



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority



# **Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery Management Advisory Committee (ScallopMAC)**

**MINUTES  
SCALLOPMAC 22  
7 FEBRUARY 2014**

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# ScallopMAC MEETING 22

**Chair** Mr John Pollock  
**Date** 6 and 7 February 2014  
**Location** AFMA Canberra Office  
73 Northbourne Avenue, Canberra

## Attendance

### *Members*

John Pollock	Chair
Bill Talbot	Scientific Member
Allan Barnett	Industry Member
Stuart Richey	Industry Member
John Hammond	Industry Member
Steve Mantzaris	Industry Member (Processor)
Steve Shanks	AFMA Member
Kylie Tonon	A/g Executive Officer

### *Invited participants*

David Jarvis	Tasmanian Government (DPIPWE)
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### *Observers*

Darren Fearnley	Industry
Dr Semmens	Scientific Member (IMAS)

### *Apologies*

Jon Bryan	Environment/Conservation member
Mellissa Schubert	Victorian Government observer

# OUTCOMES

## Actions arising

1. AFMA to circulate copies of un-finalised minutes from previous meetings to members for adoption out of session.
2. Mr Shanks to provide the ScallopMAC and RAG a copy of AFMA's current scallop handling protocols for PST testing (subject to confidentiality requirements).
3. AFMA to include the issue of weighing at the wharf as opposed to the processor on the next ScallopMAC agenda and have a compliance officer attend the next MAC meeting to explain compliance responses.
4. Mr Shanks to draft and circulate a copy of the revised Harvest Strategy Proposal to ScallopRAG and ScallopMAC members for comment out of session before it goes to the Commission.

## Recommendations

1. Future ScallopMAC meetings include an industry update on the economics of the BSCZSF.
2. That the AFMA Commission consider and adopt the Harvest Strategy proposal at **Attachment 3** (subject to acceptance by the RAG and MAC out of Session).

## Introduction

The Chair, John Pollock, opened the ScallopMAC meeting at 1:00pm on 7 February 2014 and noted apologies from John Bryan and Melissa Schubert.

The MAC noted the absence of the Conservation member and highlighted concerns that the Conservation Member has not been present at numerous meetings. The MAC would like AFMA to clarify the process for appointing other members in their place if they are unable to attend a number of meetings consistently.

## Declaration of Interest

The Chair asked members if they would like to add any declarations to their conflicts of interest in relation to any of the agenda items at **Attachment 1**. He then asked the members to step out individually while the MAC discussed whether they were comfortable for these members to be present at the meeting for all agenda items. Based on conflicts of interest declared, no members were excluded from any agenda items.

## Adoption of Agenda

Mr Pollock suggested that he would like to add one item to the agenda at **Attachment 2** based on Mr Richey's email requesting a regular update on the economic status of the fishery. The MAC were happy to add this agenda item so the Chair decided it was best discussed at the beginning of the meeting.

## Economic Update

Mr Richey explained that in other MACs, the industry members provide an economic update to give an overview of the fishery so that the Commission can see how the fishery is tracking. ScallopMAC agreed to add this item to future meetings.

<p><b>RECOMMENDATION:</b> Future ScallopMAC meetings include an industry update on the economics of the BSCZSF.</p>
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## Minutes from previous meetings

The Chair suggested that any outstanding minutes from previous meetings needed to be finalised out of session.

**ACTION ITEM:** AFMA to circulate copies of un-finalised minutes from previous meetings to members for adoption out of session.

## Action items from previous meetings

ScallopMAC went through the action items from the previous face-to-face meeting in August 2012 and explained progress:

1. *Review the size limit as a proxy for two major spawning events and clarifying whether 80mm or 90mm shell length should be used.*

**Complete:** Mr Shanks explained that 85mm was agreed as the size limit proxy for two major spawning events.

2. *AFMA to circulate naming protocols for scallop beds based on ScallopRAG advice.*

**Complete:** Mr Shanks explained that he will make naming consistent with protocols

3. *Jayson Semmens to clarify that an area qualifies as a 'Viable Area' when scallops would be at least three years of age as confirmed by surveys.*

**Complete:** This information was provided last year.

4. *Circulate the consultant's report to ScallopMAC members.*

**Complete:** The report is now up on the AFMA website.

5. *Jayson Semmens to comment on:*

- a. *the potential to additional work on the impacts of different harvesting practices and techniques and incorporate into existing projects.*
- b. *the value of a feasibility (desk top study) of the usefulness of age data compared to size data.*
- c. *previous work on the ecological impacts of scallop dredging.*

**N/A:** ScallopRAG noted that this Action Item is now obsolete.

6. *AFMA obtain and circulate a list of scallop related research undertaken in conjunction with the FRDC and provide proposed funding splits for future research proposals.*

**Complete.**

7. *AFMA to outline the policy and legal implications holding a combined RAG/MAC meeting.*

**Current:** This is still yet to be investigated but if possible, the aim will be to do the RAG in morning and MAC in afternoon.

