



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

South East Management Advisory Committee (SEMAC) Meeting 34

Meeting minutes

Date: 11 to 12 July 2018

Location: Canberra

Day 1: 8:30am to 6:00pm (AEST)

Day 2: 8:00am to 3:30pm (AEST)

Attendees

Name	Membership
Chair	
Diane Tarte	Chair
Members	
Simon Boag	Industry member
George Day	AFMA member
Shane Dugins	Industry member
Gerry Geen	Industry member
Anissa Lawrence	Environment conservation member
Sandy Morison	Scientific member
Les Scott	Industry member
Invited participants	
Debbie Wisby	Industry invited participant
Frances Seaborn	State invited participant
Neil MacDonald	GABIA invited participant
Sarah Jennings	Economics invited participant
Max Castle	Vice President – Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW (day two only)
Executive Officer	
Cadie Artuso	Executive Officer
Observers	
Cassandra Pert	AFMA (day two only)
Ian Cartwright	AFMA Commissioner (day one only)
Luke Robertson	AFMA (day two only)
Veronica Silberschneider	NSW Department of Primary Industries
Presenters	
Brodie Macdonald	AFMA Gillnet, Hook and Trap Manager
Daniel Corrie	AFMA Trawl Manager (agenda items 2.1, 3.5, 3.6 and 4.1 only)
David Mosby	ABARES (agenda item 4.6 only)
Robert Curtotti	ABARES (agenda item 4.6 only)
Robert Gehrig	AFMA (agenda item 4.5 only)
Sally McCarthy	AFMA (agenda item 4.7 only)
Sally Weekes	AFMA Small Pelagic, Squid and Scallops Manager
Phil Ravanello	AFMA Bycatch Manager (agenda item 2.4 and 4.4 only).
Beth Gibson	AFMA PEER Senior Manager (agenda item 2.3 only).
Nigel Abery	AFMA PEER Manager (agenda items 4.7 and 4.9 only)

Day one: Wednesday 11 July 2018

Agenda Item 1.1 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair opened the meeting at 8:30 am, welcomed participants and acknowledged traditional owners past and present. No apologies were recorded. Members were advised the meeting was being recorded to assist with the preparation of the minutes. No objections were raised.

Agenda Item 1.2 Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted noting some changes to the order of agenda items. The final agenda is at [Attachment A](#).

Agenda Item 1.3 Declaration of interests

The Management Advisory Committee (MAC) reviewed the table of members', invited participants' and observers' standing declarations as outlined in the revised *Fisheries Management Paper 1* (FMP 1). The Chair asked participants to declare any specific conflicts of interest with items on the agenda or to declare conflicts of interest that were not recorded in the provided table. The Chair requested that each member who had declared a conflict of interest leave the meeting while the MAC discussed whether the conflict should preclude them from participating in the agenda item. The following conflicts were declared:

- Mr Geen confirmed a conflict of interest with agenda items 3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5 and 4.3. The MAC noted that Geen holds quota in the Small Pelagic Fishery (SPF). The MAC discussed the conflict, Noting Mr Geen's knowledge and valuable contribution, the MAC agreed that Mr Geen should participate in the discussion and recommendations for all agenda items, except for agenda item 4.3 where Mr Geen should participate in the discussion only.
- Mr Morison noted a research project currently underway for the Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery (SESSF) but was not aware of any specific conflicts of interest with agenda items.
- Mr Dugins confirmed a conflict of interest with agenda items 3.2, 3.6, 4.1, and 4.2. The MAC noted that Mr Dugins holds quota for species in the Gillnet, Hook and Trap Fishery (GHAT). The MAC discussed the conflict, recognising Mr Dugins' knowledge and valuable contribution, the MAC agreed that Mr Dugin's should participate in the discussion and recommendations for all agenda items, except for agenda items 3.6 and 4.2, where Mr Dugins should participate in the discussion only.
- Mr Boag noted some changes to the declarations of interest since it was last circulated. Mr Boag confirmed a conflict of interest with agenda items 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 3.6, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.8. The MAC noted that Mr Boag is a representative of the South East Trawl Fishing Industry Association (SETFIA), the Small Pelagic Fishing Industry Association (SPFIA) and the Southern Shark Industry Alliance (SSIA) and does not have a direct financial interest. The MAC agreed that Mr Boag should participate in the discussion and recommendations for all items except for agenda item 3.6 and 4.3.
- Ms Wisby confirmed a conflict of interest with agenda items 3.1, 3.2, 3.5, 3.6, 4.1, 4.2, and 4.4. The MAC discussed the conflict, recognising Ms Wisby's knowledge and valuable contribution, the MAC agreed Ms Wisby should participate in the discussion and recommendations.
- Mr Scott confirmed a conflict of interest with agenda items 3.1, 3.5, 3.6, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4 and 4.5. The MAC noted that Mr Scott represents a company which holds quota in the SESSF. The MAC discussed the conflict, recognising Mr Scott's knowledge and valuable contribution, the MAC agreed Mr Scott should participate in the discussion and recommendations for all items except for agenda item 3.6 where Mr Scott should participate in the discussion only.
- Neil MacDonald confirmed his interests as the Great Australian Bight Industry Association (GABIA) representative with agenda items 3.1, 3.5 and 4.1. The MAC discussed the conflict, recognising Mr MacDonald's knowledge and valuable contribution, the MAC agreed Mr MacDonald should participate in the discussion and recommendations.

An updated table of declared conflicts of interest is at [Attachment B](#).

Agenda item 1.4 Action items arising from previous meetings

A consolidated list of outstanding action items from previous SEMAC meetings was circulated to the MAC ([Attachment C](#)). The MAC discussed the items noting:

- The action item '*working closely with industry to provide a more detailed cost benefit analysis*' in regard to electronic monitoring in the GHAT was addressed in a separate meeting with industry on 17 May 2018. The MAC requested that the outcomes of this meeting be circulated to the MAC.
- A letter on behalf of the MAC regarding recreational and Indigenous fishing interests was submitted to the AFMA Executive in May 2018 and will be considered by the AFMA Commission.

Action item 34.1 – AFMA to investigate whether the comments from other MACs and Resource Assessment Groups (RAGs) regarding recreational and indigenous fishing interests, can be circulated to the MAC.

- The action item for the '*Marine Mammal Working Group (MMWG) to look at potential environmental factors or diseases that may be affecting dolphin populations*' was considered by the MMWG in May 2018, in the context of reviewing the dolphin mitigation strategies for the Gillnet and SPF. The environment and conservation member suggested a more formalised approach as to how advice and actions for the MACs are communicated to the MMWG.

Action item 34.2 – AFMA to circulate the meeting minutes from the MMWGs May 2018 meeting when finalised.

Action item 34.3 – AFMA to investigate whether there is a more effective way to communicate actions and updates from the MAC to the MMWG and for the MMWG to respond to requests for information.

- The action item for '*ORLAC to amend the system to comply with the terms of reference*' relates to the ability of fishers to enter a 'live discard' code in both the CatchLog and ORLAC logbook systems. The MAC noted this issue has been going on for many years and still had not been addressed. AFMA understand that the ORLAC schema has been updated however the change will not take effect until the system is updated. The MAC recommended closing the action item and for AFMA to work further with industry to resolve the issue.

Agenda item 2.1 Manager update

The AFMA member tabled the paper: 'Manager update'. The MAC discussed the paper noting:

- AFMA's Lakes Entrance Office will officially open in August 2018.
- The public comment period for AFMA's policy on transshipping in Commonwealth fisheries had been extended until 20 July 2018. The AFMA Commission is expected to make a decision on the policy in September 2018.
- At its May 2018 meeting, the AFMA Commission considered the review of the SPF Scientific Panel and Stakeholder Forum. The Commission concluded that the fishery would transition back to a RAG structure, but retain the SPF Stakeholder Forums. Noting that there is a

broader review of the Fisheries Administration Paper (FAP) 12 currently underway, the Commission recommended that the SPF Scientific Panel and Stakeholder Forum model should be continued for a further 12 month period to June 2019, until the review of the FAP can be completed.

- AFMA is in the final stages of establishing co-management arrangements between the Southern Shark Industry Alliance (SSIA) and AFMA to facilitate crew based data collection in the GHAT. The MAC noted that there is no budget for observers in the GHAT sector for 2018-19 and was concerned that the co-management arrangements were not yet in place.

Action item 34.4 – AFMA and Mr Boag to circulate a summary of the project scope of the co-management arrangements between the SSIA and AFMA, subject to confidentiality arrangements.

Action item 34.5 – AFMA to seek advice from SESSFRAG to determine the feasibility of running a gummy shark assessment in 2019, noting there will be reduced biological data.

- A workshop for the SESSF Declining Indicators project was held on 11 to 12 April 2018. The final report is expected to be released by the end of 2018. An outcome of this work is undertaking a review of the SESSF Harvest Strategy.
 - The Declining Indicators workshop heard that the main economic drivers for the fishery were mostly fully caught and it was the TACs for non-primary species that were undercaught.
 - The Scientific member noted that several species that used to be key economic species, such as redfish, had not recovered for reasons not completely understood, and were now non-primary species.
 - The next steps following the project include integrating climate, fishing power, market and economic information into assessment approaches.
- The MAC noted that FRDC was supporting a project on the management of marine mammal interactions and was also establishing a marine mammal working group.

Action item 34.6 – AFMA to advise the MAC about the different roles of AFMA's Commonwealth Marine Mammal Working Group and FRDC's newly established marine mammal group and advise on areas for potential alignment of roles to improve efficiency.

- There is a 35 t orange roughy trigger in place to close Pedra Branca Orange Roughy Management Area (ORMA). That trigger had been exceeded by 3 tonnes in the 2017-18 season. While no additional action was recommended at this stage, the MAC noted that AFMA is automating trigger reports to provide within-season monitoring in the future.

2.1(a) SMARP implementation

The Chair introduced the agenda item and the MAC noted that:

- The final report for the SESSF Strategic Monitoring and Assessment Review Project (SMARP) was finalised in late 2017. There were 21 recommendations across five monitoring and assessment processes.

- The purpose of SMARP was to conduct a review of the monitoring and assessment required to meet the objectives of the revised Commonwealth Harvest Strategy Policy and Fisheries Bycatch Policy.
- To achieve this, the objectives of the project were to:
 - Identify opportunities for improvements to monitoring and assessment arrangements in the SESSF including regional and international developments.
 - Review the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of existing monitoring and assessment tools in the SESSF including the design and performance of the fishery independent surveys.
 - Conduct a qualitative assessment of a suite of rationalised monitoring and assessment options against reference points implied under the revised fisheries policies for target, byproduct, bycatch and protected species.
- SMARP is one of three major projects currently underway in the SESSF, along with the review of the Fishery Independent Survey (FIS) and the SESSF Declining Indicators Project. The outcomes of these projects will flow into two workshops expected to be held in October 2018 (SMARP implementation and Declining Indicators) and March 2019 (SESSF data needs).
- The final outcome is expected to be a revised SESSF Harvest Strategy, which will consider recommendations from each of the projects in line with requirements under the revised Commonwealth Harvest Strategy Policy and Bycatch Policy. The MAC noted a summary of the Multi-Species Maximum Economic Yield (MEY) project recently finalised by Sean Pascoe *et al*, and noted that setting an MEY target in a multi-species fishery is very complicated. The alternative is to set MEY targets for key commercial species.
- The MAC queried as to how byproduct species would be managed, and whether they would be managed above a limit reference point. AFMA noted that one option was to manage the key species in the SESSF under MEY targets and monitor byproduct species to ensure they do not fall below B_{20} . The industry member noted that the information available on byproduct species is not robust enough to determine this, however Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) testing and further research may be able to clarify this.

That MAC discussed the key recommendations from SMARP and the following was raised in the discussion:

- There were 21 recommendations across four key areas, including:
 1. Data collection and monitoring – includes integrated data collection plans (electronic monitoring, electronic logbooks etc.)
 2. Data documentation, handling and reporting – includes database improvements, automated storage distribution and reporting.
 3. Assessments and Harvest Strategy – includes protected species management plans, habitat assessments.
 4. Data Analysis and Reporting – includes automated analysis and reporting of fishery indicators.

