise in fish tagging and would like to be part of this research program noting their extensive network that could be used. CSIRO agreed to discuss the project with the recreational member (SBTMAC 44).</p>	SBTMAC members noted that this action will be discussed under Agenda item 4.1.

Intersessional work

10. The following items/issues have been progressed out-of-session since the last SBTMAC meeting on 17 September 2020:
- An email dated 16 August 2021 from Sarah Kirkcaldie seeking comments on the draft agenda for SBTMAC 45 scheduled for 15 September 2021;
 - An email dated 27 July 2021 from Sarah Kirkcaldie seeking comments on the draft agenda for SARAG 63 scheduled for 5-6 May 2021;
 - An email dated 12 May 2021 from Sarah Kirkcaldie seeking comments on Fisheries Management Paper 5: facilitating new and exploratory fisheries;
 - An email dated 25 March 2021 from Sarah Kirkcaldie seeking comments on the draft 2021/22 budget;
 - An email dated 2 March 2021 from Sarah Kirkcaldie seeking comments on the Ecological Risk Assessment for Effects of Fishing – Report for the Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery: Purse Seine Sub-Fishery 2015-2019; and
 - An email dated 16 November 2020 from Sarah Kirkcaldie seeking comments on a research proposal that the AFMA Research Committee (ARC) recently received relating to SBT.

2. State of the Fishery

2.1 Informal industry report on the 2020/21 catching season, markets and outlook

11. The industry member noted that they began fishing on 11 January 2021 which was later than normal and finished catching by 18 March 2021. Members noted that there was an observer on board the vessels for a number of the trips. Members noted weather conditions were very windy and there were temperature variations due to La Nina which had caused problems with days lost to fishing. Industry noted that it was a tough season with a lot of smaller fish caught and some companies not catching their quota. Industry stated that the gene tagging project that began in 2016 continued in 2021 with 7155 fish tagged over 20 days (starting on 22 March 2021). Industry

thanked Ann Preece and Russ Bradford for their assistance with this project. Members noted that industry is planning for all scenarios for next season but welcomed the recovery of the stock.

12. The industry observer noted that the price for SBT was the second lowest price ever with the Covid-19 pandemic causing huge problems for all export industries. SBTMAC noted that Border Force and Home Affairs had assisted in getting freezer boats in with foreign crew and that all fish had been sold out of farms to Japan apart from one pontoon. Members noted that large scale domestic consumption has been difficult to achieve. Members noted that industry had invested a large amount of money towards developing the Chinese market.

2.2 Informal industry report from the recreational sector member

13. The recreational member noted that the restrictions as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic had also impacted the recreational sector. The recreational effort has reduced due to the many lockdowns particularly in Victoria. Members noted that when fishing has been allowed in Tasmania there has been fishing all year with big fish being caught in the Bass Strait (145kgs in the last few weeks).
14. The recreational member noted that the Tuna Champions project funded through the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) concluded in July 2021, however, an extension has recently been negotiated. Members noted that the extension is waiting for sign off from the Minister but the program will continue for the next 3-5 years. The Industry invited participant praised the project and thanked Tuna Champions.

2.3 AFMA manager's report

15. The SBT Manager noted that catches in the farm sector for the season totalled 4592 tonnes and catches to date in the longline sector were on track to exceed 1000 tonnes.

3. Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT)

3.1 Outcomes from the CCSBT 26th Extended Scientific Committee meeting (September 2021)

16. The Scientific member (Mr Galeano) provided a summary of the meeting and reminded members that the outcomes are confidential until after the annual CCSBT Commission meeting at the end of October 2021.
17. SBTMAC noted that the management procedure was not run this year however no exceptional circumstances have been triggered so it is unlikely there would be changes to the recommended TAC.
18. Mr Galeano explained that developing a scientific research plan was a short term priority for the ESC and will be completed in the next year. The Commission also discussed improving communications between the ESC and the Commission including using plain English for the ESC meeting summaries.
19. SBTMAC noted that the forward work plan included the 2023 full stock assessment, the management procedure for the 2024-2026 TACs, the Catch per unit Effort (CPUE) fix and the scientific research plan to be agreed at the 2022 meeting.

