



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority



ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLAN

2011-2012



Contents

Foreword 3

Our planning and reporting framework 4

Intended actions in 2011-2012 5

Budgeting and reporting framework 7

Management Plans we intend to determine or otherwise institute during 2011-2012 9

Measuring success 9

Financial resources 11

Our people 11

Acronyms 13

Foreword

This Annual Operational Plan sets out the actions we intend to take in 2011-12 to give effect to the Australian Fisheries Management Authority's principal goals as outlined in AFMA's Corporate Plan 2011-2016, the fishery management plans we intend to determine or amend and the indicators we will use to measure our performance.

In 2011-2012 AFMA will continue a range of work in fisheries management and the agency's operations that will position the agency well for managing Australian fisheries into the future.



Mr Richard Stevens OAM
A/g Chairman



Dr James Findlay
Chief Executive Officer

Our planning and reporting framework

The AFMA **Corporate Plan 2011-2016** sets out the main goals and strategies AFMA has adopted for the next five years to contribute to our outcome – in pursuit of the objectives of AFMA's governing legislation.

This **Annual Operational Plan** sets out the:

- particulars of the actions AFMA intends to take in 2011-2012 to give effect to, or further, the goals set out in the corporate plan
- management plans AFMA intends to determine or otherwise implement
- performance indicators against which our performance can be assessed.

It complements and expands on AFMA's chapter in the 2011-12 Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry **Portfolio Budget Statements**, which sets out AFMA's program objectives, program deliverables and services and key performance indicators.

Together these three documents are the basis for reporting our performance each year in our annual report to Parliament and the community.

AFMA's internal performance planning and reporting structure is directed towards achievement of AFMA's stated goals through the planned actions and provision of deliverables and services in this Annual Operational Plan.

Intended actions in 2011-2012

Corporate Plan 2011-2016		
Goal	Strategy	Intended actions in 2011-2012
Complete the implementation of the Australian Government's policy preference for management by output controls in the form of Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ)	Introduce and refine Individual Transferable Quota into the Northern Prawn Fishery and other quota managed fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine the amended Northern Prawn Fishery Management Plan introducing ITQs Complete pending allocations in the SPF and ETBF Continue to implement supporting technology for ITQ management in Commonwealth fisheries
Improve the net economic returns of Commonwealth fisheries	Refine management arrangements that facilitate sustainable and profitable fisheries in-line with the Commonwealth Harvest Strategy Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of harvest strategies that have targets based on maximum economic yield or the best available proxy Implement cost-effective electronic monitoring and reporting for vessels
Deliver sustainable fisheries by managing fishing activities to ensure stocks are at sustainable harvest levels by preventing overfishing and recovering overfished stocks	Commission stock assessments and targeted research that are timely and fit for purpose to underpin well informed management decisions and actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct assessments on key target species and set total allowable catch or total allowable effort at levels that will prevent future overfishing in accordance with agreed harvest strategies. Implement stock rebuilding strategies for species assessed as being below agreed limit reference points. Provide support for development and management of regional and international fisheries
Prevent unacceptable impacts of Commonwealth fisheries on marine ecosystems and organisms	Assess risks and apply management measures under the AFMA Ecological Risk Management framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress implementation of ecological risk management responses Reassess ecological risk assessment and ecological risk management responses for fisheries as required by triggers Determine the appropriateness of introducing output controls for bycatch and TEP species Revise conditions to manage impacts on demersal high seas fisheries in light of benthic impact assessments

Corporate Plan 2011-2016		
Goal	Strategy	Intended actions in 2011-2012
Implement management arrangements and frameworks that optimise compliance with regulations	Make fisheries management arrangements more uniform, understandable and enforceable and minimise the necessary compliance burden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to reform fishery management rules to reduce complexity Engage in international meetings to ensure agreed outcomes can be implemented by Australia Ensure each Management Advisory Committee meets at least once Provide 24 AFMA Update newsletters to update stakeholders
Effectively deter illegal fishing in Commonwealth fisheries and the Australian Fishing Zone	Conduct and enable management programs that target identified risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake compliance activities in accordance with priority areas established through risk assessments Develop an effective compliance intelligence capacity Collaborate with like minded agencies on deterring illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) activity and developing fisheries management arrangements and capacity building Review and develop options to amend the <i>Fisheries Management Act</i> structure for the domestic compliance regime, including powers, incentives, offences, and administrative and criminal penalties.
Continuously improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of fisheries administration	Invest in business processes and technologies that match the core needs of AFMA and its stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to implement appropriate and cost effective fisheries management arrangements in Torres Strait fisheries on behalf of the Protected Zone Joint Authority, including development of management plans Develop a catch sharing policy to apportion shared resources between domestic jurisdictions Develop and implement a plan to increase the uptake of E-logs, GOFish and E-monitoring in all fisheries Improve the coordination of fisheries management arrangements and processes required under other legislation including environmental
Develop operational framework for co-management in Commonwealth Fisheries	Apply lessons from co-management trials to enable industry to enhance their role in the management of commercial fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a plan to communicate and apply the benefits of co-management principles to other Commonwealth fisheries