- One key recommendation was to look at species in the SESSF and determine the most appropriate assessment tier. Data availability and assessment frequency is a key consideration.
- The implementation plan for the SMARP recommendations will be considered by SESSF/FRAG at the August 2018 data meeting.
- A workshop was recently held for the declining indicators project. The workshop identified a number of factors impacting on undercaught Total Allowable Catches (TACs), declining catch rates and lack of stock recovery. The outcomes of the declining indicators project and the implementation plan for SMARP will be presented to another workshop expected to be held in October 2018.
- An industry member noted that the language around 'setting TACs too high' was potentially misleading and should not be interpreted as having to reduce TACs simply because they are not caught. If the SESSF Harvest Strategy is going to be amended to consider broader economic factors, then the economic expertise on the RAGs will need to be examined.
- The environment conservation member noted that an FAO report regarding the expected negative effects of climate change on fisheries had recently been published. The report was circulated to the MAC for noting.
- AFMA's Economic Working Group (EWG) met in April 2018. It considered approaches to MEY, economic indicators and the collection of appropriate data to inform progress towards AFMA's economic objectives.
- The MAC queried how AFMA define and interpret their objective to 'maximise net economic returns to the Australia community'. The AFMA Member noted that the objective is pursued at a fishery level with guidance from the *Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy*, the revised version of which was expected to be published shortly.
- The scientific member sought further information regarding the project reviewing the Fishery Independent Survey (FIS). AFMA noted that the project was an FRDC funded project seeking to optimise the effectiveness of the SESSF FIS. The objective of this project is to re-examine some of the underlying assumptions of the survey and find efficiencies in the sampling design. AFMA delayed the review of the FIS program until this project is completed.
- The scientific member raised concerns regarding the process of the review of the FIS programme and that the 2018 FIS had been cancelled without seeking advice from the relevant RAGs.

MAC Advice: The MAC endorsed AFMA pursuing implementation of the recommendations from the SMARP project, however noted that there are some considerable implications in moving to a new approach, a set of issues around language and how this is communicated, and noted the FAO climate change report which had been circulated to the MAC by the environment conservation member.

Agenda Item 2.2 Industry update

The Chair noted the paper: 'Industry update' and the presentations from industry members. The Chair invited questions and comments from members and the following arose from the discussion:

- Industry are trialling different gear and fishing techniques to examine whether this reduces the rate of dolphin interactions. This includes the use of dolphin acoustic devices. However, an industry member noted that the frequency and power required to operate these devices meant that battery life does not meet operational requirements.
- The SSIA have been contacted by researchers at Deakin University regarding an analysis on the frequency of dolphin interactions with spatial-temporal data (including seasons, location and time).
- The cost of electronic monitoring is still high, however advice has been received that this cost may reduce if Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) and electronic monitoring systems can be combined.
- The report on '*Improving the location and targeting of economically viable aggregations of squid available to the squid jigging method*' (Desktop study) will be finalised shortly.
- Several seismic surveys have been proposed in south east Australia. Industry have concerns over the placement of these surveys, particularly in light of research showing the negative effect on scallops, crayfish and plankton.
- The SPFIA are intending to submit comments on AFMA's draft policy on transshipment in Commonwealth fisheries.
- SETFIA have proposed a three year orange roughy TAC option to the AFMA Commission. The industry member noted that the proposal is highly precautionary however advantageous in that it may lead to third party certification, increased business certainty and catching agreements that would see other TACs utilised.
- Auto-longline vessels are currently operating in the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO) area.

Agenda item 2.2 (a) School Shark catches

An industry member noted a key issue in the Gillnet sector is the increase in catches of school shark, which must be released alive when possible. The industry member noted that:

- School shark is a 'conservation dependant' listed species.
- There is anecdotal evidence of targeting by some sectors.
- In his view, the current catches demonstrate that the 20 per cent ratio rule is not working to reduce the targeting of school shark, as catches are not consistent with gummy shark quota holdings.
- The issue could be somewhat addressed through the installation of electronic monitoring cameras on all vessels in the SESSF.
- There is a need for an immediate solution to prevent the targeting of school shark, as it is a major constraint for fishing in the Gillnet Sector.

The MAC discussed the matter noting:

- AFMA presented Catch Disposal Record (CDR) data to the MAC on school shark catches, by vessel, from the 2013 fishing year to 2017. AFMA noted the data was difficult to interpret as it presented catches for school shark only, and is not proportionate to the catches of gummy shark.
- AFMA noted that ABARES has offered to investigate incidences of school shark targeting.

Action item 34.7 – AFMA to work with ABARES to examine the catches of school shark, proportionate to the catches of gummy shark.

- AFMA noted that no vessels are breaching the 20 per cent ratio rule and that AFMA would be reviewing all school shark management arrangements once the school shark assessment is available in late 2018.
- The industry member noted their discontent of AFMA's suggested timeframe to address the issue, given the problems it's causing for fishers in the Gillnet sector. Also noting that the original intention of the 20 per cent ratio rule was for this to be reviewed if catches were trending upwards.

MAC Advice: There are a number of issues that will need to be addressed in regard to the management of school shark, AFMA should examine these issues closely when the outcomes of the school shark stock assessment are released in late 2018. Noting the industry member's discontent with the suggested timeframe to resolve the issue.

Agenda item 2.3 Policy, Environment, Economic and Research Team Update

The Chair tabled the paper: 'Policy, Environment, Economic and Research team update'. The MAC discussed the paper and the following arose from the discussion:

- The SESSF is covered by Wildlife Trade Operation (WTO) accreditation, which allows for the export of product from the fishery until 21 February 2019. The SPF is covered by WTO accreditation until October 2018. AFMA is working closely with the Department of Environment and Energy on the re-accreditation of both the SPF and SESSF.
- The Marine Park Network Management Plans for the North-west, South-west, Coral Sea, North and Temperate East came into effect on 1 July 2018. The industry member noted concerns that many aspects of the project have been poorly managed, particularly around communication with industry regarding the zoning rules.
- The Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy and Commonwealth Fisheries Bycatch Policy are near completion and should be publicly available shortly.
- AFMA is often asked to provide comments on proposed activities which may interact with fishing or have potential effects upon the fishing industry. This includes petroleum/ mineral exploration, seismic surveys, burial at sea, sea dumping, marine farming development and boat scuttling. The industry member noted that AFMA's role in this is generally limited, however it is a time consuming task for industry associations. Given recent research that demonstrates that seismic surveys can significantly affect fish stocks it is the view of industry

that AFMA should take more responsibility of the issue, one suggestion being through stronger communication between AFMA and industry associations.

- AFMA is currently seeking comments from all MACs and RAGs on the draft position statement on the social aspects of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD). The MAC queried as to how this relates to AFMA's objective to maximise net economic returns to the Australian community, and how these returns are being measured. Noting the matter will be discussed further under agenda item 4.6.
- AFMA is in the process of implementing legislative changes to ensure that AFMA takes into account the interests of commercial, recreational and Indigenous fishers when making fisheries management decisions. Part of this process includes recreational and Indigenous representation on MACs and RAGs. The MAC noted that it has been quite unsatisfactory not having a consistent recreational member on the MAC which reduces the continuity of advice being received.
- AFMA is leading an FRDC funded project looking at the *Adaptation of Commonwealth Fisheries management to climate change* (FRDC Project 2016-059). The project will take in the findings of the CSIRO project *Decadal scale projection of changes in Australian fisheries stocks under climate change* to assess how well Commonwealth fisheries management will cope with the projected impacts of climate change.

Agenda item 2.4 Bycatch Team Update

The Chair tabled the paper: 'Bycatch team update'. The MAC discussed the paper and noted:

- 2018-19 priority projects for the South East Trawl sector include:
 - trialling seal excluder devices in otter trawl - noting that this project could benefit from looking at the experiences of a recent mid-water trawler operating in the SPF which used a seal-excluder device
 - trialling gulper excluder devices in the royal red prawn fishery
 - transitioning the NSW Southern Fish Trawl sector to bird bafflers - noting that this project should be considered as part of the Southern Fish Trawl transition.
- The priority project for 2018-19 in the GHAT includes a desktop analysis on linkages between environmental and operational factors affecting dolphin mortalities in the Gillnet sector. An industry member highlighted their concerns about limiting the scope of the project to a desktop analysis and whether this would only examine interaction reports, when it should also consider boats that are not having interactions. AFMA highlighted that the project will examine a range of factors, including the work being done by researchers at Deakin University on dolphin interactions vs spatial-temporal data.
- There are no bycatch projects scheduled for 2018-19 in the SPF. An industry member queried why there is still a large budget allocated to 'bycatch projects' for 2018-19. AFMA noted that the 2018-19 budget for bycatch projects is informed by the budget allocated for the previous financial year but costs would be acquitted during the year.
- AFMA provided an update on the Threat Abatement Plan (TAP) for seabirds:

- In the GHAT Scalefish Hook sub-sector a total of 19 seabird interactions were reported in the summer season, which resulted in an interaction rate of 0.0061 birds per 1000 hooks. This is below the prescribed bycatch rate of 0.01 birds per 1000 hooks. There were no seabird interactions reported for the 2017 winter season.
- In the Shark and Scalefish Hook sub-sector there was one seabird interaction reported in both the winter and summer 2017 seasons. The interaction rate for the winter season was 0.011 birds per 1000 hooks, exceeding the bycatch rate of 0.01 birds per 1000 hooks while the interaction rate for the summer season was 0.003 birds per 1000 hooks.
- The MAC queried as to what action was taken by AFMA and industry after the Seabird Threat Abatement Plan (TAP) was breached for the winter season in the Hook sub-sector. AFMA noted that they inspected the vessels where the breach occurred and ensured that the deployment of seabird mitigation devices was being done correctly. AFMA is also currently examining tori line specifications to make sure these are appropriate.
- The industry member noted that for the 2017 calendar year there appears to be an increase in dolphin interactions for the Commonwealth Trawl Sector (CTS) and queried whether the spike in interactions is reflective of an increase in dolphin abundance or improved training around reporting requirements.
- The MAC noted that seabird interactions in the CTS seem relatively consistent despite the implementation of bird bafflers in 2017.

Action item 34.8 - AFMA to follow up the number of seabird interactions in the CTS sector in 2018, despite the implementation of bird bafflers.

Agenda item 3.1 Research Priorities for 2019-20

AFMA introduced the agenda item and asked the MAC to comment on the proposed research priorities for the Southern Squid Jig Fishery (SSJF), SPF and SESSF, noting that:

- in examining the research needs for each fishery, the fisheries' five year Strategic Research Plan and Annual Research Statement for 2019-20 need to be considered
- the ARC will agree which new essential stock assessment related priorities and scopes are to be included in AFMA's call for research applications in early November 2018 and priorities for potential FRDC funding in 2019-20.

Southern Squid Jig Fishery

The Chair asked the MAC to consider the SSJF Annual Research Statement for 2019-20 noting the SSJF five year Strategic Research Plan 2015-2019. In regard to the research priorities put forward for AFMA funding in 2019-20, the MAC noted that:

- The SSJF is still subject to low levels of catch and effort, therefore the capacity to fund research is limited.
- Individual Squid Resource Assessment Group (SquidRAG) members recommended in June 2018 that no research priorities should be put forward for AFMA Research Committee (ARC) funding in 2019-20. The outcomes of the current project: *'Improving the location and*

targeting of economically viable aggregations of squid available to the squid jigging method (Desktop study) are still pending and will inform future priorities. This project is expected to be considered by SquidRAG at its September or October 2018 meeting.

MAC Recommendation: The MAC recommended that no SSJF research priorities be put forward for AFMA funding in 2019-20.

In regard to the research priorities put forward for FRDC funding in 2019-20, the MAC noted that:

- The project for: *'Improving the SSJF fishing fleets ability and efficiency to catch squid'* has been put forward to harness international knowledge on catching techniques and identify any advances in technology.
- There are two broader projects being put forward for FRDC funding that will have implications for the SSJF, this includes the project for the development of bycatch triggers for use in Commonwealth fisheries under the new Commonwealth Bycatch Policy and the project for estimating cumulative bycatch and protected species in Commonwealth fisheries. The MAC noted that industry should be closely involved in the discussions.

MAC Recommendation: The MAC recommended that the identified research priority be put forward for FRDC funding in 2019-20.

Small Pelagic Fishery

The Chair asked the MAC to consider:

- two additional research priorities that have been proposed for funding in the 2018-19 financial year, noting that these were not included in the 2018-19 research budget
- the SPF Annual Research Statement for 2019-20 noting the SPF five year Strategic Research Plan for 2017-18 to 2021-22.

In regard to the additional research priorities being proposed for funding in the 2018-19 financial year, the MAC noted:

- That the research priority for the *'Jack mackerel east Daily Egg Production Method (DEPM) survey'* is intended to be undertaken in 2018-19. This project was not included in the 2018-19 research plan and consequently was not budgeted for but has since been raised as a priority by the SPFIA. The rationale being that if a survey is not conducted this financial year, jack mackerel east will fall to a tier two stock and that there is now interest in keeping the stock in tier 1. The MAC noted that the SPFIA represents a large proportion of quota holders, but not all concession holders and that if the project was funded through the levy base, it would result in a large overspend that affects a broader range of concession holders. AFMA is currently working with the SPFIA to identify a potential co-funding arrangement that would reduce the potential overspend.