20. Industry members thanked the Australian government departments for keeping the industry well informed.

4. Research issues

4.1 Proposed 2021/22 research program and priorities

AFMA funding

21. In 2020 SBTMAC deemed the SBT Inter-sessional science 2021/24 project as essential for providing ongoing scientific advice to AFMA to support the adequate monitoring, implementation and success of management arrangements in the Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery. This work also includes the routine otolith archiving, ageing and developing age-length keys for the Australian SBT surface fishery 2021/24 project that provides direct age estimates to the CCSBT via the data exchange process.
22. SBTMAC noted that the project was approved by the AFMA Research Committee as essential research and has been funded for a period of three years.
23. Members noted that no further AFMA funded projects, relating to the SBTF, are being considered this year.

Fisheries Research Development Corporation funding

24. SBTMAC noted that in the SBT Annual Research Statement 2022/23 CSIRO are proposing a design study to examine options, feasibility and cost-benefits of a variety of electronic tagging programs for SBT. The outcomes of the research would seek to understand changes in spatial and temporal movement, behaviour and migration through the GAB, Indian Ocean and Tasman Sea and identify impacts for CPUE, gene-tagging and Australian Industry, to inform climate change adaptation strategies. Industry members noted their support of this project.

4.2 Research Mortality Allowance

25. SBTMAC noted that Australia submitted a paper to the recent CCSBT Extended Scientific Committee meeting which describes a requested RMA for 2021/2022. At CCSBT 27 in 2020, Australia committed to a trial of emerging stereo-video (SV) technology to test whether any current system meets its pre-conditions. Australia has continued to monitor emerging SV technologies in Australia, New Zealand and Japan and there is anecdotal evidence that there may now be systems available that meet, or are close to meeting, Australia's preconditions. However, this cannot be confirmed without testing these in an operational environment.
26. Members noted that Australia requested a three tonne RMA for a project to trial the use of stereo video technology to determine the weight of catch taken in Australia's Southern Bluefin Tuna farming sector. The trial will operate between December 2021 and March 2022. The CCSBT Extended Scientific Committee endorsed the proposal however it will still need to be formally agreed by the CCSBT Commission in October 2021.

5. Compliance update

5.1 Compliance update

27. The AFMA member gave an update from the National Compliance Strategy section on compliance activities in the SBT fishery for the current fishing season. Members noted that the domestic farm sector received inspections from Primary Industries and Regions South Australia (PIRSA) and AFMA undertook a range of compliance checks from January to April including 8 at sea boardings (Purse seine and tow boats). No compliance issues were detected.
28. The industry members noted and thanked AFMA management for the support they had received at the port briefings which assisted with ensuring compliance. Industry encouraged this initiative to continue.

6. Domestic management issues

6.1 Undercatch arrangements in the SBT Fishery – long-term options

29. The AFMA observer stated that CCSBT allows members to carry over a maximum of 20 per cent of the members effective catch limit (uncaught) into the following year. Domestically, AFMA implements this CCSBT resolution by allowing each individual quota holder to carry over up to 20 per cent of their total quota holdings provided it is uncaught. This undercatch percentage is agreed annually by the AFMA Commission and implemented through a determination prior to the commencement of the fishing season.
30. SBTMAC noted that the majority of CCSBT members calculate undercatch at a national level to maximise the amount of undercatch available to fishers in the following season. Australia reports its undercatch at a national level. However, as the AFMA system calculates it at an individual level it is administratively difficult for Australia to attain the maximum amount of undercatch available under the CCSBT resolution.
31. SBTMAC noted that Section 9C of the *Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery Management Plan 1995* (the Plan) deals with undercatch arrangements. It allows AFMA to determine the determined percentage of undercatch for a season. This occurs prior to the season commencement on 1 December each year.
32. In 2020, industry asked the AFMA Commission to amend the determined undercatch percentage mid-way through the season (from 20% to 100%) as a measure to assist concession holders deal with the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. Members noted that the AFMA Commission agreed to this one-off amendment and to ensure Australia remained compliant with its CCSBT obligations relating to undercatch. The increase was conditional upon the fishery as a whole catching an amount equal to or more than Australia's Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC) minus 20 percent of the national catch allocation. If this requirement was met, individuals could carry over 100% of their uncaught quota in that season.
33. SBTMAC noted that in 2021, industry again approached the AFMA Commission seeking the same amendment noting the on-going issues associated with the Covid-19 pandemic and also the effects of La Nina. The Commission did not support the industry request but agreed to explore, in consultation with industry, a long-term arrangement that might result in greater usage of Australia's CCSBT allocation and avoid ad hoc considerations that would likely lead to inconsistent decision making over time.
34. The AFMA observer informed members that they had identified two potential options for implementing longer term arrangements that could result in greater usage of Australia's

CCSBT allocation while remaining consistent with Australia's international obligations. These could be implemented through:

1. changes to the annual undercatch/overcatch determination agreed by the Commission prior to the start of the season; or
2. an amendment to Section 9C of the *Southern Bluefin Tuna Management Plan 1995*.