Budgeting and reporting framework

AFMA has responsibility for one outcome and one program. This reporting framework is consistent with program based reporting.

Outcome 1

Ecologically sustainable and economically efficient Commonwealth fisheries, through understanding and monitoring Australia's marine living resources and regulating and monitoring commercial fishing, including domestic licensing and deterrence of illegal, domestic and foreign fishing.

Program 1.1 Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Program objective

- To sustainably manage Commonwealth fisheries and deter illegal fishing in the Australian Fishing Zone.

In addition to the intended actions in 2011-2012 to further our planned goals set out in the table above, AFMA provides ongoing program deliverables and services as set out below.

Program Deliverables

AFMA aims to better understand and monitor Australia's marine living resources relevant to AFMA managed fisheries for the long term sustainability of target and non-target species through:

- Conducting ecological risk assessment of Commonwealth commercial fishing
- identifying management responses to fishing impacts for species assessed as being at high risk from fishing.

AFMA pursues ecological sustainability and maximising the net economic returns to the Australian community from fisheries management by:

- applying the Commonwealth Harvest Strategy Policy which defines targets for pursuing precautionary, economically efficient catch levels
- conducting risk based compliance enforcement to deter illegal fishing in AFMA managed fisheries.

AFMA aims to deter illegal fishing (domestic and foreign) in the Australian Fishing Zone and thereby minimise its impact on Australian fisheries resources by:

- providing the fisheries focus within the Australian Government Civil Maritime Surveillance and Response Program
- completing an annual compliance risk assessment and identifying risk treatment and/or intervention programs for domestic fisheries.

AFMA's projected deliverables for the coming period are detailed in the following table (Table 1).

Table 1. AFMA Deliverables

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
	Revised	Budget	Forward	Forward	Forward
Deliverables	budget		year 1	year 2	year 3
Completed research projects including Torres Strait Fisheries. ^{1.}	12	Minimum of 10	Minimum of 10	Minimum of 10	Minimum of 10
Completed fishery independent surveys.	8	10	9	10	10
Regulate fisheries including Torres Strait Fisheries under plans of management.	11	12	12	13	13
Apply harvest strategies. ^{2.}	13	11	11	11	11
Complete licensing transactions a) manual	1912	2376	1805	1500	866
b) automated	1239	1333	1600	1919	2764
Collect levies.	Greater than 99%	Greater than 99%	Greater than 99%	Greater than 99%	Greater than 99%
Prosecute illegal foreign fishers.	193	note ^{3.}	note ^{3.}	note ^{3.}	note ^{3.}
Dispose of illegal foreign fishing vessels.	36	note ^{3.}	note ^{3.}	note ^{3.}	note ^{3.}
Administered: Illegal foreign fishing vessel caretaking and disposal					
Number of disposal facilities constructed. ^{4.}	0	1	-	-	-
Forfeited vessels disposed of. ^{5.}	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Completion of annual domestic risk assessment	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

^{1.} Includes only research projects that AFMA administers contracts with the research provider. It does not include research projects administered by other agencies for which AFMA co-invests

^{2.} The reduction in 2010-11 reflects consolidation of four harvest strategies into one and one additional harvest strategy coming into effect

^{3.} Performance cannot be forecast reliably. Actual results will be included in the AFMA annual report

^{4.} Proposed construction rephased from 2010-11 to 2011-12

^{5.} Expressed as a proportion of forfeited vessels brought to AFMA commissioned caretaking and disposal facilities. The actual numbers depend on the number apprehended and brought to the disposal facilities through the Civil Maritime Surveillance and Response Program (Customs and Border Security Program 1.4), and cannot be forecast reliably.

