



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority



Southern Bluefin Tuna Management Advisory Committee (SBTMAC)

**MINUTES
SBTMAC 42
25 SEPTEMBER 2018
PORT LINCOLN**



SOUTHERN BLUEFIN TUNA MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SBTMAC)

Introduction

The forty second meeting of the Southern Bluefin Tuna Management Advisory Committee (SBTMAC 42) was held in Port Lincoln on 25 September 2018.

The primary objectives of the meeting were to discuss:

- the outcomes from the 2018 Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) Operating Model and Management Procedure Technical Meeting and 23rd Extended Scientific Committee meeting;
- the proposed 2019/20 research priorities;
- progress towards accounting for all forms of mortality and 2018/19 Total Allowable Catch; and
- proposed changes to CCSBT catch disposal scheme (CDS).

Agenda Item 1: Preliminaries/matters arising

1.1: Opening Comments

1. The Chair, Mr Max Kitchell, opened the meeting at 9:00am and welcomed members, invited participants and observers to the 42nd meeting of SBTMAC. The Chair introduced new industry invited participant Mr Phil Turner who briefly outlined his background in the industry. Members noted that Mr Michael Thomas had recently resigned as an invited participant on SBTMAC. SBTMAC thanked Mr Thomas for his contributions to the committee and resolved that the Chair should write to Mr Thomas to that effect.

2. The apology from Glen Sant was noted

3. Participants at SBTMAC 42 were:

Chair

Mr Max Kitchell

Members

Dr Simon Nicol (ABARES)
Mr Trent Timmiss (AFMA)
Mr Andrew Wilkinson (farm industry sector)
Mr Marcus Stehr (farm industry sector)
Mr Rick Kolega (farm industry sector)
Mr Terry Romaro OAM (longline industry sector)
Mr Brett Cleary (recreational sector)

Invited Participants

Mr Brian Jeffriess AM (industry sector)
Mr Phil Turner (farm industry sector)
Mr Sean Sloan (State government)
Mr David Ellis (Tuna Australia)

Executive Officer

Ms Amelinda Byrne (AFMA)

Observers

Ms Ann Preece (CSIRO)
Mr Matt Daniel (AFMA)
Mario Velcic, (industry observer)
Hagen Stehr, AO, (industry observer)



Daryl Evans (industry observer)
Claire Webber (ASBTIA)
Dr Campbell Davies
Kirsten Rough (ASBTIA)

Adoption of agenda

4. SBTMAC adopted the agenda that was circulated prior to the meeting with no changes. **(Attachment A).**

1.2: Pecuniary interest declarations

5. The Chair stated that as outlined in the *Fisheries Administration Act 1991* and Fisheries Management Paper 1, all members and invited participants of SBTMAC must declare any interests, not limited to just pecuniary gain, in Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery as they relate to specific agenda items at the commencement of the meeting (Table 1). SBTMAC noted that if a member or invited participant discloses an interest in an agenda item, the person must absent themselves from the meeting while SBTMAC makes a decision as to whether they can participate in the discussion and in the making of recommendations, or remain absent from the meeting for the agenda item.

Table 1: SBTMAC members, invited participants and permanent observers' declarations of interest

Members	Declared Interests	Agenda Items Relevant to Declared Interests
Mr Max Kitchell	Employed as the SBTMAC Chair. No pecuniary interest in the Fishery.	Nil
Mr Trent Timmiss	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery	Nil
Dr Simon Nicol	Member of the Commonwealth Research Advisory Committee (COMRAC managed by the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation), ABARES research provider within government and no pecuniary interest.	Nil
Mr Andrew Wilkinson	SBT quota holder, General Manager of company that owns and operates a tuna farm/catching business.	6.1 and 6.2
Mr Rick Kolega	SBT quota holder and managing director of a tuna farm.	6.1 and 6.2
Mr Terry Romaro OAM	Director of a company that owns SBT, ETBF & WTBF quota SFR's. Mr Romaro further advised he is also a member of Squid Resource Assessment Group & Tropical Tuna Management Advisory Committee. He attends Indian Ocean Tuna Commission & CCSBT meetings representing Industry & is an Alternate Director of Tuna Australia P/L	6.1 and 6.2
Mr Marcus Stehr	Board member of Clean Seas, Board member of Australian Maritime and Fisheries Academy and Board member of Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Industry Association. Mr Stehr has recently been appointment to the Seafood Industry Association Board. Mr Stehr is also an SBT quota holder.	6.1 and 6.2
Mr Brett Cleary	Chair of Tasmanian Association for Recreational Fishing [TARFish]*, Board member Sustainable Marine Research Collaboration (SMRCA) Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS)*, Trustee International Game Fishing Association and Life Member of Game Fishing Association of Australia [GFAA]*. Mr Cleary has no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery. *Have or are funding research into SBT.	Nil
Ms Amelinda Byrne	Employee of AFMA acting as the Executive Officer for the SBTMAC42, no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery.	Nil
Invited participant	Declared interests	
Mr Brian Jeffriess AM (Invited Participant)	CEO of Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Industry Association.	Nil
Mr Phil Turner (Invited participant)	Board member of the Sarin Group and is an SBT quota holder.	6.1 and 6.2

Members	Declared Interests	Agenda Items Relevant to Declared Interests
Mr David Ellis (Invited participant)	Chief Executive Officer of Tuna Australian (Industry Association).	6.1 and 6.2.
Mr Sean Sloane (Invited participant)	Executive Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture, PIRSA. Member of the Australian Fisheries Management Forum, Chair of the Aquaculture Committee and member of the South Australian Advisory Committee. No pecuniary interest in SBT fishery.	Nil
Mr Matt Daniel (Observer)	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery	Nil
Ms Ann Preece (Observer)	Employee of CSIRO, no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery. Noting that CSIRO conducts research on range of fisheries issues.	4.1 and 4.2.
Dr Campbell Davies (Observer)	Employee of CSIRO, no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery. Noting that CSIRO conducts research on range of fisheries issues.	4.1 and 4.2.

