



**Australian Government**

**Australian Fisheries Management Authority**

## **Northern Prawn Fishery Management Advisory Committee (NORMAC) 84**

### **Videoconference minutes**

**Date: 22 February 2021**

**Time: 02.00 pm – 03.30 pm (AEDT)**

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# Contents

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Contents.....	2
Attendance.....	3
1 Preliminary business.....	3
1.1 Chairs opening remarks.....	3
1.2 Adoption of agenda.....	3
1.3 Declaration of interests.....	3
1.4 Minutes from previous meeting.....	3
2 Broodstock.....	4
3 Remake of NPF Directions.....	5
4 Other business.....	5
5 Next meeting.....	5
Attachment 1 – NORMAC 84 agenda.....	7
Attachment 2 – NORMAC Declared Conflicts of Interest.....	8

# Attendance

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Name	Membership Type (i.e. chair)
John Glaister	NORMAC Chair
David Carter	Industry member
Ian Boot	Industry member
Arthur Raptis	Industry member
Jo McCrea	Environment/conservation member
Ian Knuckey	Research member, NPRAG Chair
Steve Bolton	AFMA member
Steve Eves	NORMAC EO
Annie Jarrett	Invited participant – NPFI
Darren Roy	Invited participant – Qld Fisheries
Trevor Hutton	Observer – CSIRO
Phil Robson	Observer – Raptis
Andy Prendergast	Observer – Austral
Adrienne Laird	Observer – NPFI
Darci Wallis	Observer – NPF Manager, NPRAG AFMA member
Shijie Zhou	Observer – CSIRO

## 1 Preliminary business

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### 1.1 Chairs opening remarks

The Northern Prawn Fishery Management Advisory Committee (NORMAC) Chair, John Glaister, opened the videoconference at 02.00 pm (AEDT) on 22 February 2021 with an Acknowledgement of Country. Apologies were noted from Industry Members Ron Earle and Gregory Albert.

### 1.2 Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without change.

### 1.3 Declaration of interests

The Chair advised that NORMAC consider the standing table of declared interests (Attachment 2) and individually declare whether the stated interests are accurate, and if not, provide an update. Updated interests were declared by Arthur Raptis, noted by the MAC and updated in Attachment 2. It was also noted that all industry participants had a potential conflict regarding agenda item 2 – Broodstock, but their contribution to the discussion was considered essential. No other apparent conflicts of interest were identified that would prevent individuals participating in discussions.

### 1.4 Minutes from previous meeting

It was noted that the Minutes from the 01 October 2020 meeting were accepted out-of-session and are published on the AFMA website.

## 2 Broodstock

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NORMAC noted that the NPF Resource Assessment Group (NPRAG) had discussed the results of the *Penaeus monodon* stock assessment project at its February 2021 meeting and provided advice/ recommendations on a sustainable approach for *P. monodon* catches in the NPF as follows:

- Maintain status quo for the management of *P. Monodon*, noting there is significant variability in the incidental catches of *P. Monodon* taken within the commercial fishery.
- This will allow the continuation (and improvement where possible) of current *P. Monodon* data collection and monitoring across the fishery (commercial byproduct and targeted broodstock collection).
- The existing management controls that are in place for the banana and tiger prawn fisheries (e.g. seasonal closures, gear restrictions) also provide protection to *P. monodon* populations.
- Undertake another stock assessment in 3 years (2024), which will include data up until 2023 (including broodstock collection discard data from 2017-2023).
- In the interim, commence annual monitoring of total catch (5-year running average) against the two estimates of MSY from the model to assess possible risk to stock sustainability. Total catch (including discard mortality) less than MSY is not likely to lead to overfishing.
- Based on the results of the model (noting there is significant uncertainty within the model) the RAG does not believe that the stock is currently overfished or overfishing is occurring. As with other *Penaeus* species, there is significant annual variability for these stocks due to environmental factors and therefore limit reference points (e.g. tiger prawns) are set based on the moving average of  $B_Y/B_{MSY}$  and other indicators to take account of this variability.
- While the RAG recommended the maintenance of current catch levels, it did not provide any recommendation on sustainable take between the commercial byproduct or targeted broodstock collection as this should be considered by NORMAC.
- NPRAG also noted that the peak period for broodstock demand is during June to August each year. Considering this, it was suggested that the total *P. monodon* catch could be reviewed after the banana prawn season, as the largest proportion of total *P. monodon* is caught during the start of the banana prawn season in the higher catch years. This could potentially allow the targeted broodstock fishing limit to be reviewed mid-year. It was cautioned, however, that targeted broodstock and *P. monodon* taken as commercial byproduct are caught in different areas and this should also be considered when reviewing any broodstock catch limits.