Management Plans we intend to determine or otherwise institute during 2011-2012

This Annual Operational Plan provides for the amendment of the following fishery management plans:

Northern Prawn Fishery Management Plan 1995. The amended management plan will replace gear (share of total trawl net headrope length) Statutory Fishing Rights with quota (share of allowed catch) Statutory Fishing Rights and meet the Australian Government's policy objective to move to output controls where appropriate.

Measuring success

Our success in pursuing our objectives in 2011-2012 and over the life of our 2011-2016 Corporate Plan will be indicated by:

Maximising the net economic returns to the Australian community from the management of Australian fisheries

Ecological sustainability, including fishing impacts on the marine environment and biodiversity

The Commonwealth Harvest Strategy Policy and associated Guidelines provide a framework to maintain key commercial fishery stocks at ecologically sustainable levels and maximise net economic returns through fisheries management and applying a precautionary approach.

AFMA, the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences are reviewing and testing harvest strategies to assess their effectiveness at meeting the objectives of the Commonwealth Harvest Strategy Policy over 2009–2012. Progress will be reported in AFMA's annual reports.

AFMA Key Performance Indicators are detailed in following Table (Table 2).

Table 2. AFMA's Program Key Performance Indicators

Program Key Performance Indicators					
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Key Performance Indicators	Revised budget	Budget Target	Forward year 1	Forward year 2	Forward year 3
For economically significant stocks ¹ :					
a) Maximise the number of key commercial stocks with harvest strategy targets based on maximum economic yield or the best available proxy ²	18	18	21	22	24
b) Improve the number of stocks in (a) assessed as being on target	11	11	15	16	17
c) For those stocks in (a) that are assessed as not on target, improve the number that are heading towards their target reference point	7	7	6	6	6
Minimise the number of fish stocks subject to overfishing ³	1	0	0	0	0
Minimise the number of species assessed as remaining at high risk after mitigation ⁴	73	90	95	93	92
Maximise the disposal of apprehended foreign IUU vessels and SIEVs	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
% of treatment targets for priority domestic compliance risks met	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%

^{1.} The top 32 fish stocks contributing to the gross value of production of Commonwealth fisheries.

^{2.} Where higher and lower value species are caught together, different targets for the lower value species may maximise net economic returns over all.

^{3.} In AFMA managed fisheries, not including jointly and internationally managed fisheries

^{4.} Ecological Risk Assessments for 30 Commonwealth managed fisheries and sub-fisheries have been completed covering 1184 species. The number of species estimated at high risk has decreased from that reported in 2009/10 due to the completion of higher level assessments and the application of residual risk guidelines. All species identified as being at high risk are the subject of mitigation measures. Further assessments are scheduled during the reporting period which may identify additional high risk species – because of the use of more precautionary reference points for shark species. Later assessments should reflect the outcome of mitigation measures.

Financial resources

AFMA is funded by a combination of Government appropriations, industry levies and fee for service.

The majority of domestic fisheries management costs are recovered from the domestic fishing industry in accordance with AFMA's Cost Recovery Impact Statement (CRIS). AFMA has reviewed its budget for domestic fisheries management and set a target for levies in 2011-12 in line with the size of the industry and cost-effective management to meet AFMA's legislated responsibilities. Costs relating to foreign fishing compliance are fully funded by Government.

AFMA has used prior year surpluses to complete key business improvement projects such as Co-management trials and bycatch mitigation. This expenditure completes a three year program of investment in information technology and business improvement projects from its cash reserves. AFMA retains sufficient cash reserves in its Special Account to fully meet its employee and supplier liabilities.

AFMA's budget

AFMA has budgeted for total expenditure in 2011-12 of \$43m comprising \$36.8m in Departmental expenditure and \$5.7m on Administered activities (for the caretaking and disposal of illegal foreign fishing vessels). This represents a reduction of \$0.8m on the budget for 2010-11. The reduction is due to several factors including whole of government efficiencies and a finalisation of projects funded from reserves.

The 2011-12 Budget process has identified the following funding available to AFMA:

