



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority



ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLAN

2012-2013



Contents

Foreword 3

Our planning and reporting framework 4

Intended actions in 2012-2013..... 5

Budgeting and reporting framework..... 8

Management Plans we intend to determine or otherwise institute during 2012-2013..... 10

Measuring success 10

Financial resources..... 12

Our people 13

Acronyms..... 14

Foreword

This Annual Operational Plan sets out the actions we intend to take in 2012-13 to give effect to or further the Australian Fisheries Management Authority's main goals as outlined in AFMA's Corporate Plan 2012-2017.

These include:

- simplifying regulation
- fulfilling our obligations under the December 2005 Ministerial Direction
- managing ecological and compliance risks
- better engaging industry, other stakeholders and the community in the responsible management of fisheries resources
- the fishery management plans we intend to determine or amend
- the indicators we will use to measure our performance.

The plan communicates to staff and the Australian Government how the AFMA Commission and the agency intend to pursue our objectives in 2012-2013.

AFMA's focus in 2012-2013 continues to be the delivery of fisheries management to ensure sustainable and profitable fisheries that produce Australian seafood now and into the future.



The Hon Michael Egan FAICD
Chairman



Dr James Findlay
Chief Executive Officer

Our planning and reporting framework

The AFMA **Corporate Plan 2012-2017** sets out the main goals and strategies AFMA has adopted for the next five years in pursuit of the objectives of AFMA's governing legislation.

This **Annual Operational Plan** sets out:

- actions AFMA intends to take in 2012-2013 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 2012-13 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 goals through the delivery of actions and services in this Annual Operational Plan.

Intended actions in 2012-2013

Corporate Plan 2012-2017			Intended actions in 2012-2013
Goal	Strategy		
Complete the implementation of the Australian Government's policy preference for management by output controls in the form of Individual Transferable Quota ¹	Refine quota management for Commonwealth Fisheries Introduce Individual Transferable Quota management arrangements in the Northern Prawn Fishery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a revised quota administration policy for all quota managed fisheries • Determine the amended Northern Prawn Fishery Management Plan introducing ITQs 	
Deliver sustainable fisheries, including preventing overfishing and recovering overfished stocks and improving the net economic returns of Commonwealth fisheries	Manage all fisheries in-line with the Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission stock assessments and targeted research to underpin well informed management decisions • Implement harvest strategies which have targets based on maximum economic yield or the best available proxy • Set total allowable catch or total allowable effort at levels that will prevent overfishing • 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's Ecological Risk Management Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise development of ecological risk management framework • Reassess ecological risk assessments as required by triggers • Progress implementation of ecological risk management responses • Determine the appropriateness of introducing output controls for bycatch and Threatened, Endangered and Protected (TEP) species • Conduct education activities with fishing concession holders to raise awareness of reporting obligations and to encourage responsible fishing practices 	

¹ Unless there is a strong case that can be made that this would not be cost effective or would be otherwise detrimental.

Corporate Plan 2012-2017		
Goal	Strategy	Intended actions in 2012-2013
Implement management arrangements and framework that encourage voluntary compliance	Where feasible make fisheries management arrangements more uniform, understandable and enforceable	<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
Effectively deter illegal fishing in Commonwealth fisheries and the Australian Fishing Zone	Conduct and enable compliance programs that target identified risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake compliance activities in accordance with priority areas established through risk assessments • Develop a compliance intelligence capacity that is fully effective • 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

Corporate Plan 2012-2017		
Goal	Strategy	Intended actions in 2012-2013
Continuously improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of fisheries administration	Adopt 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 Work with key fishing industry associations to increase the uptake of E-logs, GOFish and E-monitoring Contribute to the implementation of the Australian Government's response to the review of the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
Facilitate co-management in Commonwealth fisheries and continually improve consultative processes	Apply lessons from co-management trials to enhance industry and other stakeholder's role in the management of commercial fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise outcome from the co-management trials to maintain and expand where possible, co-management arrangements with industry groups

² Fisheries co-management is an arrangement in which responsibilities and obligations for sustainable fisheries management are negotiated, shared and delegated between government, fishers and other stakeholders where appropriate.

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 2012-2013 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 improve the long term sustainable catch of target and non-target species through:

- ecological risk assessments 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 and economically efficient catch levels
- conducting risk based compliance programs to deter illegal fishing in AFMA managed fisheries.

AFMA aims to deter illegal foreign fishing 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.