It was advised that, due to administrative oversight, the NPRAG Chair's appointment had expired prior to the February NPRAG meeting. NORMAC noted the NPRAG Chair was not formally appointed while providing NPRAG's recommendation on a sustainable approach for *P. monodon* catches in the NPF. The MAC acknowledged this in considering NPRAG's advice.

The demand for broodstock from the NPF was discussed and the MAC noted that since 2019 when 20,000 individuals were requested orders from farms have remained within the supply cap. During 2020, a number of available broodstock trips were not taken up and the total number of individuals ordered was within the 9,000 supply limit. Reasons for the lower demand were attributed to some operators collecting their own broodstock by fishing under NPF statutory fishing rights (SFRs) and some hatcheries having a greater level of operational success from broodstock than previous years. Preliminary estimates indicate the demand for broodstock in 2021 will again be within 9,000 individuals. It was noted that the 9,000 animal supply limit is sufficient to meet current demand by the aquaculture industry.

It was noted that continuing to apply the 9,000 animal supply limit is unlikely to compromise the sustainability of *P. monodon* in the NPF, however, it was questioned whether the bycatch, and in particular sawfish, generated any broader sustainability concerns. As the number of sawfish caught during broodstock fishing has significantly decreased from the high volume in 2018, the level of concern and associated risk to bycatch species has reduced. It was noted that AFMA and NPRAG continue to monitor the broader risks from broodstock fishing and will continue to provide updates if there is any change to the risk status.

Limiting the number of individuals that can be caught using a broodstock permit was discussed as the majority of *P. monodon* is caught as commercial byproduct in the NPF. The MAC noted that the 9,000 individual broodstock supply limit is part of the current management arrangements for the *P. monodon* stock and the results of the stock assessment demonstrate there is no immediate concern with catch volumes across the fishery. Considering this, and the fact that the 9,000 supply limit is sufficient to meet current aquaculture demand, the MAC supported maintaining the current supply limit for broodstock at 9,000 individuals.

NORMAC accepted the broad NPRAG advice from its February meeting and recommended to retain the status quo of the current management arrangements with enhanced monitoring arrangements for *P. monodon*, noting:

- the significant fluctuations in commercial byproduct catches (similar to the other penaeid species taken in the fishery) from several hundred kilos to around 8 tonnes;
- continuing to apply the 9,000 animal supply limit is unlikely to compromise the sustainability of *P. monodon* in the NPF; and
- the 9,000 animal supply limit is sufficient to meet current demand by the aquaculture industry.

### 3 Remake of NPF Directions

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NORMAC noted that the four NPF Directions are being remade and was asked to comment on the proposed changes. No comments were provided and NORMAC supported the proposed Directions as presented.

### 4 Other business

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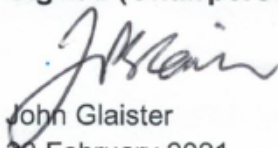
No other items of business were included in the agenda.

### 5 Next meeting

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The Chair advised the next meeting is scheduled for May 2021 and ended the meeting at 3.20 pm.

Signed (Chairperson):



John Glaister  
28 February 2021

## List of Attachments

- 1) NORMAC annotated agenda
- 2) NORMAC declared conflicts of interest

# Attachment 1 – NORMAC 84 agenda

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## NORMAC Tele/videoconference

22 February 2021

2:00 pm – 3:30 pm (AEDT)