The research proposal *'Developing species specific in situ hybridisation probes to identify eggs of SPF species'* that was received by AFMA in June 2018 in light of new DEPM surveys potentially being conducted in 2018-19 and 2019-20. The outcomes of the project would improve the accuracy of species identification of eggs collected from around > 95 per cent to 100 per cent. However, the new method would not necessarily reduce the time spent sorting eggs and therefore not much cost saving. The project was considered by individual SPF Scientific Panel members and in their view, while the scientific approach was sound, given the reasonable level of certainty with the existing approach and limited benefit in terms of cost savings, they did not

consider it a high priority for the fishery at this time. The MAC concurred with the individual Panel member's advice. **The MAC endorsed the research priority for the 'Jack mackerel east DEPM survey' being undertaken in 2018-19 subject to an appropriate funding model and that AFMA seek comments on the proposal from all SPF concession holders, to ensure transparency.**

The MAC did not endorse the research project for 'Developing species specific in-situ hybridisation probes to identify eggs of SPF species' given the reasonable level of accuracy of the current approach and the cost associated with conducting the project and no evidence of any long term cost savings.

Action item 34.9 – AFMA to write a letter to all SPF concession holders seeking comments on the proposal to conduct a jack mackerel east DEPM survey in 2018-19, noting that this project was not budgeted for in 2018-19 and will lead to an overspend

In regard to the priorities put forward for AFMA funding in 2019-20, the MAC noted that:

- the annual research statement was endorsed by the SPF Scientific Panel in 2018
- there is currently a low level of effort in the fishery, therefore limited capacity to fund research
- the project '*Monitoring & assessment of SPF quota species under the SPF Harvest Strategy*' is an annual assessment. The MAC noted the cost of running this assessment is high and queried the benefit given the regular schedule of DEPM surveys being done on SPF stocks. AFMA noted that the annual assessment allows AFMA to monitor stock status in between DEPM surveys and the requirement to run the assessment annually is set out in the SPF Harvest Strategy. The MAC noted that it may be worth revisiting the SPF Harvest Strategy to examine the application of these assessments, noting the high cost and increased level of information that is now available for each of the stocks as a result of the DEPMs.

Action item 34.10 – AFMA to seek advice from the SPF Scientific Panel and industry on the cost and necessity of conducting the '*Monitoring & assessment of SPF quota species under the SPF Harvest Strategy*' annually.

- SPFIA recommended a blue mackerel east DEPM in 2019-20, given the low level of fishing effort in the west and current effort in the east. The MAC noted their discontent with the information provided in order to make an informed decision and asked that if industry suggest changes in the future that the industry proposal be circulated to the MAC.

The MAC endorsed the SPF Annual Research Statement for 2019-20, noting that the Annual Research Statement should be amended to clarify that the 2019-20 assessment will be for 'blue mackerel east'. The MAC highlighted that if significant changes are made to the Annual Research Statement in the future, the rationale and any associated documentation be made clear to the MAC.

Southern and Eastern Scafish and Shark Fishery

The Chair asked the MAC to endorse the SESSF Annual Research Statement for 2019-20 noting the SESSF five year Strategic Research Plan for 2016-20.

In regard to the AFMA funded research priorities that are already underway, the MAC noted:

- the project '*Fish Ageing for SESSF quota species*' has limited samples available for analysis

- the project '*Analysis of Electronic Monitoring Data*' was originally planned for 2018-19, but is now being proposed for 2019-20.

In regard to the priorities put forward for AFMA funding in 2019-20, the MAC noted that:

- the proposed research priorities were endorsed by SESSFRAG on 15 March 2018
- the project '*Orange roughy (non-eastern) stock status update*' should be removed from the Annual Research Statement as the industry members noted that they do not see the benefit in progressing the project. The cost of the project is high and there is a large amount of effort involved, with little benefit. The MAC noted that this project was listed as a high priority by SESSFRAG
- the project for: '*GHAT CPUE calculation methodology*' looks at changing CPUE data from catch-by-shot to catch-by-metres, given the change to net length restrictions, SESSFRAG identified this project as essential
- the project '*Pre-1998 data*' is intended to investigate the differences in the data from AFMA databases and the CSIRO database, to ensure accuracy and consistency.

MAC Recommendation: The MAC recommended that the proposed research priorities be put forward for AFMA funding in 2019-20, except for the "*Orange roughy (non-eastern) stock status update*" which should be removed from the Annual Research Statement.

In regard to the FRDC funded research priorities that are already underway, the scientific member noted that they are aware of some FRDC funded projects that have not been included in the Annual Research Statement but do have implications for the SESSF. AFMA noted that a comprehensive list of underway FRDC projects was seen by the AFMA Research Committee at their meeting in early July 2018.

Action item 34.11 – AFMA to circulate the complete list of FRDC projects that are underway to the MAC.

In regard to the priorities set out for FRDC funding in 2019-20, the MAC noted:

- research priorities for 2020-21 will be considered by fishery RAGs later this year
- the project '*School whiting stock structure and catch composition*' will look at eastern school whiting from NSW to Victoria
- the proposal '*Quantifying discards and bycatch reduction strategies in the Great Australian Bight Trawl Fishery (GABTF)*' was originally intended to apply only to the GABTF, but has now been extended to also apply to SET
- AFMA noted that a large proportion of the budget is allocated to ongoing or business-as-usual type projects, which leaves limited funding for more innovative or strategic-type projects. Consequently, any research priorities not listed as 'essential' are unlikely to be funded. The MAC noted the importance of these projects and suggested that AFMA explore other sources of funding.

Action item 34.12 – AFMA to work closely with the ARC to develop a forward research plan, targeted at other funding providers, including universities.

MAC Recommendation: The MAC recommended that the proposed research priorities be put forward for FRDC funding in 2019-20.

The MAC endorsed the SESSF Annual Research Statement for 2019-20.

Agenda item 3.2 Update on Dolphin Strategies for the Small Pelagic Fishery and the Gillnet Hook and Trap Sector

The Chair introduced the agenda item and the MAC noted that:

- The Gillnet and SPF Dolphin Mitigation Strategies were implemented on 10 May 2017.
 - The Gillnet Dolphin Mitigation Strategy expanded the Coorong Zone Dolphin Strategy that was implemented in 2014 to the whole fishery.
 - The SPF Dolphin Mitigation Strategy replaced the arrangements that applied to mid-water trawl vessels within the *Small Pelagic Fishery (Closures) Direction No.1 2015*.
- The purpose of implementing the Dolphin Strategies was to apply greater protection to dolphins in the GHAT and the SPF. The strategies put in place performance criteria and a system of pre-agreed responses to dolphin interactions which aimed to allow for greater consistency in management responses across the entire fishery.
- AFMA Management committed to review the dolphin strategies 12 months after implementation.
- AFMA Management are seeking the MAC's comments on the proposed approach to the review and the suggestions made by the Commonwealth Marine Mammal Working Group (CMMWG).

The MAC discussed the matter and the following was raised in the discussion:

- At its May 2018 meeting the CMMWG discussed AFMA's proposed approach for reviewing the Gillnet and SPF Dolphin Mitigation Strategies. As part of this discussion, a research project was suggested to look at the type of pingers available to determine effectiveness. A SEMAC industry member queried the usefulness of this project, noting that the uptake of pingers in the Gillnet fishery has been minimal and there is little data available on their effectiveness.
- An industry member highlighted that, as part of AFMA's review into the Dolphin Mitigation Strategies, vessel-specific mitigation plans and boats that do not have interactions should also be examined.
- AFMA is moving towards improved consistency between the strategies where appropriate. AFMA is developing a Commonwealth Dolphin Bycatch Strategy and incorporating individual fishery arrangements into Fishery Management Strategies. An industry member highlighted that there is a need for the review to consider the application of the strategies to other sectors of the SESSF. AFMA explained that while consistency is important, one set of rules cannot be applied to all sectors in the SESSF due to key differences in gear types etc.
- The reviews are expected to be completed before the end of 2018.

The MAC endorsed the approach for the review, and indicated a preference for consistency in the approaches used to minimise marine mammal interactions across Commonwealth fisheries.

Agenda item 3.3 Small Pelagic Fishery Ecological Risk Assessment

The Chair introduced the agenda item and the MAC noted:

- that the SPF Scientific Panel, at its December 2016 meeting, considered the draft Ecological Risk Assessment (ERA) revised methodology and results for the Small Pelagic Fishery (SPF). The Panel supported the revised ERA methodology as it applies to the SPF but recommended some changes, including additional commentary to explain the changes to how protected species were assessed and why the numbers of high risk species have changed since the last ERA. These comments were considered by the ERA Technical Working Group (TWG) which agreed that a comprehensive justification for the decision on the species included in the analysis should be included in the ERA for all fisheries.
- that the Panel, at its November 2017 meeting, endorsed the final SPF ERA report with no amendments
- there were notable changes in the fishery between the 2017 assessment (the current assessment) and the last full assessment completed in 2006. Key differences between assessments were:
 - the level of observer coverage (33% in the 2006 assessment; 100% in the current assessment) and low level of fishing activity
 - the greater application of management strategies in the 2017 assessment with a clearer direction to sustainably manage resources both for commercial species and for the preservation of threatened species, habitats and communities.

The MAC noted the ERA outcomes:

- All ecological components were eliminated at Level 1 i.e. there were no risk scores of 3 – moderate – or above for any component.
- All hazards (fishing activities) were eliminated at Level 1 (risk scores 1 or 2).
- Significant external hazards were from other fisheries in the region for all components except the key commercial species and coastal development for protected species and habitats.
- Risks rated as major (risk scores of 4) were all related to other fishing activities on protected species and habitats and coastal development for protected species.
- No severe impacts (risk score 5) were recorded.

The MAC discussed the ERA and the following was raised in the discussion:

- The environment conservation member noted that some stakeholders are likely to criticize the results that no species are at high risk given that they perceive the impacts of this fishery to be high.

- An industry member noted that there is a large cost associated with high levels of observer coverage and the requirement for 100% review of electronic monitoring footage for protected species interactions. Given the results of the ERA, which did not identify any species at 'high-risk' this requirement seems excessive and should be reviewed. AFMA noted that the data and monitoring requirements for the fishery are currently being reviewed.

Agenda item 3.4 Small Pelagic Fishery – Fisheries Management Strategy

AFMA introduced the agenda item and the MAC noted that:

- Based on advice from an independent review of AFMA's Ecological Risk Management (ERM) framework, AFMA is intending to develop a Fisheries Management Strategy (FMS) for each Commonwealth fishery over the next five years, starting with the SPF and Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) as test cases.
- The FMS is designed to:
 - consolidate the suite of documents that underpin a fishery's operational, legislative and policy objectives (including its Harvest Strategy, Bycatch and Discarding Workplans, data plans and research plans)
 - provide a clear link between AFMA's legislative objectives and operational objectives (i.e. explicitly describe the practical way in which AFMA actions or pursues legislative objectives)
 - provide a transparent process for assessing AFMA's performance against its objectives by adopting a 'logic modelling' approach, similar to those used in quality management systems such as ISO90001
 - develop annual fishery workplans that will be assessed and reported on each year through annual FMS performance reports, resulting in the FMS acting as both a fishery planning document and an external communication/reporting document
 - be a living document which will be regularly reviewed and updated. Each section within an FMS will be reviewed separately according to the timeframe specified for that component.

The MAC discussed the draft SPF FMS document and the following was raised in the discussion:

- while there is a large amount of work required to establish an FMS in each fishery it will provide longer term gains in efficiency for AFMA. The MAC highlighted logic models for particular objectives (e.g. ensuring accountability) should be the same across fisheries and be combined where possible.
- The MAC noted that the approach to how the objectives that require AFMA to 'have regard to' (as opposed to 'must pursue') will be presented in the FMS, including the new recreational and Indigenous fishing objective, is still being developed.
- The MAC suggested that each FMS could apply a colour coding schematic to the logic models to make it clear where the management objectives are being achieved or where further work may be required (i.e. traffic light system).

- The MAC highlighted the importance of ensuring consistency between fisheries and noted that it will be a challenge to clearly communicate to the public how AFMA interprets its objectives. AFMA noted that one of the key benefits of the FMS is that it will assist in doing this.
- AFMA is intending to consult with the MAC on the specific content of the FMS in 2018-19. The MAC highlighted that for efficiency, advice should be sought on key elements as they develop, particularly the 'logic models'.