8. *Assess the implications of including food safety testing costs in the fishery budget under AFMA's legislative framework.*

**Complete:** Mr Shanks explained that there is no budget line for Paralytic Shellfish Toxin (PST) testing for the upcoming financial year but that testing costs were not high at approximately \$7,000-\$8,000 if needed.

Mr Shanks explained that AFMA is currently unsure of the timing for when to test and open the closed area that was affected by PST but proposed that when sampling for a new area this season, that part of the closed bed is sampled for PST prior to the commencement of the season. If these results show a PST level of <0.08 then he expects the area to be opened.

Mr Hammond requested that future PST sampling protocols require samples taken off boats to be shucked, bagged and frozen immediately as PST elevates if not looked after properly. The bags should be marked with the coordinates of the shot.

**ACTION ITEM:** Mr Shanks to provide the ScallopMAC and RAG a copy of AFMA's current scallop handling protocols for PST testing (subject to confidentiality requirements).

In relation to a comment about the requirement for observers on the boats, Mr Shanks explained that observers were put on two boats in order to illustrate the integrity of the PST testing processes. He acknowledged that this came at an extra cost to the fishery and explained that this season, AFMA is likely to place an observer on the boat that will be testing for 500t closure area and the rest of the sampling can be done at the wharf.

## Correspondence

ScallopMAC noted that there was no further relevant correspondence to discuss at this meeting.

## Harvest Strategy Proposal

The Chair explained that the majority of the Harvest Strategy had already been discussed with the MAC members present as observers at the RAG meeting. The MAC confirmed that they were happy with the RAG Harvest Strategy proposal including the 85mm minimum size limit at **Attachment 3**

The Chair explained that AFMA needed to ensure that, when describing the RAG proposal, the advice that goes to the Commission is framed in terms of how the proposal meets AFMA's objectives. He suggested this should be done as a summary statement that is cleared by the RAG and MAC with firm justifications as to each segment of the Harvest Strategy.

Mr Mantzaris explained that the RAG and MAC need to further define an 85mm scallop, mature scallop, juvenile scallop, third year scallop and commercially viable bed as this is currently unclear in the current proposal. Dr Semmens explained that the 85mm is a proxy for a third year age class scallop and that IMAS is currently researching how much spawn scallops contribute at varying sizes.

**ACTION ITEM:** Mr Shanks to draft and circulate a copy of the revised Harvest Strategy Proposal to ScallopRAG and ScallopMAC members for comment out of session before it goes to the Commission.

## Other Items

Mr Mantzaris and Mr Barnett highlighted that under current AFMA arrangements, there is no need to weigh scallops until they arrive at the factory. Industry explained that they preferred the Tasmanian system where the verified weight is taken at the wharf. In the Tasmanian system there is less opportunity for black market activity, operators have a better idea of their quota holdings, and less chance for drainage (14-15% of shell weight drainage).

**ACTION ITEM:** AFMA to include the issue of weighing at the wharf as opposed to the processor on the next ScallopMAC agenda and have a compliance officer attend the next MAC meeting to explain compliance responses.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the AFMA Commission consider and adopt the Harvest Strategy proposal at **Attachment 3** (subject to acceptance by the RAG and MAC out of Session).

## Meeting Closure

The MAC Chair closed the ScallopMAC meeting at 2:30pm on 7 February 2014.

## Attachment 1 – ScallopMAC 22 Conflict of Interest declarations

Member	Position	Declaration of interest
Mr John Pollock	Chair	No pecuniary interest in the fishery.
Mr Bill Talbot	Research Member	ScallopRAG Chair. No pecuniary interest in the fishery.
Mr Darren Fearnley	Industry Member (Victoria)	Holds Commonwealth and State concessions.
Mr Steve Mantzaris	Industry Member (Victoria)	Operates a scallop processing plant.
Mr Allan Barnett	Industry Member (Tasmania)	Holds Commonwealth and State concessions, a Commonwealth fish receiver permit and operates a scallop processing plant.
Mr Stuart Richey	Industry Member (Tasmania)	Holds Commonwealth and State concessions. FRDC Board Member.
Mr John Hammond	Industry Member (Tasmania)	Holds Commonwealth and State concessions.
Mr Jon Bryan	Conservation Member	Tasmanian Conservation Trust and Tasmanian Fishery Advisory Committee. No pecuniary interests in this fishery.
Mr David Jarvis	Permanent Observer (Tasmanian Government)	Senior Fisheries Management Officer (Crustaceans and Scallop Fisheries) in Tasmania. No pecuniary interests in the fishery.
Ms Melissa Schubert	Permanent Observer (Victorian Government)	Manager of the scallop fishery in Victoria. No pecuniary interests in the fishery.
Mr Steve Shanks	AFMA Member	AFMA Manager for the BSCZSF. No pecuniary interest in the fishery.
Ms Kylie Tonon	A/g Executive Officer	Management officer. No pecuniary interest in the fishery.
Dr Jayson Semmens	ScallopRAG Research Member (MAC Observer)	Scallop Research Group Leader, Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies. Organisation is known to submit research funding applications for consideration by ScallopMAC. Currently submitted an EOI for research in the BSCZSF