35. Members agreed that option 1 is a simple and cost-effective approach and could, if agreed by the Commission, be implemented for the upcoming 2021/22 fishing season. Members further noted that amending the Plan (Option 2) provides more certainty for industry but is expensive and time consuming and if there were future changes to the CCSBT resolution, a further amendment would be required.
36. The meeting discussed the proposition that changing the current rules may have adverse impacts on some concession holders. Industry members from both the farming and the longline sectors believed that no concession holders would be disadvantaged by the proposed amendment. The scientific member (Mr Galeano ABARES) noted that the changes would not add any inherent inefficiency into the market and believed that they were consistent with AFMA's legislative objectives.
37. Members also discussed the fact that undercatch is not transferrable within the AFMA system noting that this requirement is the same across all AFMA quota fisheries. Industry members believed this led to a level of inequity amongst concession holders. Those who do not fish their quota but rely on the lease market may be entitled to undercatch however this undercatch is not able to be utilised by them in the following season. The AFMA member noted that to amend these arrangements significant legislative change is required.
38. **SBTMAC members unanimously supported recommending option 1 (annual determination) noting that pursuing this option would have no adverse effect on concession holders. SBTMAC also recommended that the AFMA Commission pursue legislative amendments or other measures to make undercatch tradeable.**

6.2 Undercatch arrangements in the SBT Fishery – current season (2020/21)

39. Members noted that due to the ongoing impact of Covid-19 pandemic (in particular, the Delta strain) and the impact of the La Nina weather pattern, industry had again requested the Commission change the undercatch arrangements in the current SBTF season (2020/21) to allow industry to carryover 100% of individual undercatch. SBTMAC noted that the AFMA Commission had earlier this year rejected this request twice stating that they remain concerned that changing arrangements mid-way through the season may disadvantage concession holders who already have arrangements in place for the season. The Commission also noted that a number of other fisheries have applied for similar relief and all have been refused and if the SBTF were to again receive an increase this could be viewed by concession holders in those fisheries as inequitable.
40. SBTMAC noted that the AFMA Commission had agreed to revisit the issue at its upcoming meeting on September 20, 2021.
41. Members noted that to ensure Australia remained compliant with its CCSBT obligations, any change would be conditional upon the fishery as a whole catching an amount equal to or more than Australia's Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC) minus 20 percent of the national catch allocation. Members noted that this 80% target was 5186 tonnes for the current season and catches to date were 5558 tonnes so the threshold level has now been met.

42. Industry members and invited participants noted that the Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Industry Association (ASBTIA) represents over 97% of quota holders and all had supported the determination amendment. The longline sector highlighted that they fish late in the season and this amendment was very important to that sector. CSIRO confirmed that the SBT Management Procedure Management Strategy Evaluation took into account undercatch allowances so this was not a sustainability issue. Industry highlighted that SBT is an international managed fishery and therefore the domestic requirements should be consistent with other CCSBT members and not other Australian domestic fisheries.
43. The recreational member noted that he supported the amendment to the determination but was concerned that carryover could be accumulated over a number of years leading to sustainability concerns. The CSIRO observer noted that the CCSBT Scientific Committee had evaluated the rules relating to undercatch prior to the resolution being agreed and that under these rules undercatch could not be accumulated above 20% of the allocation in any one year.
44. **SBTMAC unanimously supported requesting a current season (2020/21) determination amendment to increase the undercatch allowance from 20% to 100% noting that the carryover does not have an impact on the sustainability of the stock, the amendment has the full support of ASBTIA members and recognising the international framework of the fishery and the need to ensure that Australia is not at a competitive disadvantage when compared to other CCSBT members.**