The MAC supported the concept of an FMS as a 'one-stop-shop' for all matters relating to the management of a fishery. The MAC noted there is a large amount of work and staff time required to establish an FMS in each fishery and it is key that all FMSs are consistent and minimise duplication, where possible.

Agenda item 3.5 SESSF and SPF Closures Direction

AFMA introduced the agenda item and the MAC noted:

- That AFMA is intending to amend the current closure direction in the SESSF and SPF to:
 - exempt SPF concession holders using the mid-water pair trawling method from closures that already exempt mid-water trawling. This approach was endorsed by SEMAC in April 2016 but the change had not yet been made as AFMA wanted to bundle a few changes together and it was the only one at the time.
 - exempt SPF concession holders using jigging and minor line methods from closures that already exempt purse seine methods. AFMA consulted with the SPF Scientific Panel and SEMAC on the determination of these methods during December 2017 to February 2018. No closures were identified for these methods. Consequently, this direction is being amended so the direction does not unintentionally apply closures to these methods
 - consolidate the western deepwater shark and Flinders research zone area closures (currently implemented through separate closure directions) which are sunsetting at the end of 2018. This will reduce the number of legislative instruments in the SESSF and SPF.

The MAC discussed the matter and raised the following:

- The western deepwater shark area (SESSF Closure Direction No.6 2013) was implemented to allow for targeted fishing of western deepwater sharks in the existing SESSF deepwater closure, subject to a 25 tonne trigger for western orange roughy. The MAC noted that since the western deepwater shark area was opened in 2013 there has been some commercial fishing in the area.
- The Flinders Research Zone closure (SESSF Direction No.11 2013) was implemented as part of the Upper Slope Dogfish Management Strategy. The Upper-Slope Dogfish Management Strategy is being reviewed in 2018. However, no changes to the Flinders Research Zone area are currently proposed as part of this review. An industry member noted that there are multiple closures in this area with differing management arrangements.

Action item 34.13 – AFMA to examine the coordinates of the Flinders Research Zone closure for gulper sharks and report back to the MAC on the management arrangements that apply.

The MAC endorsed the suggested amendments to the '*Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery and Small Pelagic Fishery (Closures) Direction 2016*' (the direction) to:

- exempt SPF concession holders using the mid-water pair trawling method from closures that already exempt mid-water trawling
- exempt SPF concession holders using jigging and minor line methods from closures that already exempt purse seine methods
- incorporate the western deepwater shark and Flinders Research Zone area closures that are currently implemented through separate closure directions.

Agenda item 3.6 Eastern nominal pink ling Total Allowable Catch for 2019-20

The Chair introduced the agenda item and the MAC noted that:

- For the past three fishing seasons, the AFMA Commission has set a global TAC as well as a notional eastern TAC of 404 tonnes to ensure catches allow for rebuilding of the eastern stock.
- During the 2016-17 fishing season, SETFIA managed an arrangement for eastern pink ling to ensure overall catches remained at or below the notional eastern TAC of 404 tonnes. Operators could either commit to catching no more than 25 per cent of their pink ling quota in the east (ratio vessels), or commit to limit their catches under a SETFIA managed commitment arrangement (commitment vessels). A number of 'smaller vessels' did not opt into formal arrangements. These arrangements were successful for the 2016-17 season, and were continued for the 2017-18 season.
- The 2017-18 eastern TAC was exceeded with 434 tonnes of eastern pink landed, comprising of 87 tonnes for ratio vessels, 323 tonnes for commitment vessels and 24 tonnes for smaller vessels. This is largely due to high catches late in the season and an underestimate of what the ratio vessels and smaller vessels would catch when allocating catch to the commitment vessels.
- In March 2018, the AFMA Commission set a 2018-19 global pink ling TAC of 1117 tonnes with a notional eastern TAC of 404 tonnes. When the expected ratio vessel and small vessel catches are deducted from the eastern TAC, 298 tonnes remains for allocation to the commitment vessels which is 25 tonnes less than was caught for the 2017-18 season.
- SETFIA have noted the difficulty of constraining individual catches and the reluctance of some operators to opt into the arrangement because of the impact on their operations. A decrease in the catch allocation would make managing the commitment vessels even more difficult. The alternative to current catch arrangements is to have daily trip limits in place, which in the past has led to increased discards and non-reporting of discards in logbooks.
- To provide more flexibility and to encourage further industry uptake of voluntary arrangements, AFMA management is proposing an increase in the notional eastern TAC to 436 tonnes for the 2018-19 season. This provides SETFIA 315 tonnes to allocate to commitment vessels as was the case for 2017-18, as well as a buffer of 14 tonnes across the fleet in case any of the ratio boats, commitment vessels or small operators exceed their expected catch.

The MAC discussed the matter and the following was raised in the discussion:

- The key issue is that pink ling is managed under a global TAC, however there are two distinct stocks (eastern and western).
- Pink ling is a key species being considered as part of the SESSF Stock Regionalisation Project. However, plans to separate the quota Statutory Fishing Rights (SFRs) would not be in place until 1 May 2020, therefore specific management arrangements in the east are still needed.
- The MAC noted that SETFIA have managed the voluntary arrangements well. The 2017-18 TAC was exceeded as AFMA underestimated the amount that larger and smaller vessels would catch. SETFIA also noted difficulties in getting vessels to adhere to the voluntary arrangements and constrain their catches, despite their best efforts.
- AFMA is proposing to increase the notional eastern TAC from 404 tonnes to 436 tonnes in the 2018-19 fishing season. The rationale being that an increase in the notional TAC will support the continuation of the industry voluntary arrangements, and negate the need for trip limits or closures which can lead to increased discards. This would have a negative outcome for the stock and will present implications for the stock assessment.
- The MAC noted that the proposed 436 tonne TAC would extend the projected rebuilding timeframe, however the projections are based on catches over time, and a single year would likely have little impact.
- The pink ling stock assessment is due to be finalised by November 2018, with the aim to set a three year MYTAC starting in the 2019-20 fishing season. Alternative management arrangements may be considered, depending on the outcomes of the stock assessment.
- The scientific member noted concerns that the previous constant catch level for the eastern stock was nearly double the RBC produced by applying the SESSF Harvest Strategy. In his view the principle of increasing the notional eastern TAC because catches had been exceeded is poor justification for the change and there was no guarantee that the higher catch level would also not be exceeded.
- Based on catch projections from the last assessment, which assume average recruitment, the MAC noted that annual catches of up to 550 tonnes for eastern pink ling would mean the stock would not rebuild until around 2050. The scientific member noted that catches greater than 550 t were estimated to have a greater than 10 per cent chance of the stock declining to less than the limit reference point. While any increase in the TAC represents an increased risk of the stock falling below the limit reference point, AFMA noted that the rebuilding projections at 550 tonnes are based on catches over a 30 year period, not a single years catches.
- The scientific member agreed that catches of up to 550 t in a single year presented little additional risk of the stock falling below the limit reference point based on average recruitment. However he did not support an increase in the eastern TAC given the status of the stock, the potential for low recruitment to be occurring which has been seen historically and the recent increase in discards and state catches (especially at a time when the NSW fleet was transitioning to a quota system). This combination meant that such catch levels carried the risk of being classified as constituting overfishing.
- An industry member noted that if the allocation to commitment vessels is decreased, there is a risk the industry will opt out of the voluntary arrangements, and more regulated controls will be necessary. This will lead to increased discarding, which, in the view of the majority of MAC members and AFMA management, represents a greater risk in the context of data collection and the stock assessment.

- The MAC noted that the data used to monitor catches within a season are primarily from Catch Disposal Records.

Action item 34.14 – AFMA to monitor logbook catches along with Catch Disposal Records data, for pink ling catches in 2018-19 for more up to date monitoring of the in-season catches.

- Considering the revised four year weighted average for State catch and discards, the MAC noted that a 517 t RBC resulted in an eastern TAC of 428 t. This represents little additional risk to the stock, accounts for the average catch of ratio and ‘smaller’ vessels over the past three years, and provides the commitment vessels with the same amount of catch as in 2017-18.
- Mr Boag, Mr Dugins and Mr Scott left the meeting due to conflicts of interest.

MAC Recommendation: The MAC in making their recommendation noted the following key points from the discussion:

- **It is the view of industry that an increase in the notional pink ling east TAC is needed in order to maintain the voluntary arrangement. Keeping this arrangement together has already been a difficult task for the industry association and a decrease to the allocation would risk operators opting out. The introduction of alternative management arrangements would likely lead to an increase in discards which would have negative ramifications for the stock.**
- **The scientific member noted that any suggestion to increase the TAC presents a risk to the timeframe in which the stock can rebuild and increases risk that the stock will fall below the limit reference point.**

Noting the above points, the majority of MAC members recommended increasing the notional eastern pink ling RBC to 517 tonnes noting that this is the best balance between maintaining the industry voluntary arrangement, but minimising the risk to the rebuilding of the stock.

The scientific member disagreed with any increase in the TAC and did not endorse the MAC recommendation.

Day two: Thursday 12 July 2018

Agenda item 4.1 SESSF Stock Regionalisation Project

The Chair introduced the agenda item and the MAC noted that:

- In light of evidence that there are distinct stocks for some species in the SESSF, AFMA is proposing a project to pursue regionalisation of quota statutory fishing rights (qSFRs) for species which are currently managed under a single qSFR.
- Recommended biological catches (RBCs) for separate stocks of pink ling, jackass morwong and blue warehou are combined to provide a global TAC for each species under the current SESSF Management Plan. The RBC in one region can be exceeded even though the overall TAC has not been caught.
- This situation is currently managed using a variety of input and output controls such as: spatial closures, trigger limits, and, for pink ling, SETFIA managed voluntary catch apportionment. These arrangements place an administrative burden on AFMA and industry, are not cost-effective, and are operationally inefficient from an industry perspective.

- The objective of this project is to implement arrangements to manage these species under separate qSFRs. While pink ling was the original driver for SESSF stock regionalisation, there are efficiencies gained by including other species that exhibit stock structuring, and managing these species accordingly.

AFMA presented five options to the MAC for splitting the current SFRs. The MAC discussed the options and the following was raised in the discussion:

Option 1: Status quo (base case) - The baseline option for this project is to maintain the status quo. There would be no change to quota statutory fishing right (qSFR) allocations, no amendments to fishery management plans and no changes to any interim management arrangements.

Option 2: Cancel and grant new qSFRs - Existing quota SFR units would be cancelled and, for every qSFR previously held, each holder would be granted two qSFRs, one for each stock.

This option was developed following previous consultation in 2005 and 2009.

Ocean perch would be treated differently and instead would be managed by species rather than zone. For example, inshore ocean perch (*H. percooides*) could be removed from the quota basket. Instead of granting a qSFR for each stock, the existing qSFRs would be for offshore perch only. The inshore stock is subject to high discards and is not targeted and so would be managed as a non-quota species, following receipt of SESSFRAG and SERAG advice.

Option 3: Grant an equal number of new qSFRs - A holder's existing qSFRs would be changed to apply to one stock and an equal number of SFRs allocated for the other stock. For example, existing pink ling qSFRs could be reclassified as eastern pink ling, and a new western pink ling qSFR would be allocated.

Again, ocean perch would be treated differently under this scenario. All qSFRs would be allocated to the offshore stock. The inshore stock would be managed under harvest controls rather than qSFRs.

Option 3 and Option 4 would result in the same outcome for operators.

Option 4: Catch history - Reallocate existing qSFRs for separate stocks based on each holder's catch history in the defined management area.

Option 5: Operators nominate - Existing qSFR holders would nominate what percentage of quota they would like allocated to each management area.

- Any option that will lead to changes to the SESSF Management Plan (i.e. granting of new qSFRs) will need the legal requirements considered.
- An industry member noted that if the status quo was maintained for pink ling, voluntary catch arrangements would need to be pursued and this was not something SETFIA is prepared to do for another season.
- An industry member noted that in their view, both options 4 and 5 would be unrealistic. The reason being that should AFMA proceed with option 5, operators nominating qSFRs to each zone would create conflict and difficulties (i.e. an operator nominating east because it's more valuable). Both options (4 and 5) would also have tax implications

- An industry member noted that option 4 would be complicated to implement, is contrary to AFMA's allocation policy and has the potential to disadvantage operators who have changed their recent fishing activity because of management arrangements. For example, some operators have been withholding their catches of eastern pink ling under catch restrictions, therefore their catch history data would put them at a disadvantage.
- The industry members noted that options 2 and 3 also present problems, in that they would involve removing assets. Any reallocation of SFRs would require amendments to the SESSF Management Plan. The MAC noted that the legal and tax implications of these options also must be considered. Option 2 would also present issues in that it may cost operators money to continue to the same fishing operations.