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

Table 1. AFMA Deliverables

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
	Revised	Budget	Forward	Forward	Forward
Deliverables	Budget		year 1	year 2	year 3
Completed research projects including Torres Strait Fisheries. ¹	Minimum of 10	Minimum of 10	Minimum of 10	Minimum of 10	Minimum of 10
Complete fishery independent surveys.	10	10	10	10	10
Number of fisheries regulated under plans of management, including Torres Strait Fisheries.	12	12	12	13	13
Number of harvest strategies applied to regulated fisheries.	11	11	11	11	11
Complete licensing transactions					
a) manual	1,559	1,269	1,141	852	617
b) automated	3,168	3,946	4,562	4,579	4,814
Amount of levies collected.	Greater than 97.8% of levies collected	Greater than 99% of levies collected	Greater than 99% of levies collected	Greater than 99% of levies collected	Greater than 99% of levies collected
Prosecute illegal foreign fishers.	Note ²	Note ²	Note ²	Note ²	Note ²
Dispose of illegal foreign fishing vessels.	Note ²	Note ²	Note ²	Note ²	Note ²
Administered: Illegal foreign fishing vessel caretaking and disposal					
Number of disposal facilities constructed.	0	0	0	0	0
Forfeited vessels disposed of. ³	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Review annual domestic compliance 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 in which AFMA co-invests

² Performance cannot be forecast reliably. Actual results will be included in the AFMA annual report

³ 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 2012-2013

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 2012-2013 and over the life of our 2012-2017 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 Key Performance Indicators are detailed in following Table (Table 2).

Table 2. AFMA's Program Key Performance Indicators

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Key Performance	Budget	Budget	Forward	Forward	Forward
Indicators	Target	Target	year 1	year 2	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	21	22	22	23
b) Improve the number of stocks in (a) assessed as being on target	11	14	15	16	19
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	7	6	4
Minimise the number of fish stocks subject to overfishing ³	0	0	0	0	0
Minimise the number of species assessed as remaining at high risk after mitigation ⁴	90	90	95	93	92
Maximise the disposal of apprehended foreign IUU vessels and SIEVs	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
% of treatments implemented to meet priority domestic compliance risks identified through the domestic compliance risk assessment	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. All species identified as being at high risk are the subject of mitigation measures. Assessments scheduled during the reporting period will use more precautionary reference points and hence more species may be identified at high risk.

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 2012-13 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 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 2012-13 of \$42.5m comprising \$38.3m in Departmental expenditure and \$4.07m on Administered activities (for the caretaking and disposal of illegal foreign fishing vessels). This represents a reduction of \$1.4m on the budget for 2011-12. The reduction is due to several factors including whole of government efficiencies and a finalisation of projects funded from reserves.

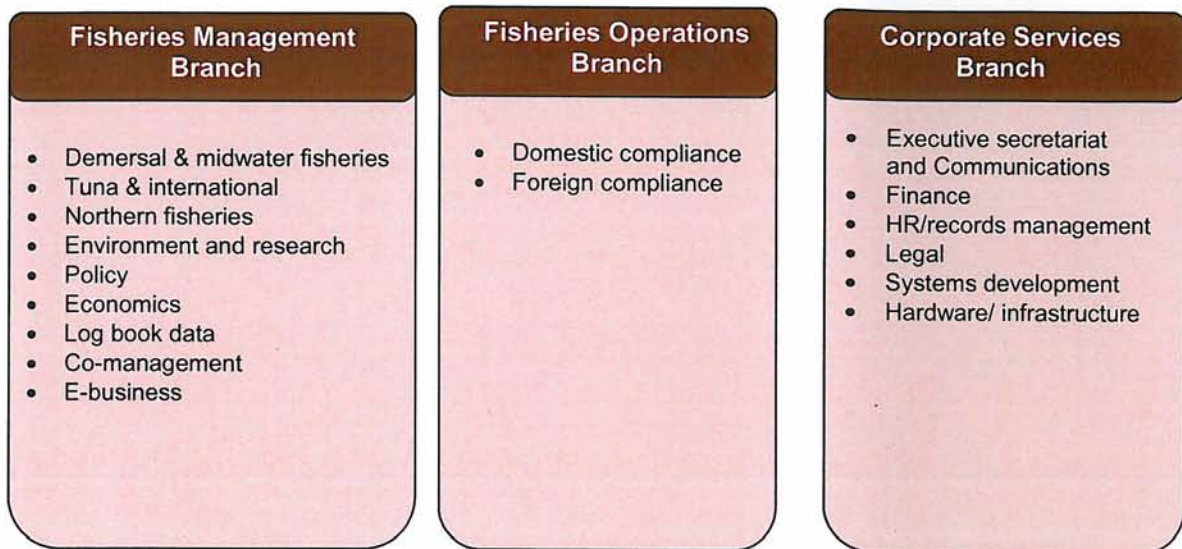
The 2012-13 Budget process has identified the following funding available to AFMA:

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
	Revised	Budget	Forward	Forward	Forward
	budget		year 1	year 2	year 3
('000)	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Annual administered expenses:					
Ordinary Annual Services					
(Appropriation Bill No. 1)	5,693	4,070	4,075	5,308	5,414
Special account expenses:					
AFMA Special Account	13,767	14,549	14,985	15,403	15,882
Annual departmental expenses:					
Ordinary Annual Services					
(Appropriation Bill No. 1)	23,654	23,123	24,337	22,312	22,735
Expenses not requiring appropriation in					
the budget year	794	727	727	727	727
Total program expenses	43,908	42,469	44,124	43,750	44,758

Our people

During 2012-13, AFMA expects average staffing levels to be about 189 full time equivalents in total, with the majority located in the Authority's central office in Canberra (136 full time equivalents). There are two regional offices in Australia. On Thursday Island in the Torres Strait, four staff are employed on fisheries management and two on foreign compliance functions. AFMA's Darwin office has 32 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 three 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 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