Dial in number: 02 8318 0009

Conference ID: 160 550 607#

Title	Presenter	Outcome
<b>1. Preliminary Business</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.1 Chair's opening remarks</li><li>1.2 Adoption of agenda</li><li>1.3 Declaration of interests</li><li>1.4 Minutes from previous meeting</li></ul>	Chair	Noting
<b>2. Broodstock</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CSIRO presentation on final results of the <i>P. monodon</i> stock assessment project</li><li>• Review and provide recommendation on current catch limit</li></ul> <p><i>Outcomes: Provide a recommendation on the broodstock collection catch limit for the 2021 fishing season.</i></p>	CSIRO/AFMA	For recommendation
<b>3. Remake NPF Directions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review and provide comment/support on revised NPF Directions</li></ul>	AFMA	For comment
<b>4. Other business</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>		

## Attachment 2 – NORMAC Declared Conflicts of Interest

Participant	Membership	Interest declared
John Glaister	NORMAC Chair	NORMAC Chair, ex-AFMA Commissioner. Chair - Torres Strait Prawn Management Advisory Committee Chair - Torres Strait Rock Lobster Working Group Member - North Marine Parks Management Advisory Committee. No pecuniary interest in the fishery.
Jo McCrea	Environment/conservation member	Bio.inspecta, Development Manager Freelance sustainable seafood advisor/consultant NSW Ministerial Advisory Council, Conservation Member National Fishery Advisory Council, Conservation Member FRDC Leadership Group for development of Strategic R&D Plan AFMA Climate Change Adaptation Project, Steering Committee Member Recent prior, WWF AUS, Head of Sustainable Seafood Program 2012-Aug '20
David Carter	Industry member	NPF Statutory Fishing Right (SFR) holder, interested in the successful management of a profitable and sustainable fishery.
Arthur Raptis	Industry member	CEO – Raptis Premium Seafoods, processes aquaculture prawns from a Queensland prawn farm. NPF SFR holder, interested in the successful management of a profitable and sustainable fishery.
Ian Boot	Industry member	Managing Director of Austfish, a company which has SFR holdings in the fishery. Previous NPF broodstock permit holder. Participates in broodstock collection in the NPF.
Ian Knuckey	Research member	Director - Fishwell Consulting Pty Ltd Director - Olrac Australia – a company associated with electronic logbooks. Scientific member – NORMAC Member – North Marine Parks Advisory Committee Chair - Tropical Rock Lobster RAG



Participant	Membership	Interest declared
		<p>Chair - Victorian Rock Lobster RAG</p> <p>Scientific member - SESSF shark RAG</p> <p>Scientific member – GABRAG</p> <p>Works with Indigenous communities in capacity building activities</p> <p>Chair - South Australia's Gulf of St Vincent prawn fishery's research committee</p> <p>Scientific member - South Australia's Gulf of St Vincent prawn fishery's management advisory committee</p> <p>Current consultancy with NT Fisheries designing a snapper species survey</p> <p>Has a son working on a vessel in the NPF</p> <p>Various research interests in other Commonwealth and State fisheries.</p>
Steve Bolton	AFMA member	AFMA employee. No pecuniary interest
Steve Eves	Executive Officer	NORMAC EO and AFMA employee. No pecuniary interest
<b>Invited participants</b>		
Darren Roy	Invited participant – Qld Department of Agriculture and Fisheries	Queensland Government representative. No pecuniary interest
Annie Jarrett	Invited participant – NPFI	<p>CEO- NPFI</p> <p>Member of the MSC Stakeholder Council</p> <p>Chair - Australian Council of Prawn Fisheries (ACPF).</p> <p>Member – National Fisheries Advisory Council.</p> <p>Director – Commonwealth Fisheries Association (CFA).</p> <p>Some research items are of relevance to NPFI.</p>
<b>Observers</b>		
Trevor Hutton	Observer – CSIRO	CSIRO employee. Participates in projects related to the NPF that currently receives funding and will seek to receive funding in the future
Shijie Zhou	Observer – CSIRO	CSIRO employee. Participates in projects related to the NPF that currently receives funding and will seek to receive funding in the future
Phil Robson	Observer – Industry (Raptis)	Fleet Manager for company with SFR holdings in the fishery

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Membership</b>	<b>Interest declared</b>
Andy Prendergast	Observer – Industry (Austral)	Fleet Manager for company with SFR holdings in the fishery
Adrienne Laird	Observer – NPFI	Employed as a contractor by NPFI. Some research items are of relevance to NPFI.
Darci Wallis	Observer – AFMA	AFMA employee, NPF Manager. No pecuniary interest.