Action item 34.15 – AFMA to contact the ATO and AFMA legal team to examine the tax and legal implications of options 2, 3 and 4.

- The main concern for industry is that any option presents a challenge regarding the re-allocation of wealth, due to the differences in the value of SFRs.
- The MAC noted that the priority for industry is to see the ocean perch quota basket separated, and for other species to come after this.
- The MAC suggested it may be appropriate to establish an Independent Allocation Panel to ensure the appropriate reallocation of rights.
- An industry member noted that they would like gummy shark removed from the list of priority species given it was managed under a single TAC.
- The MAC queried whether AFMA has considered kilogram allocations between stocks on a single SFR, noting that it avoids the cancellation of SFRs or creating/amending management plans. AFMA noted that this had been considered previously and was available as an option under the Management Plan. However AFMA's systems would not support trading and quota decrementation between two different stocks. AFMA agreed to re-examine this option as part of the project.

Action item 34.16 – AFMA to re-examine the issues and benefits with kilogram allocations.

- The MAC noted that NSW had recently allocated quota using a sequential share trading scheme. AFMA undertook to consider the applicability of this platform.

Action item 34.17 – AFMA to look at NSW model of share trading – question around trading.

MAC Advice: The MAC endorsed the overall concept of the stock regionalisation project and supported its progression. The MAC recommended that AFMA examine the tax and legal implications of options 2, 3 and 4 and that options 1 and 5 are not realistic options. The MAC strongly supported the establishment of an Independent Allocation Panel to appropriately reallocate rights.

Agenda item 4.2 Gillnet, Hook and Trap simplification project

The Chair introduced the agenda item and the MAC noted that:

- AFMA is seeking to implement the next phase of the GHAT Future Directions Project through a review of the sector's system of access rights.
- The GHAT Future Directions Project commenced in 2012, with the objective of reviewing and, where necessary, rationalising management arrangements in the GHAT to ensure they properly pursue AFMA's objectives.
- AFMA subsequently established the GHAT Future Directions Working Group to review existing management arrangements and develop recommendations for future arrangements to improve economic viability and ensure environmental impacts are minimised. AFMA has implemented a number of recommendations from this Working Group and is now undertaking a review of the access rights system in the GHAT.
 - Access rights within the GHAT have become increasingly complex due to changes in fishery management arrangements. As a result of these changes, the GHAT now has over 20 permit types and three SFR types.
 - Each of these permits and SFRs has its own conditions and requirements, including specifications on gear type and where fishing can occur. This complexity increases management and compliance costs and limits the ability of fishers to effectively plan for and adapt to changes in the fishery or markets.
- The project aims to review the access right system in the GHAT with a view to rationalise the system with the following outcomes:
 - A simplified system of access rights imparting less of a management burden on fishers.
 - A system that is easier for industry to comply with.
 - Fewer permit and SFR types, but with a greater flexibility for fishers to catch their quota in the most efficient way.

The MAC discussed the matter and the following was raised in the discussion:

- AFMA proposes the review could be undertaken in a staged approach.

Stage one - phasing out of fishing permits (including trap, automatic longline and gillnet to hook permits) with the view to issuing gear entitlements on all relevant SFRs.

Stage two – investigating whether a single 'GHAT Boat SFR' could be implemented. A single 'GHAT Boat SFR' would provide fishers flexibility to quickly adapt to changes in management arrangements that may be required to ensure the protection of the environment and protected species, to use methods that may be more efficient at targeting quota species or to respond to market conditions. Fishers could use any approved method subject to gear specific conditions related to the sustainability of the resource and requirements to limit interactions with the environment and protected species.

- The State invited participant noted that it would be a concern in Tasmania if GHAT fishers had increased flexibility in the gear they can use on the basis that this could increase the level of effort in Tasmanian coastal waters. AFMA noted the intention is to provide flexibility to fishers, but

not increase effort in State coastal waters. Also noting that the States will be consulted on the outcomes of the project in relation to coastal waters permits, and the project has already received support from South Australia.

- AFMA will consult throughout 2018 and 2019 with stakeholders and establish an industry working group with the aim of implementing changes by 1 May 2020. The MAC noted that it is critical that this working group includes a broad cross sector of industry representatives, covering the use of all gear type.
- The MAC noted that currently all SFR types in the GHAT have different values, therefore moving towards one single SFR would have economic implications for operators. Having representative membership is critical to ensuring good outcomes.
- Industry members noted that there may be an increased risk to certain species if all operators select the same method. For example there may be an increased risk to dolphins if everyone choose to operate gillnets, even if all operators remain under the interaction cap as specified in the Dolphin Mitigation Strategy. The MAC recommended that AFMA consider these potential impacts in the implementation of this project.
- The scientific member noted that there may be implications for stock assessments, given the reliance on catch per unit of effort as an index of abundance.
- A project update will be provided to the next meeting of SEMAC.

MAC Advice: The MAC noted their overall support for the GHAT simplification project.

Noting that:

- **an appropriate cross-sector of industry representation on the proposed working group is critical**
- **there are issues to be resolved on the process and whether it's feasible to move to a single GHAT SFR (an industry member made a suggestion to first reduce the amount of rights then examine a single GHAT SFR)**
- **additional consultation must be undertaken with the relevant State governments if considering changes to coastal waters permits.**

Agenda item 4.3 Small Pelagic Fishery – levy allocations

AFMA introduced the agenda item and the MAC noted that:

- AFMA is seeking advice from the MAC to change the way that costs for DEPM surveys are recovered from concession holders in the SPF.
- SFRs exist for each of the seven SPF stocks (blue mackerel east, blue mackerel west, jack mackerel east, jack mackerel west, redbait east, redbait west, sardines). Currently, the research activity component of the budget is allocated equally across the total number of SFRs in the fishery.
- SPFIA has requested AFMA to change how the research activity component of the levies is allocated to SFRs. The SPFIA suggested that the cost of surveys be levied directly to the SFRs for the relevant stock and not across all SFRs in the fishery.

- AFMA wrote to all concession holders seeking comments on the proposed changes and intends to implement these changes in the next levy cycle. The industry invited participant noted that concession holders were only given 10 days to provide comments on the proposed changes and should be given further opportunity to comment.

The MAC discussed the matter and the following was raised in the discussion:

- The proposal is consistent with the Australian Government Cost Recovery Guidelines, which state that the costs of activities should be allocated to the individual or groups that receive the activity or create the need for the activity.
- An industry member noted that the proposal is beneficial and supports a ‘user pays’ model, which often results in the best decisions for management. As levies are a fishery investment, the proposal would encourage industry involvement in the decision making process.
- An industry member supported the general principle and queried whether it could be applied to other costs within the fishery, for example electronic monitoring and observers.
- The MAC supported the proposal but noted that AFMA needs to be cognisant of any implications for surveys that are currently underway. AFMA noted that the levy allocation hasn’t been set for 2018-19 and the changes can be implemented in this levy cycle.

MAC Recommendation: The MAC endorsed the proposal to allocate species specific survey costs in the SPF against the relevant concession holders, as suggested by SPFIA and AFMA.

Agenda item 4.4 Protected species sub-strategies – AFMA Seabird Strategy

The Chair introduced the agenda item and the MAC noted that:

- The AFMA seabird bycatch sub-strategy (the seabird strategy) is the first of a suite of sub-strategies being developed under the overarching AFMA Bycatch Strategy. The AFMA Bycatch Strategy serves as a guide for responding to bycatch issues across Commonwealth Fisheries in order to operationally pursue the objectives of the Commonwealth Bycatch Policy and higher legislation.
- AFMA is in the process of developing a protected species sub-strategy for seals. The strategy is in its very early stages. Preliminary advice was sought from the Commonwealth Fisheries Marine Mammal Working Group at its last meeting in May 2018.
- The seabird strategy aims to ensure consistency in the management of interactions between seabirds and Commonwealth fisheries using a risk based approach. This includes: improved data collection and monitoring of seabird interactions; applying appropriate mitigation and management measures; streamlining consultative arrangements for seabird bycatch management; improving environmental stewardship by fishers; and understanding cumulative impacts of Commonwealth fisheries.
- The draft seabird strategy has been distributed for comment internally within AFMA, and externally to other government organisations and environmental non-government organisations.
- The MAC noted that comments have already been received from other MACs and RAGs.

- The MAC noted the following comments in regard to the content of the draft seabird strategy:
 - Regarding section 2.2.2 for '*low risk fisheries*' the strategy states that 'an appropriate statement summarising why the fishery is considered low risk... should be reviewed every five years'. The MAC noted that the risk rating of a fishery is driven by the results of the ERA, therefore this should be made explicit in the text. An industry member questioned the wording 'if a fishery is determined at being low risk for seabird interactions then no form of mitigation measures are required', as the reason a fishery may be assessed as low risk on the basis that it has mitigation.
 - Regarding section 2.1 for '*data collection and monitoring*' the strategy states that 'in determining risk, the total number of annual seabird interactions must be reliably estimated each year...' The MAC suggested that the sentence be amended to be explicit that this includes estimations of cryptic mortality, as this is a key concern for some environmental non-government organisations. The scientific member noted a concern that the current proposal is for an annual estimate, which will be difficult to do in many fisheries (and has never been done in the SESSF) and appears to go against the principles of the risk based analysis. Noting that the risk rating of a fishery will be based on the results of a fisheries ERA, it may be more appropriate to amend this to state that AFMA will examine the results of the ERA in each sector to inform the frequency of estimates.
 - Regarding section 2.5 for '*understanding cumulative impact*' the environment conservation member queried whether there has been any thought as to how AFMA will measure this and whether it will also consider spatial distribution. The scientific member noted his concern that the strategy states that cumulative impacts will also be examined annually, noting again that for low risk fisheries, this seems unnecessarily frequent. AFMA noted that they are looking at developing an 'annual bycatch statement' which looks at impacts across all fisheries, and this reporting mechanism would support estimates of cumulative impact.
 - Regarding appendix B for '*best practice mitigation measures for reducing interactions with seabirds as determined by the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP)*' the environment conservation member noted that not all mitigation measures listed here would be appropriate for all gear types or fishing operations, and the appendix would benefit by having more options presented. The industry member noted that the South East Trawl sector operates with mitigation measures of a higher standard than the ACAP guidelines in regard to mitigating seabird interactions. The MAC agreed that appendix B should be removed and instead the strategy should include a reference to relevant guidelines including ACAP.
 - Regarding appendix A for '*summary of current management measures for each fishery for the management of seabird interactions*' the industry member noted an error in the table which states that the TAP rate applies to the SPF. The scientific member also noted that there are mitigation measures listed in appendix A that according to the data in the table are not being used in any fishery, therefore the heading should be amended in light of this. The MAC suggested that this could state 'AFMA approved' measures, noting that there is little guidance available as to what 'AFMA approved means' but also making it clear that there is flexibility built in to allow industry to come up with innovative measures.

- The MAC noted that the draft seabird strategy is intended to provide overarching principles, but is not intended to override fishery specific arrangements, such as the TAP in the longline sector.
- The MAC noted that there is a TAP stakeholder meeting coming up in August 2018 which may be able to inform the draft seabird strategy.

Action item 34.18 – AFMA to check the comments made by HSI and what was addressed in the revised draft AFMA seabird strategy.

MAC Recommendation: The draft AFMA seabird strategy should be amended to reflect the above comments, including clear guidance as to the definition of ‘AFMA approved’, the removal of appendix B, and amendments to appendix A.

Action item 34.19 – AFMA to circulate the revised draft seabird strategy to Mr Scott, Dr Jennings and Ms Lawrence, after the TAP stakeholder meeting in August 2018.

Agenda item 4.5 AFMA Cost Recovery Implementation Statement and Budget update

Mr Gehrig presented the Cost Recovery implementation Statement (CRIS) and AFMA’s general financial processes. The MAC noted that:

- The purpose of the CRIS is to provide information on how AFMA implements cost recovery for the management of Commonwealth fisheries.
- AFMA applies an activity based costing (ABC) method that assigns costs against an established activity hierarchy. AFMA has nine overarching activity groups which includes all the activities that AFMA undertakes and consequently, cost recovers. For example the overarching activity group for the ‘Management of Domestic Commercial Fisheries’ includes costs for bycatch management and MAC and RAG consultation.
- Cost recovery by activity can include direct, indirect and overhead costs.
 - Direct allocations – includes costs within a fishery cost centre, such as staffing and environmental management.
 - Indirect allocations – includes costs that are allocated to fisheries for specific activities using a cost driver for allocation, such as observer costs that are attributed to fisheries using ‘observer days’.
 - Overheads – includes costs which cannot be directly traced to or identified with specific activities such as, office occupancy costs and corporate services.
- The CRIS is updated annually, the biggest change to the 2018-19 CRIS compared to that of 2017-18 was the manner in which the ‘policy support’ activity group is allocated. AFMA noted that a portion of this activity had been recovered from industry, however was previously included as an overhead.