## Attachment 2 – Agenda

Time	Item
10.00am	<b>1. Preliminaries</b> 1.1. Welcome and apologies 1.2. Declaration of interests 1.3. Adoption of agenda
10.30am	<b>2. Meeting Administration</b> 2.1. Confirmation of record for previous meeting 2.2. Actions arising from previous meetings 2.3. Correspondence
11.00am	<b>3. Report from the ScallopRAG meeting including revised proposed Harvest Strategy</b> <i>Chair of ScallopRAG to present the outcomes of the ScallopRAG meeting. AFMA to present proposal, including consultation undertaken and reasoning for positions included.</i>
11.30am	<b>Morning tea</b>
11:45am	<b>4. ScallopMAC consideration of the outcomes of ScallopRAG</b> 4.1. 85 mm size limit 4.2. Data collection processes and ability to base management decisions on data collected. 4.3. Application of scallop density information to harvest strategy
1.00pm	<b>Lunch</b>
1.30pm	<b>5. Development of a revised harvest strategy</b> <i>ScallopMAC to provide direction on the information to be incorporated in and the adoption of a revised harvest strategy.</i>
3:30pm	<b>Afternoon tea</b>
3:45pm	<b>6. Revised harvest strategy information to AFMA Commission for consideration</b> <i>Adoption of a revised harvest strategy for 2014 season.</i>
4.30	<b>Close</b>

# ATTACHMENT 3 – ScallopRAG Harvest Strategy Proposal

## Revised Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery harvest strategy proposal for the 2014 season

### Exploratory fishing period

1. Prior to considering opening the fishery for the 2014 season exploratory fishing will be undertaken to gather data to assess the status of the stock in the fishery.
2. Data will be obtained by issuing research permits, to all those who apply, from 1 April 2014 until the opening date of the 2014 season.
3. Fishers may be required to collect length frequency data using electronic measuring boards (when available) in accordance with the research data requirements developed by IMAS to provide ongoing data to assess and manage the fishery.
4. Fishing under the research permits issued will be restricted to competitive Total Allowable Catches (TACs) by area. Attachment A shows the locations and competitive TAC settings for the 5 zones.
5. Once potential commercially viable bed or beds are located an IMAS research officer may be placed aboard a commercial vessel to transect the area. Data from transecting will be used by IMAS to determine the biomass estimate of the bed/s.
6. IMAS will produce a report incorporating a biomass estimate and length frequency distribution of any scallop beds identified as being commercially viable.

### Open the fishery for the 2014 season

7. Should the IMAS report illustrate that a scallop bed/s (not more than 2 scallop beds) containing at least 500 tonnes in total of scallops of a size limit of 85mm of high density<sup>1</sup> be located the fishery will be opened to fishing for the season.

### Tier 2 - Harvesting starting point

8. Should the criteria as detailed in paragraph 6 be met the fishery will be opened under the following arrangements:
  - An area/s (not more than 2 scallop beds) containing not less than 500 tonnes biomass of scallops of a size limit of 85mm of high density will be closed to fishing for the entire season.
  - The area of the fishery not closed to fishing will be opened for the entire season with a TAC of 1000 tonnes.
  - Should 800 tonnes of the 1000 tonne TAC set be caught during the season the TAC will be increased to 1500 tonnes if required.
  - Should 1300 tonnes of the 1500 tonne TAC set be caught during the season the TAC will be increased to 2000 tonnes if required.

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<sup>1</sup> Criteria for high density to be determined by IMAS as part of current research prior to the commencement of the 2015 season.

- Scallop beds fished that do not meet the discard rate of less than 20 per cent of scallops less than 85mm in size will be closed to fishing under voluntary arrangements applied by industry.
- Fishers are encouraged to collect length frequency data using electronic measuring boards (when available) in accordance with the research data requirements developed by IMAS to provide ongoing data to assess and manage the fishery.

Tier 1 – TAC above 2000 tonnes

9. Should the IMAS report illustrate that a scallop bed/s (not more than 2 scallop beds) containing at least 1000 tonnes of scallops of a size limit of 85mm of high density be located the fishery will be opened under the following arrangements:
  - An area/s (not more than 2 scallop beds) containing not less than 1000 tonnes biomass of scallops of a size limit of 85mm of high density will be closed to fishing for the entire season.
  - An area/s of the fishery will be opened to fishing with a TAC of at least 2000 tonnes.
  - Scallop beds fished that do not meet the discard rate of less than 20 per cent of scallops less than 85mm in size will be closed to fishing under voluntary arrangements applied by industry.
  - Fishers are encouraged to collect length frequency data using electronic measuring boards (when available) in accordance with the research data requirements developed by IMAS to provide ongoing data to assess and manage the fishery.
10. The arrangements as detailed in paragraphs 1 to 8 will be applied for the 2014 season in the initial instance. Following the completion of the 2014 season a review of the arrangements in paragraphs 1 to 8 will be undertaken and consideration will be given to applying these arrangements on a permanent basis.

# ATTACHMENT A – Draft BSCZSF research permit zones and TACs