6.3 Monitoring arrangements in the SBT Fishery

45. SBTMAC **noted** that on 24 May 2021, AFMA sought tenders for the provision of monitoring services in the farming sector of the Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery. The main requirements of the tender included:
- conducting a sample of 100 fish of $\leq 10\text{kg}$ to determine an average weight for every tow cage that returns to Port Lincoln holding fish;
 - observation of each transfer of SBT from the tow cage to the farm site and the recording of all fish transferred on mono videotape;
 - conducting fish counts (using the recorded video) of all transfers to determine the number of fish in the tow cage;
 - the calculation of the relevant weight for each tow cage for quota decrementation purposes;
 - the provision of weekly reports on SBT catches as well as a monthly situation reports.
 - the ability to implement alternative monitoring technologies if instructed to do so in the future.
46. Tenders closed on 30 June 2021. The tender evaluation panel awarded the contract to Seatec Pty Ltd for a period of three years that also includes an option for an extra two years at AFMA's discretion. Industry members noted that Seatec (the current contractor) run a very efficient operation and are well respected throughout the industry.
47. At CCSBT 27 in 2020, Australia committed to trialling emerging stereo-video (SV) technology to test whether any current system meets its pre-conditions (fully automated and cost effective). Australia has continued to monitor emerging SV technologies in Australia, New Zealand and Japan and there is anecdotal evidence that there may now be systems available that meet, or are close to meeting, Australia's preconditions. However, this cannot be confirmed without testing these in an operational environment.

48. The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE) sought tenders through AusTender. Tenders opened on 6 August 2021 and closed on 31 August 2021.
49. The requirements of the trial were agreed by the Stereo Video Working Group comprised of DAWE, Industry, ABARES and AFMA representatives.
50. The request for tender noted the stereo video equipment must be fully-automated as per the description in section A.A.2. of the tender document. The supplier must be able to conduct the trial in the trial period (from 1 December 2021 to 30 March 2022).
51. The trial is scheduled to commence on 1 December 2021 and be completed by 30 March 2022, with a final report due 1 May 2022. It should be noted however that, as much of Australia is currently in lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, any testing of the system will be subject to regulations around the pandemic.
52. SBTMAC noted the timeline for the trial.

6.4 SBT 2021/22 budget

53. SBTMAC noted that the total AFMA 2021-22 cost recovered budget is \$15.958 million, or \$0.590 million (3.8%) higher compared to 2020-21. Members noted that the annual levy collections also include a research component collected on behalf of the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation.
54. Members noted that the SBTF cost recovered budget is \$1,560,187. This is an increase of \$119,954 (8.3%) and is mainly due to increases in direct management costs, data management costs, VMS, research and the budgeted costs for tendering the farm monitoring contract. These increases have been partially offset by reductions in e-monitoring and licencing.
55. SBTMAC noted that acquittals are not yet available but a small underspend is expected due to various reasons. Members stated that the 8% increase was difficult in the current climate but noted the detailed explanation provided.
56. SBTMAC noted the 2021/22 SBT budget.

6.5 Environment update

US MARINE MAMMAL IMPORT RULE

57. SBTMAC noted that the US MMPA Import Provisions implements aspects of the Marine Mammal Protection Act that aim to reduce marine mammal bycatch associated with international commercial fishing operations, by requiring nations exporting fish and fish products to the United States to be held to the same standards as U.S. commercial fishing operations.

Members noted the key points to note for Australian Fisheries:

- The new measures have been formally endorsed but do not take effect until 1 January 2022.
- The first stage of implementation involved Australia providing a suite of information to the US on how Australia manages its commercial fisheries with regard to marine mammal interactions. The US used this information to assess and categorise Australia's fisheries as either 'exempt' or 'export'.
- AFMA is currently working with the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment to update detailed information for our fisheries to feed back into the US assessment process and achieve a comparability finding. AFMA is aiming to have a set of updated data for Commonwealth fisheries loaded into the US online system by the end of September 2021.

DEVELOPMENTAL FISHERIES POLICY (FMP5)

58. Members noted that AFMA finalised its review of Fisheries Management Paper 5: Developmental Fisheries Policy in July 2021. The new Policy sets out the policy and processes for the exploration and development of new, unallocated or unexploited fish resources in the Commonwealth fisheries jurisdiction.

NEW POLICY TO INTERPRET NET ECONOMIC RETURNS

59. The AFMA member noted that AFMA is currently developing a Fisheries Management Paper (FMP) that will detail how AFMA will measure its performance against the net economic returns requirements of the Commonwealth Harvest Strategy Policy, Fisheries Management Act 1991 and Fisheries Administration Act 1991. A key component of the policy will include a template for RAGs and MACs to complete that assists them assess and interpret trends, external factors and economic risks influencing a fishery's net economic returns. The draft policy will go through a public consultation process as well as being provided to RAGs and MACs prior to being presented to the AFMA Commission for approval.
60. Members noted that the SBT Fishery has been included and data has been provided.