The MAC discussed the matter and the following was raised in the discussion:

- The costs of SEMAC are split between fisheries based on agenda time in session, for example if matters relating to the management of the GHAT take up 25% of agenda time, then the GHAT will pay for 25% of the MAC costs in that financial year.
- The Commonwealth Fisheries Association (CFA) has previously written to AFMA with concerns regarding how the costs for electronic monitoring are allocated. The CRIS currently states that 'compliance activities' are not cost recovered from industry, however electronic monitoring costs are, despite the fact that electronic monitoring has a key role in compliance related activities. AFMA noted that under a recent whole-of-Government portfolio charging review, agencies were directed to look at further opportunities for cost recovery. AFMA's position on domestic compliance functions differs to that of other departments such as the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, who fully cost recover all compliance activities.

Action item 34.20 – AFMA to circulate the letter from AFMA to the Commonwealth Fisheries Association (CFA) on the review of the CRIS, in light of the whole-of-Government portfolio charging review.

- The MAC noted that industry are keen to move towards a 'user pays' model, as some operators still view the payment of levies as a 'tax' rather than a financial contribution to the management of the fishery. An industry member noted that to improve transparency, AFMA could improve the way that the information is presented to make it clear how levies translate into activities to support the management of fisheries.
- The MAC noted the Commonwealth fisheries budget for 2017-18 compared to the actual expenditure for 2017-18. An industry member noted that fishery budgets have resulted in an overspend with the exception of the GHAT.

Action item 34.21 – AFMA to circulate the revised Commonwealth fisheries budget for 2017-18 compared to the actual expenditure for 2017-18, to the MAC, when the financial statements have been finalised (approximately October 2018).

- An industry member queried whether AFMA have considered examining levies as a percentage of revenue in each fishery, noting that for some fisheries the levy costs are quite high compared to GVP. AFMA noted that this is considered and can be a useful metric. The Economic Working Group (EWG) have also looked at metrics for fishery performance and have considered a ratio approach to levy payments against GVP. There will be an opportunity to raise this matter further when the CRIS is next reviewed.
- The industry invited participant queried why there is a bycatch allocation in the SSJF, given the low level of bycatch in the fishery. AFMA explained that this is a broader bycatch policy allocation.

Agenda item 4.6 Australian Fisheries Economic Indicators Report 2017

The Chair welcomed Robert Curtotti and David Mosby from the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) and introduced the agenda item.

The MAC noted the following key points for their consideration:

1. The Economics Working Group (EWG) are currently providing advice on the development of economic performance indicators for fisheries.
2. The '*Australian fisheries economic indicators report for 2017 on the financial and economic performance of the SESSF*' (the economic indicators report), may present some valuable indicators for this work.
3. Whether there is any additional ABARES work, including the annual economic reports, that may be useful for further evaluation by the MAC.

The MAC discussed the matter and the following was raised in the discussion:

- Profitability in the GHAT improved in 2014-15 compared to 2013-14, driven primarily by an increase in the price for gummy shark.
- Net Economic Returns (NER) in the CTS saw a significant increase from -\$1.1 million in 2013-14 to \$174,793 in 2014-15. However, this is still significantly lower than the peak of \$7.5 million in 2010-11. The environment conservation member noted that NER does not examine the returns to the Australian community, such as the flow on benefits to consumers.
- NER in the CTS is projected to rise over 2015-16 and 2016-17. Preliminary NER estimates for 2015-16 (including management costs) were \$3.5 million. The expected improvement is driven by operating costs falling further than fishing income. In 2016-17 NER is expected to rise again to \$4.2 million.
- NER in the GHAT increased from -\$7.4 million in 2013-14 to -\$3.8 million in 2014-15 (increase driven by higher fishing income and higher catch composition of high value species including gummy shark and pink ling). However, did remain negative and well below the \$7.1 million peak in 2008-09. NER in the GHAT has been negative since 2008-09.
- Preliminary NER estimates for the GHAT in 2015-16 (including management costs) were \$0.4 million. The estimated improvement is driven by an expected increase in unit price, increase in fishing income and a fall in operating costs (fuel prices). In 2016-17 NER is expected to increase to \$1.6 million, driven by the highest catch and Gross Value Production (GVP) levels in the fishery since 2010-11.
- Productivity for both the GHAT and CTS is generally trending upwards. The MAC has a key role in the trend for productivity.
- Total management costs in the CTS have generally decreased since 2006-07 (peaked at \$4.7 million). Since this time, costs have decreased by 26 per cent to \$3.5 million in 2016-17. Total management costs in the GHAT have also decreased by 29 per cent from 2002-03 to 2016-17, however are still higher than the CTS.
- The scientific member highlighted that the Australian Government has indicated it intends to commence a national survey of recreational fishers in 2018, focussing on social and

economic information. The recreational invited participant also noted that there is independent research available that looks at the value of recreational fishing.

Agenda item 4.7 AFMA Draft position on the social aspects of Ecologically Sustainable Development

The Chair introduced the agenda item and the MAC noted that:

- AFMA has developed a draft position statement as a starting point for consultation on how AFMA addresses the social aspects of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD). It draws a link between sustainable and profitable fisheries, a secure supply of Australian seafood and the consequent social benefits (for example employment and maintenance of ecosystems).
- The statement has been developed in response to increased community interest in fisheries management and a recent legislative amendment which requires AFMA to take into account the interests of Indigenous and recreational fishers in making fisheries management decisions.

The MAC discussed the matter and the following was raised in the discussion:

- The draft statement in its current form focusses heavily on two principles of ESD:
 1. 'decision making processes should effectively integrate both long-term and short-term economic, environmental, social and equity considerations'; and
 2. 'the principle of intergenerational equity – that the present generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment is maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations'
- The scientific member noted a key consideration for AFMA is how social objectives will factor into the development and principles underpinning fishery specific harvest strategies.
- It is a key objective of AFMA to 'Maximise net economic returns to the Australian community from the management of Australian fisheries'. AFMA currently works towards this objective by managing fisheries to a Maximum Economic Yield (MEY), under the assumption that this will maximise economic returns. The economics invited participant highlighted that it would be important to consider how effective MEY was as a proxy for measuring returns to the Australian community.
- An industry invited participant raised concerns about AFMA interfering with fishing businesses; it was their choice whether to remain in an industry regardless of AFMA's or economist's view points on the individual fishing business viability. The industry invited participant noted that, from an economic perspective, in a ten vessel fleet, having only three vessels operating could be seen as achieving maximum profitability but would mean seven vessels are tied to the wharf. This would negatively impact flow on economic and social benefits and cause business uncertainty. They did not see this scenario fitting with AFMA's objective of maximising net economic benefits to the Australian community. The industry invited participant had serious concerns about the potential for AFMA becoming involved in something that is outside of its (AFMA's) business that could have dire consequences for businesses, employment and communities, further, that there was no weight applied in the ESD policy for impacts on communities and individual businesses.

- The environment conservation member questioned how the pursuit of maximising economic returns fits with the pursuit of AFMA's social objectives. She also raised the issue of social licence and whether, in the consideration of social objectives, AFMA would also play a larger role in managing this.
- The MAC noted it is critical to consider the interests of consumers as well as producers, which could mean that the 'optimal biomass' would be lower than would otherwise be the case.

MAC Advice: The MAC broadly supported the intention of the draft statement on the social aspects of ESD, and noted that the themes are appropriate to highlight what AFMA already does in this space. Further work can be done to expand on broader values (besides the supply of seafood) and ensure consistent language between the Fisheries Management Strategies and the content of the statement.

The MAC noted it's important to highlight that this is a product of broader government policy.

Agenda item 4.8 Southern Fish Trawl Transition

The Chair introduced the agenda item and the MAC noted that:

- AFMA and the NSW Department of Primary Industries are in the process of negotiating an Offshore Constitutional Settlement arrangement (OCS) and associated MoU that will transition the NSW Southern Fish Trawl Fishery (SFTF) into the Commonwealth SESSF as a new sector, the NSW Coastal Waters Sector.
- The OCS will be a legislative instrument that will determine the species and methods that will be transitioned to the Commonwealth. However, the MoU will contain many of the parameters that will need to be considered in management.
- The proposed arrangement will be provided to both the NSW and Commonwealth fisheries ministers in August or September 2018. As such the need to develop the parameters of the MoU is fairly urgent to enable the two ministers enough time to consider the parameters of the arrangement.
- Aside from the required formalities, the MoU is intended to set out obligations relating to: formal consultation, catch and trip limits, licensing arrangements, data sharing, boat and gear and compliance arrangements.
- The development of this MoU will not preclude future broader cooperation between the jurisdictions on formal catch sharing arrangements, common harvest strategies and shared stock assessments.
- The transition is expected for implementation at the beginning of the SESSF season on 1 May 2019.

The MAC discussed the matter and the following was raised in the discussion:

- The intention is that operators in the NSW SFTF will transition to a Commonwealth NSW Coastal Waters permit.

- The MAC noted that NSW are currently transitioning some of their fisheries to a quota-based system under the '*commercial fisheries business adjustment program*'. The NSW SFTF has not been included in the program as this transition is underway.
- The transition of this fishery was also recommended in the 2016 Australian Government Productivity Commission report, which stated:

The [SFTF] should be absorbed into the [SESSF] as:

- i. the Commonwealth has the necessary management infrastructure in place including proven stock assessment methods and a best practice individual transferable quota regime*
 - ii. the fish taken by trawling in southern New South Wales waters extend into Victorian and Tasmanian waters where they are also managed by the Commonwealth within the Commonwealth Trawl Sector.*
- The NSW SFTF has many fish stocks in common with the SESSF and many fishers who operate in the SFTF are already fishing in the SESSF. The MAC noted that it's important to ensure that the handful of operators who only have experience fishing in the NSW SFTF are fully aware of Commonwealth obligations including changes to gear requirements, boat size and monitoring requirements.
 - An industry member noted that, in their view, the transition was a 'zero sum game', as currently state catch from the NSW SFTF is deducted from the Commonwealth RBC to set the annual TAC in the SESSF, therefore this transition is just formalising this process.
 - The MAC noted a key consideration in the development of the MoU will be the incorporation of marine parks, which means that any NSW marine parks will need to be equally matched by the Commonwealth.
 - The MoU itself will not be legally enforceable. However, key conditions will be specified in fishing permits and other legislative instruments.
 - The MAC queried whether the work involved in the transition has been accounted for in the existing budget, and whether it would be more economically viable to buy-out existing operators. AFMA noted that part of the work has been government funded, however when the transition is completed new operators will pay levies, therefore upon transition work will be cost recovered.
 - The recreational sector invited participant explained that recreational fishers are highly concerned with the transition and the perceived impact on the recreational sector. The recreational fishing industry have submitted a request to the NSW fisheries minister to put the transition on hold until a more detailed business case can be developed, with their preference being that the existing operators are bought out of the fishery. An industry member noted that a key issue with a buy-out is that NSW would see a large reduction in the amount of fish being sold locally and this may negatively affect local businesses. AFMA noted that a buy-out is a matter of consideration for NSW state government, however given the tight timeframe AFMA is continuing work towards the transition.
 - The MAC noted that the new arrangements will mean that fish stocks that are currently jointly managed will only be managed by the one jurisdiction, removing duplication and administrative burden for operators currently operating in two jurisdictions.

Agenda item 4.9 Economics update

The Chair introduced the agenda item and the MAC noted that:

- In 2017, AFMA established the Economic Working Group (EWG) as an advisory group to provide AFMA with strategic advice on a range of fisheries economic matters.
- The purpose of the EWG is to provide advice on major and cross fishery economic issues related to Commonwealth fisheries management. The outcomes from the EWG are intended to support AFMA in meeting its legislative requirements, in particular, maximising the net economic returns to the Australian community from the management of Australian fisheries.
- The EWG held its first meeting on 10 April 2018 at AFMA in Canberra.