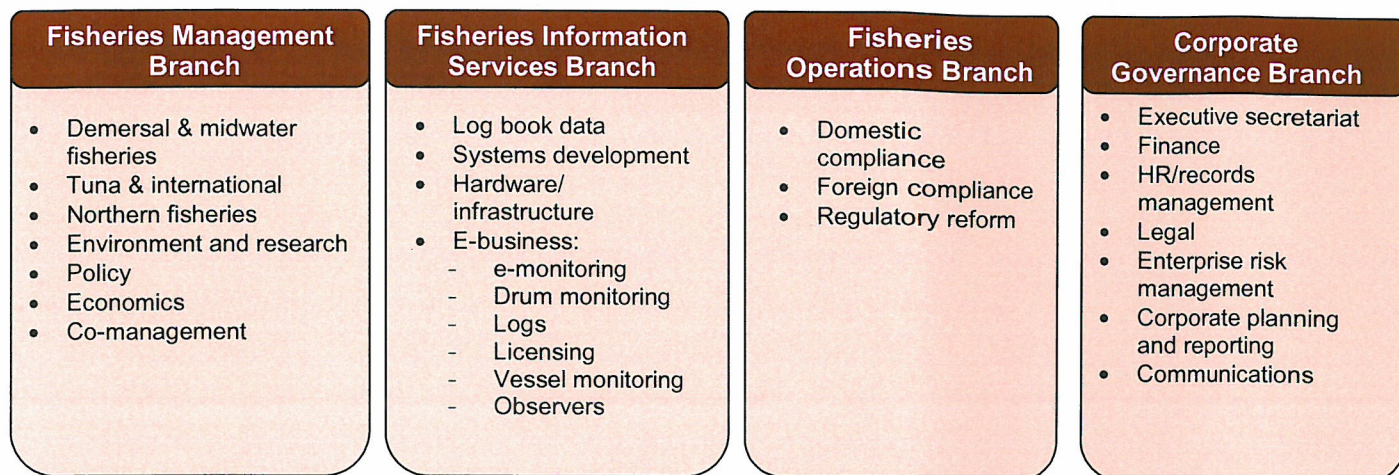
	2010–11 Revised budget \$'000	2011–12 Budget \$'000	2012–13 Forw ard year 1 \$'000	2013–14 Forw ard year 2 \$'000	2014–15 Forw ard year 3 \$'000
Annual administered expenses:					
Ordinary Annual Services (Appropriation Bill No. 1)	4,100	5,693	4,066	4,158	5,303
Special account expenses:					
AFMA Special Account	13,114	13,168	13,563	13,970	14,389
Annual departmental expenses:					
Ordinary Annual Services (Appropriation Bill No. 1) ¹	26,377	23,682	23,737	24,959	22,904
Expenses not requiring appropriation in the budget year ²	494	740	727	727	727
Total program expenses	44,085	43,283	42,093	43,814	43,323

- 1 Departmental Appropriation combines "Ordinary annual services (Appropriation Bill No. 1)" and "Revenue from independent sources (s31)" and "Departmental Capital Budget (Appropriation Bill 1)".
- 2 Expenses not requiring appropriation in the budget year is made up of depreciation expense and amortisation expense for both departmental and administered items.

Our people

During 2011-12, AFMA expects average staffing levels to be about 198 full time equivalents in total, with the majority located in the Authority's central office in Canberra (142 full time equivalents). There are two regional offices in Australia. On Thursday Island in the Torres Strait, 4 staff are employed on fisheries management and two on foreign compliance functions. AFMA's Darwin office has 39 full time equivalents undertaking compliance functions in the field throughout Australia. AFMA employs approximately 24 staff residing around Australia (15 full time equivalents) to observe at sea fishing operations.

In undertaking AFMA's day-to-day business affairs and overall fisheries management, the Chief Executive Officer is assisted by four senior executives, with the following responsibilities:



This organisation structure and staffing provides for the delivery of AFMA's intended actions deliverables and services, and the internal supporting services that contribute to them.

AFMA is currently negotiating a new Enterprise Bargaining Agreement.

AFMA strives to be a flexible, learning organisation. AFMA employs appropriately skilled and motivated staff committed to ongoing improvement in managing the Commonwealth's fisheries resources and to achieving AFMA's objectives and goals. AFMA recognises that the performance and commitment of its staff is central to its success as an innovative fisheries management organisation and seeks to provide an environment in which staff can reach their full potential.

AFMA's performance management scheme focuses on providing fair and accurate performance feedback to staff, and remuneration changes are tied to annual performance reviews.

AFMA underpins its service, partnerships and accountability to stakeholders by adhering to the principles of public sector governance:

- **Accountability**
- **Transparency/openness**
- **Integrity**
- **Stewardship**
- **Leadership**
- **Efficiency**

Acronyms

ABARES	Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences
AFMA	Australian Fisheries Management Authority
AFZ	Australian Fishing Zone
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
AOP	Annual Operational Plan
IMFP	Informally Managed Fishing Permits
ITQ	individual transferable quota
IUU	illegal, unreported and unregulated