CLIMATE ADAPTION HANDBOOK

61. SBTMAC noted that the FRDC funded research project Adaption of Commonwealth Fisheries to Climate Change has recently been completed. The project looked at the readiness of Commonwealth Fisheries Management Arrangements to the potential impacts of climate change and options to adapt to changes. Its key output is a climate adaption handbook that provides detailed steps for fisheries and other stakeholders to conduct climate risk assessment of their fishery management arrangements and operations. The final project will be made available on the FRDC and AFMA Websites shortly. A workshop focussing on the methodology of the handbook and the project is planned as part of the upcoming World Fisheries Conference in Adelaide and online in September 2021.

ECOLOGICAL RISK ASSESSMENT

62. SBTMAC noted that in 2020 CSIRO conducted an assessment of the ecological impacts of the Southern Bluefin Tuna Purse Seine sub-fishery using the ERAEF method version 9.2. ERAEF stands for "Ecological Risk Assessment for Effect of Fishing" and was developed jointly by CSIRO Marine and Atmospheric Research and the Australian Fisheries Management Authority.
63. ERAEF provides a hierarchical framework for a comprehensive assessment of the ecological risks arising from fishing, with impacts assessed against five ecological components – key commercial species; by-product and by-catch species; protected species; habitats; and (ecological) communities.
64. Application of the ERAEF methods to a fishery can be thought of as a set of screening or prioritization steps that work towards a full quantitative ecological risk assessment. At the start of the process, all components are assumed to be at high risk. Each step, or Level, potentially screens out issues that are of low concern.
65. Members noted that no high risks were identified for any components assessed in the SBT purse seine sub-fishery from internal activities. The external activities that impacted components were

other fisheries on key commercial and protected species, and communities, and aquaculture on protected species and communities.

66. A draft of the Ecological Risk Assessment report was circulated to SBTMAC for comment earlier in the year and the final report was provided to members. The industry invited participant noted that a paper has been submitted to update information regarding sardines.

6.6 IUCN listing of SBT

67. SBTMAC noted that industry wanted to seek the advice of Non-governmental organisations on how to remove the Southern Bluefin Tuna as 'Critically endangered' on the IUCN Redlist. Industry noted that the rules for listing were very inconsistent and that the industry wants to meet the Marine Stewardship Council Fisheries Standard. Industry further noted that the listing can be used against fisherman as some restaurants will not serve fish that are listed. The Conservation member agreed to meet separately with industry to discuss.

7. Other Business

68. Industry members noted that a Southern Launch rocket facility was conducting rocket launches in Port Lincoln. The facility has been conducting experiments for 3 years but was now seeking to make it more permanent. Members noted that a large area of air space has to be closed when a rocket is launched and this may occur between 200-300 times a year. Industry will be providing a submission to the South Australian Government regarding the significant impact this could have on the industry.
69. SBTMAC members noted that this was Mr Trent Timmiss' last meeting as he would be taking up a new role at the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences. The Chair on behalf of SBTMAC thanked Mr Timmiss for his hard work and his professionalism over the ten years he had been involved with SBTMAC and wished him well for the future.

8. Next meeting

70. Members agreed that the next SBTMAC meeting should be held in September 2022 with a date to be confirmed next year.
71. The SBTMAC Chair thanked the members, invited participants and observers and closed the meeting at 14:11 pm.

Meeting of the Southern Bluefin Tuna Management Advisory Committee (SBTMAC 45)



Wednesday 15 September 2021

10.00 am – 2.00pm

Teleconference

Final Agenda

- 1. Preliminaries/matters arising**
 - 1.1 Opening remarks/apologies/acceptance of agenda
 - 1.2 Pecuniary interest declaration
 - 1.3 Final minutes SBTMAC 44 teleconference
 - 1.4 Action arising SBTMAC 44 and intersessional work
- 2. State of the Fishery**
 - 2.1 Informal industry report on the 2021/22 catching season, markets and outlook
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 - 6.3 Monitoring arrangements in the SBT fishery – update
 - 6.4 SBT 2021/22 budget and 2020/21 acquittals
 - 6.5 Environment update
 - 6.6 IUCN listing of SBT
- 7. Other Business**

7.1 Southern rocket launch in Port Lincoln

8. Next meeting