The MAC discussed the key items raised at the first meeting of the EWG and the following arose from the discussion:

- Regarding the agenda item for '*AFMA Key Performance Indicator review*' the MAC noted that the EWG agreed to amend AFMA's main economic indicator and to consider six new indicators, when data to estimate these indicators are available.
- The agenda item for '*Cost Benefit Analysis of individual accountability for discards of quota species*' was discussed. In 2018 AFMA undertook a cost benefit analysis (CBA) in the ETBF and GHTF (where e-monitoring operates) to determine if individual accountability would be cost effective in those fisheries. This analysis was completed and the key outcome was that, under the assumptions in the report, it is marginally cost effective to implement individual accountability in the ETBF but not in the GHAT.
- AFMA has considered the CBA for individual accountability for discards and considers that due to marginal benefit in the ETBF and economic unfeasibility in the GHAT, AFMA will not progress this further at this time but will continue to monitor cost-effectiveness. The MAC noted that the CBA could be revisited to ensure that all benefits and costs were accounted for. It was noted that the bycatch policy guidelines were to be released shortly which may impact on this issue.

Action item 34.22 – Dr Jennings to relay the concerns raised by the MAC on the cost benefit analysis (i.e. whether all benefits are being captured) and circulate a redacted copy of the analysis to the MAC (removing all confidential information) for further consideration.

- Regarding the agenda item for '*Quota Undercatch & Overcatch provisions – impact on economic efficiency of the fishing fleet*' the MAC noted that the project was initiated as AFMA's Quota Administration Policy states that AFMA will review the undercatch and overcatch arrangements after the review of the Commonwealth Harvest Strategy Policy and the implementation of the 28 day quota reconciliation arrangements. AFMA completed this review, and consulted with ABARES and the EWG whom both concluded that the current undercatch and overcatch provision provide economic benefits by allowing flexibility for industry to balance quota at the end of the fishing season, and therefore should not be changed.
- Regarding the agenda item for '*Economic risk assessment project proposal*' the intention is that this will work in parallel to AFMA's ERA process. The EWG considered the proposal as work in progress. AFMA will continue to work on the proposal.

- Regarding the agenda item for '*application of behavioural economics to fisheries issues*' the MAC noted that AFMA is considering incorporating behavioural economic techniques to improve fisheries management outcomes in some cases, via AFMA staff training.
- The MAC noted that for the economic indicators proposal, it would be beneficial to get regular feedback on this, in order to make useful management decisions. An industry member noted that in their view, the preferred indicators were: NER; GVP compared to management costs; quota latency; productivity index and profit and loss.

Agenda Item 5 Other Business

The next MAC meeting is expected to be held in October 2018 with a survey to gauge availability will be circulated shortly.

Other Business – Electronic monitoring in the GHAT

AFMA introduced the agenda item and the MAC noted:


- the 2017-18 costs are close to the original business case budget
- the administration costs of electronic monitoring are reducing
- there were opportunities for integrated electronic monitoring and VMS to reduce costs
- AFMA was seeking to engage the SSIA for a crew based co-management data collection project. The industry noted their support for crew based collection.
- the electronic monitoring program benefits AFMA by verifying logbooks, protected species, individual accountability and compliance risk assessments. Some access to closures may be available to fishers if they have electronic monitoring.

The MAC discussed the matter and the following was raised in the discussion:

- An industry member noted that under the CRIS, electronic monitoring administration was 50 per cent cost recovered from industry and had concerns about this arrangement changing.
- An industry member noted a benefit of electronic monitoring is a lower compliance risk for a fishery.
- Industry members noted the potential benefits for electronic monitoring in improving the current trip limit management arrangements. Electronic monitoring could help ensure that state managed species are not targeted but could be retained rather than discarded if incidentally caught.

With no other items of business raised, the Chair thanked all participants and closed the meeting at approximately 3.30 pm (AEST).

Signed (Chairperson):



Date: 7/09/2018

Attachments

Attachment A: SEMAC 34 Final agenda

Attachment B: SEMAC 34 Declared conflicts of interest

Attachment C: SEMAC 34 Action items arising from previous meetings

SEMAC 34 Final agenda

Meeting Logistics

Date Wednesday 11 to Thursday 12 July 2018

Time Day 1: 8.30 am – 6:00 pm
Day 2: 8:00 am – 3:30 pm

Location Aquarium Board Room, AFMA offices, Canberra

Chair Diane (Di) Tarte

Attendees

Members	Anissa Lawrence	Environment member	
	George Day	AFMA member	
	Gerry Geen	Industry member	
	Les Scott	Industry member	
	Sandy Morison	Scientific member	
	Shane Dugins	Industry member	
	Simon Boag	Industry member	
	Vacant	Recreational member	
	Invited Participants	Debbie Wisby	Industry Invited Participant
		Frances Seaborn	State Invited Participant
Max Castle		Recreational Invited Participant (day two only)	
Sarah Jennings		Economics Invited Participant	
	Neil MacDonald	GABIA Invited Participant	
Executive Officer	Cadie Artuso	AFMA	
Observers	Cassandra Pert	AFMA (day two only)	
	Ian Cartwright	AFMA Commissioner (day one only)	
	Luke Robertson	AFMA (day two only)	
	Veronica Silberschneider	NSW Department of Primary Industries	
	N/A		

Apologies

Day 1: 8:30 am – 6:00 pm

<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Speaker</i>	<i>Duration and Paper Action</i>
1. Preliminaries		60 minutes 8:30 am – 9:30 am
1.1 Welcome and apologies	Chair	For Noting and Advice
1.2 Acceptance of agenda	Chair	For Noting and Advice
1.3 Declarations of interest	All	For Noting and Advice
1.4 Action items arising from previous meetings	Executive Officer	For Noting and Advice
2. Updates		
1.1 Managers Update, including: a. SMARP project plan and implementation	George Day	40 minutes 9:30 am – 10:10 am For Questions
2.2 Industry Update, including: a. School Shark Catches	All	30 minutes 10:10 am – 10:40 am For Questions
Morning tea		20 minutes 10:40 am – 11:00 am
2. Updates (cont.)		
2.3 Policy, Environment, Economic and Research Team Update	PEER team	15 minutes 11:00 am – 11:15 am For Questions
2.4 Bycatch Team Update	Bycatch Team	15 minutes 11:15 am – 11:30 am For Questions
3. Business		
3.1 Research Priorities for 2019-20 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southern Squid Jig Fishery • Small Pelagic Fishery • Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery 	George Day	60 minutes 11:30 am – 12:30 pm For Recommendation
Lunch		45 minutes 12:30 pm – 1:15 pm
3.2 Update on Dolphin Mitigation Strategies for the Small Pelagic Fishery and the Gillnet Hook and Trap Sector	Brodie Macdonald and Sally Weekes	45 minutes 1:15 pm – 2:00 pm For Noting and Advice
3.3 Small Pelagic Fishery Ecological Risk Assessment	Sally Weekes	30 minutes 2:00 pm – 2:30 pm For Noting and Advice

3.4 Small Pelagic Fishery – Fisheries Management Strategy (FMS)	Sally Weekes	60 minutes 2:30 pm – 3:30 pm For Recommendation
Afternoon tea		15 minutes 3:30 pm – 3:45 pm
3.5 SESSF and SPF Closures Direction	George Day	30 minutes 3.45 pm – 4.15 pm For Recommendation
3.6 Eastern nominal pink ling Total Allowable Catch for 2019-20	Daniel Corrie	45 minutes 4:15 pm – 5:00 pm For Recommendation

Day 2: 8:00 am – 3.30 pm

<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Speaker</i>	<i>Duration and Paper Action</i>
4. Business (cont.)		
4.1 SESSF stock regionalisation project	George Day	45 minutes 8:00 am – 8:45 am For Recommendation
4.2 Gillnet, Hook and Trap simplification project	Brodie Macdonald	60 minutes 8:45 am – 9:45 am For Noting and Advice
Morning tea		15 minutes 9:45 am – 10:00 am
4.3 Small Pelagic Fishery – levy allocations	Sally Weekes	45 minutes 10:00 am – 10:45 am For Recommendation
4.4 Protected species sub-strategies – AFMA Seabird Strategy	Bycatch team	60 minutes 5:00 pm – 6:00 pm For Recommendation
4.5 AFMA 2018 Cost Recovery Implementation Statement and Budget update	Robert Gehrig	60 minutes 10:45 am – 11:45 am For Noting and Advice
4.6 Australian Fisheries Economic Indicators Report 2017	Rob Curtotti and Sarah Jennings	45 minutes 11:45 am – 12:30 pm For Noting and Advice
Lunch		45 minutes 12:30 pm – 1:15 pm
4.7 AFMA draft position on the social aspects of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD)	PEER	30 minutes 1:15 pm – 1:45 pm

		For Recommendation
4.8 Southern Fish Trawl transition	George Day	30 minutes 1:45 pm – 2:15 pm For Noting and Advice
4.9 Economic update	Sarah Jennings	60 minutes 2:15 pm – 3:15 pm For Recommendation
5. Close of meeting and other business Electronic monitoring update		15 minutes 3:15 pm – 3:30 pm

SEMAC 34 Declared conflicts of interest

Declared Interest - Last updated: July 2018	
Members	
Ms Anissa Lawrence	<p>Independent consultant. Director of TierraMar Consulting.</p> <p>Conservation member on SharkRAG</p> <p>Undertakes contracts for a number of Conservation NGOs, government departments, non-government agencies and the private sector on a range of fishery related matters.</p> <p>No pecuniary interest.</p> <p>President of the SEA LIFE Trust (ANZ).</p> <p>Director of FISHI International.</p>
Ms Diane Tarte	SEMAC Chair - No interest whether pecuniary or otherwise.
Mr George Day	AFMA - Senior Manager Demersal and Midwater Fisheries. No interest whether pecuniary or otherwise.
Mr Gerry Geen	<p>A partner in Seafish Tasmania Pty Ltd that holds approximately 60 per cent of the SPF Jack Mackerel SFRs, 70 per cent of the Redbait (east) SFRs, 30 per cent of Blue Mackerel (east) SFRs and significant quota holdings in the western zone.</p> <p>Seafish Tasmania Pty Ltd owns a Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Trawl Boat SFR.</p>
Mr Les Scott	<p>I, Ronald Leicester Scott (Les) in my capacity as a member of the South East Advisory Committee (SEMAC) provide below a disclosure of my interests that conflict or could conflict with the proper performance of my functions as a member of the SEMAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing Director: Petuna Sealord Deepwater Fishing P/L an Australian resident company which holds various fishing rights in, and operates vessels in the SESSF, GHAT, East Coast Deepwater Fishery, Coral Sea and International fisheries operating a vessel under an Australian Flag; Consultant to: Australian Longline P/L an Australian resident company which holds various fishing rights in, and operates vessels in the Australian Sub-Antarctic fisheries (Heard Island and McDonald Islands, Macquarie Island Fisheries) and waters under the jurisdiction of CCAMLR; and Advisor to PG&UM Rockliff – Petuna Fisheries who hold various fishing rights in the SESSF, GHAT, Commonwealth and State (Tasmania) Scallop Fishery, East Coast Tuna Fishery, Off Shore Fisheries and Tasmanian State Fisheries. <p>My pecuniary interest is limited to the extent of: an employee of the company's and partnership disclosed.</p>
Mr Sandy Morison	<p>Director of Morison Aquatic Sciences.</p> <p>Chair of SERAG, SharkRAG, and Tropical Rock Lobster Working Group.</p> <p>Contracted by government departments, non-government agencies and companies for a range of fishery related matters including research and MSC assessments of AFMA managed and other fisheries (by SCS Global Service).</p> <p>No pecuniary or other interest.</p>

Mr Shane Dugins	Chair of the Sustainable Shark Fishery Association. Shareholder and Director of a Fishing Company that holds: Commonwealth SFRs including Shark and Scalefish quota SFRs, Victorian and Tasmanian licenses and Victorian Crayfish quota. Representative of the Sustainable Shark Fishing Association.
Mr Simon Boag	Non-beneficiary Director of two fishing companies in the SESSF. Industry member on SERAG. Undertakes work for various industry associations including SETFIA, SSIA, SPFIA, EastRock and Bass Strait Scallop Association through consulting company Atlantis Fisheries Consulting Group. Some of these associations receive funding from various bodies for different projects. Undertakes work for private clients through AFCG.
Invited participant	
Ms Debbie Wisby	CEO of a fishing Company in Tasmania - scallops, squid and shark. Partner owns Tasmania State Scallop Units and Entitlements. Commonwealth Fish Receiver. Local Government Councillor. Tasmania Scallop Fishery Advisory Committee member.
Ms Frances Seaborn	No interest whether pecuniary or otherwise. Employed by the Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE).
Dr Sarah Jennings	Economics member on SERAG. Economics coordinator, FRDC Social Science and Economics Research Program. Member of AFMA Economics Working Group. Independent economics consultant. No pecuniary or other interest.
Mr Neil MacDonald	Director NMAC(SA) P/L which provides the following services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive officer of the Great Australian Bight Industry Association. • Executive officer of Surveyed Charter Boat Owners and Operators Association South Australia. • Executive officer of Southern Fishermen's Association. • Executive officer of Saint Vincent Gulf Prawn Boat Owner's Association. • Executive officer of South Australian Blue Crab Pot Fishers Association. • Executive officer of Marine Scale Net Fishers Association. • Contract services to other non government organisations and government agencies. • Committee support to SARLAC Rock Lobster MAC/Rock Lobster Sub Committee.
Executive Officer	
Ms Cadie Artuso	AFMA – Fisheries Management Officer, Demersal and Midwater Fisheries. No interest whether pecuniary or otherwise.

SEMAC 34 Action items arising from previous meetings

SEMAC 33

Action Item		Member to action	Agenda Item in which the matter was raised	Status
33.1	AFMA to examine what information from the annual review of the School Shark Rebuilding Strategy, considered by SharkRAG, can be presented to the MAC.	AFMA	Agenda item 2.2 (SESSF 2018-19 TACs)	Complete. Will be presented to the MAC at SEMAC 34 under agenda item 2.2.

SEMAC 32

Action Item		Member to action	Agenda Item in which the matter was raised	Status
32.1	AFMA to circulate the next quarterly protected species report, when available.	AFMA	Agenda item 1.4	Complete. The preliminary report for quarter four was circulated on 26 March 2018.
32.2	CSIRO to provide projections under an average recruitment scenario with an annual catch of 100 tonnes to show the impact on expected rebuilding times.	AFMA and CSIRO	Agenda item 3.1 (SESSF 2018-19 TACs) - Redfish	Complete. This was circulated with SEMAC 33 meeting papers on 16 February 2018 and discussed at the teleconference on 21 February 2018.
32.3	AFMA to ensure that in future MAC papers, the SESSF TAC recommendations are split between non-recovering (incidental catch allowances) and MYTAC species.	AFMA	Agenda item 3.1 (SESSF 2018-19 TACs)	Complete. Has been noted by AFMA Management for action in the next SESSF TAC paper for 2019-20.

32.4	AFMA to investigate the spatial extent of closures in the consideration of applying a discount factor to tier 4 assessments.	AFMA	Agenda item 3.1 (SESSF 2018-19 TACs)	Underway. AFMA is considering approaches to this question, including fishing/species overlap approaches and looking at historic catches and catch rates before and after closures. Depending on the outcomes and costs and benefits, will be sought. SEMAC to be updated at its next meeting.
32.5	AFMA to circulate species summaries with all attachments, including RAG advice and assessment results.	AFMA	Agenda item 3.1 (SESSF 2018-19 TACs)	Underway. AFMA is doing a review of how the information for the TAC setting process is presented to the RAG, the MAC and the AFMA Commission. This action will be considered as part of that review.
32.6	AFMA to work further with the Panel to develop an agreed method of calculating discards, to be applied to the SPF RBCs from 2019-20 onwards. Noting the MAC preference for consistency between fisheries and relevant consideration towards the potential variability in fishing effort.	AFMA and the SPF Scientific Panel	Agenda item 3.3 (SPF 2018-19 TAC recommendations)	Underway. Will be considered by the SPF Scientific Panel at its November 2018 meeting.
32.7	The Panel to consider if the samples of blue mackerel east collected by the Geelong Star provide adequate information to increase the Tier 1 harvest rate from 15 per cent to 23 per cent for this species. The higher harvest rate was found to be safe by the MSE work done by Smith et al. however the more conservative rate was adopted on the basis that there was some uncertainty around the adult parameters for this species at the time.	SPF Scientific Panel	Agenda item 3.3 (SPF 2018-19 TAC recommendations)	Underway. Samples of blue mackerel collected by the Geelong Star were received by SARDI, including some targeted samples of large fish which may help address some of the uncertainties relating to the biology of this species. The samples and data are currently being analysed and expected to be reported on in 2018.
32.8	AFMA to confirm whether jigging or line methods in the SPF, fall under the definition of 'line fishing' as set out in the <i>Threat Abatement Plan for the incidental catch of seabirds during oceanic longline fishing operations</i> .	AFMA	Agenda item 3.4 (jigging and line methods in the SPF)	Complete. The TAP does not apply to jigging and line methods in the SPF. The Australian Antarctic Division (AAD) have published a background document to the application of the TAP (available on the AAD website)

				which specifies that the TAP applies only to Demersal and Pelagic longline gear configurations.
32.9	AFMA to work closely with industry to provide a more detailed cost benefit analysis, to be presented to the MAC at their June 2018 meeting.	AFMA	Agenda item 3.7 (electronic monitoring in the GHAT)	Complete. This was discussed with industry directly on 17 May 2018, and included a presentation of cost information.
32.10	AFMA to present the seabird strategy to the MAC at their June 2018 meeting.	AFMA	Agenda item 3.11 (update on seabird strategy)	Complete Will be presented to the MAC at SEMAC 34 under agenda item 4.1.
32.11	AFMA to circulate the presentation 'SEMAC 32 Compliance update' to the MAC.	AFMA	Agenda item 3.12 (compliance update)	Complete. Presentation was circulated to the MAC on 26 March 2018.
32.12	AFMA to prepare a formal response, with contribution from the MAC, summarising the key challenges on taking into account recreational and Indigenous fishing interest, from the MACs perspective.	AFMA and SEMAC	Agenda item 3.13 (Fisheries Legislation Amendment Bill)	Complete. Letter was provided to the research team and Dr Nick Rayns on 29 May 2018. This advice will be considered by the AFMA Commission in their July meeting.

SEMAC 31

Action Item	Member to action	Agenda Item in which the matter was raised	Status
31.3 AFMA to advise the MAC of the date of the first TAG meeting and include the Terms of Reference and membership, when established. AFMA to also ensure that the first meeting addresses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>protected species reporting compared to industry average and observer rates and the consequences of non-reporting and</i> b) <i>Seabird mitigation on large factory freezer vessels, noting the preference for consistency with other fisheries, and ensuring the operators of large factory</i> 	AFMA and TAG	Agenda item 1.4 (action items)	Underway. Formal agreements to establish co-management in the South East Trawl sector, including establishment of the TAG (now STAG), are currently being drafted. SEMAC will be advised once complete.

	freezer vessels are present for the discussion. <i>Note:</i> This replaces action items 2, 4 and 5 from SEMAC 27.			
31.4	AFMA and SETFIA to consider a formal consultation process with eNGO's to engage in the TAG process.	AFMA and SETFIA	Agenda item 2.1 (Managers update)	Underway. This will be considered when drafting the terms of reference for the TAG. SEMAC will be advised once complete.
31.10	AFMA to ensure that in the next environment update, due in early 2018, that all protected species are included when providing the number of interactions. AFMA to also include an update on any breaches of the TAP, including information on the species, and the number of breaches that occur.	AFMA (Environment team)	Agenda item 2.3 (Environment update)	Complete. Addressed under agenda item 2.4 of SEMAC 34 and will be considered in future updates.
31.11	AFMA to update the MAC on the action taken by industry after the summer TAP was breached.	AFMA	Agenda item 2.3 (Environment update)	Complete. Addressed under agenda item 2.4 of SEMAC 34.
31.17	AFMA to request that the MMWG look at potential environmental factors or diseases that may be affecting dolphin populations, propose technical solutions to address the increased number of interactions in the Gillnet fishery and cross reference the outputs from the climate change working group.	AFMA	Agenda item 3.4 (Update on dolphin mitigation strategies)	Complete. At its May meeting the MMWG provided input to a proposed approach to review both the gillnet and SPF dolphin mitigation strategies. The strategy reviews will capture some elements of the work requested, namely examining the environmental factors that may be impacting on dolphin interactions. A suite of other factors will be looked at as part of the review as well.
31.18	AFMA to set up protocols with the AFMA duty officer to ensure that they are qualified to review a vessels' Dolphin Mitigation Plan and authorise the recommencement of fishing.	AFMA	Agenda item 3.4 (Update on dolphin mitigation strategies)	Complete. AFMA Manager to be contacted by the duty officer for action.
31.19	AFMA to check the wording in the <i>Fisheries Management Regulations 1992</i> and engage to operator to determine the feasibility of the operation, noting this requirement must be met.	AFMA (GHAT team)	Agenda item 3.5 (processing/ filleting on board SESSF boats)	Complete. The <i>Fisheries Management Regulations 1992</i> in their current form state that fins must not be removed from the shark prior

				to landing. It is the responsibility of the operator to ensure any processing on board meets these regulations.
31.20	AFMA to work closely with industry to determine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Whether the operation is consistent with the <i>Fisheries Management Regulations 1992</i>; b) The intended conversion ratio for quota management; and c) The level of monitoring and compliance to cover any additional risk. AFMA to circulate this information to the MAC.	AFMA (GHAT team)	Agenda item 3.5 (processing/ filleting on board SESSF boats)	Underway. These remaining actions will be subject to whether the operator can meet the regulations as outlined above.
31.21	AFMA to work on the issue further with the VFA, with the intent to focus more on discards and to seek more information of the level of discards in the fishery by Victorian boats. AFMA to inform the MAC of any progress made.	AFMA (GHAT team)	Agenda item 2.6 (trip limit for school and gummy shark)	Complete. Update provided under agenda item 2.1 managers updates of SEMAC 34.
31.24	AFMA to conduct a risk based analysis of interactions with protected species in the purse seine sector of the SPF, including the level of observer coverage, number of interactions and areas of operation.	AFMA (SPF team)	Agenda item 4.2 (electronic monitoring in the SPF)	Underway. Focus is on achieving observer coverage targets during 2018-19 to support risk assessment. Expected to be completed in 2018-19.

SEMAC 30

All actions items from SEMAC 30 have been completed. This was noted and endorsed at SEMAC 31.

SEMAC 29

Action Item	Member to action	Agenda Item in which the matter was raised	Status	
29.7	If the results of the Jack Mackerel West survey results in a significant increase in the RBC for this species, that a step up approach is considered in next year's RBC and TAC discussions. The purpose of this would	SEMAC, SPF Scientific	Agenda item 3.2	Complete. Neither the MAC or SPF Scientific Panel have recommended a step-up approach for jack mackerel.

	be to minimise the potential impact of increased discarding of Redbait in the Western area due to limited availability of quota or operators being forced to relocate to new fishing grounds.	Panel and AFMA		
29.10	AFMA to consider the options to improve incentives for operators to correctly report dolphin interactions. For example, allowing an operator to reduce the review rate if they have a proven record of correctly reporting interactions. The MAC noted that this would require a change to the EM monitoring costs within the levy base.	AFMA	Agenda item 3.3	Underway. Being considered as part of long-term discussions around direct billing for e-monitoring catch review. All MACs will be consulted on reporting and monitoring standards in 2018-19 as part of a broader AFMA review.

SEMAC 28

Action Item		Member to action	Agenda Item in which the matter was raised	Status
1	AFMA to contact <i>OLRAC</i> to amend system to comply with terms of reference.		Agenda Item 1.4 (action items)	Underway. Update to be provided.
4	AFMA to refer MAC and SharkRAG concerns surrounding accounting for discards back to the RAG, questioning whether the 15% discount factor can be moderated. Note potential relevance of maximum economic returns from the fishery as a whole and the high level of protection given to elephant fish via closures.		Agenda Item 2.1 (Elephant Fish)	Complete. SESSFRAG is considering assessing species with high discards. Closures will be considered as part of action item 32.4.
6	AFMA to review western gemfish trigger limits within the GABTF.		Agenda Item 2.1 (Western Gemfish)	Underway. GABRAG considered as part of assessment in June 2018. Next steps are to consult with industry associations (GABIA and SETFIA). GABMAC and SEMAC to consider more appropriate triggers in 2018.

7	AFMA to provide the expected timeframe to conduct a tier one assessment of ocean perch, and the SFR allocation for inshore and offshore.		Agenda Item 2.1 (Ocean Perch)	<p>Complete.</p> <p>This will be considered as part of the SESSF stock regionalisation project, due for implementation in 2020.</p> <p>SESSFRAG recommended that due to insufficient ageing data and an assessment being low priority for industry it would be unwise to pursue an assessment at this time.</p>
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