Mr Andrew Wilkinson – as per requirements as a MAC member who has declared interests under an agenda item, Mr Wilkinson left the room. The remaining members of SBTMAC agreed that Mr Wilkinson should be allowed to return for all discussions but not the recommendations made under Agenda Item 6.1 and 6.2.

Mr Phil Turner – as per requirements as a MAC invited participant who has declared interests under an agenda item, Mr Turner left the room. The remaining members of SBTMAC agreed that Mr Turner should be allowed to return for all discussions but not recommendations made under Agenda Item 6.1 and 6.2.

Ms Ann Preece – as per requirements as a MAC observer who has declared interests under an agenda item, Ms Preece left the room. The remaining members of SBTMAC agreed that Ms Preece should be allowed to return for all discussions but not recommendations made under Agenda Items 4.1 and 4.2.

Dr. Campbell Davies - as per requirements as a MAC observer who has declared interests under an agenda item, Dr Davies left the room. The remaining members of SBTMAC agreed that Dr Davies should be allowed to return for all discussions but not recommendations made under Agenda Items 4.1 and 4.2.

1.3: Acceptance of minutes from SBTMAC 41

6. SBTMAC noted the finalised SBTMAC 41 minutes and the finalised minutes from the September teleconference as a true and accurate account of the discussions. Comments received were incorporated.

1.4: Actions arising from SBTMAC 41 and subsequent intercessional work

7. Members noted the status of the actions arising from SBTMAC 41 as outlined below:

	Action arising	Status
1	Australian Research Council project – Industry asked to be provided with raw data from the project published in the ICES journal of Marine Science.	The AFMA observer will provide an update on this item intersessionally to the SBTMAC.

2	Outcomes from the 8th CCSBT Operating Model and Management Procedure Technical Meeting – scientific member agreed to circulate a report summarising the outcomes from the meeting.	Completed and was discussed under 3.1.
3	Research Mortality Allowance – SBTMAC asked to receive any reports from the project titled “Health assessment of wild SBT”.	Final report provided to CCSBT Scientific Committee in 2018. Copies will be available at the meeting. This research has been completed. Novak paper under 4.2.
4	Overcatch in the SBTF - AFMA and the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources to discuss a solution for the overcatch issue and come up with a solution that will be acceptable to CCSBT.	Was discussed under agenda item 6.2.
5	Environment update – industry agreed to write to AFMA expressing their concerns regarding petroleum/mineral exploration.	Industry provided their concerns in the ASBTIA update on the SBT fishery provided to the AFMA Commission.

	Action arising from teleconference	Status
1	Management of the discarding of smaller fish in foreign longline fleet – industry invited participant and the conservation members would discuss the discarding issue out-of-session.	Verbal report provided at the meeting. Action complete.

Intersessional work

8. The following items/issues have been progressed out-of-session since the last SBTMAC meeting: 27 July 2017, the Executive Officer circulated the draft minutes from SBTMAC 41 for comment and accepted by SBTMAC 42:

- a) 12 September 2017, the Executive Officer circulated an email proposing to hold a teleconference on 26 September 2017;
- b) 22 September 2017, the Executive Officer circulated the agenda and papers for the SBTMAC teleconference;
- c) 26 September 2017, the Executive Officer circulated an updated conflict of interests table for the SBTMAC teleconference;
- d) 4 October 2017, the Executive Officer circulated the draft minutes from the SBTMAC teleconference;

- e) 31 January 2018, the Executive Officer sent an email seeking comments on accounting for recreational and indigenous fishing interests;
- f) 15 February 2018, the Executive Officer circulated an email seeking comments on the AFMA Research Committee proposals;
- g) 23 May 2018, the Executive Officer circulated an email proposing a date for SBTMAC 42;
- h) 6 June 2018, the Executive Officer circulated an email proposing the 25 September as a date for SBTMAC 42;
- i) 25 June 2018, the Executive Officer circulated an email confirming 25 September as the date for SBTMAC 42 in Port Lincoln; and
- j) 5 September 2018, Executive Officer circulated the draft agenda for SBTMAC 42.

Agenda Item 2: State of the fishery

2.1: Informal industry report on the 2017/18 catching season, markets and outlook

- 9. No members had any potential conflict of interests to declare under this item.
- 10. Industry members informed the SBTMAC that it was a good start to the season with confidence growing in the sales and marketing campaigns with the Japanese markets removing old stock. Demand was higher amongst buyers than what could be supplied by industry, however, prices did not fully reflect this heightened demand as much as hoped but the exchange rate is improving. Progress is still continuing to develop markets in China and Korea. An industry member also raised the positive and negative recreational interactions occurring in the fishery.
- 11. Other industry members also noted that sea conditions have been favourable, with good quantities of fish coming through earlier in the season with notable concentrations behind Kangaroo Island. Recreational fishing turnout has increased around the same area and some conflict was seen during commercial fishing operations, with the behaviour of recreational fishers of some concern to industry. This has been particularly difficult to navigate with instances of interference with commercial operations. Industry members indicated that harvesting was earlier this season, with frozen fish in late May the harvesting for fresh fish commencing in April. This is mainly due to the buyers and environmental conditions. Industry members agreed that there is a balance in creating new markets and ensuring fish are kept in the water for enough time to maintain the high quality of the Port Lincoln fish.
- 12. Industry members noted that there was not much effort in the west due to higher water temperatures and the presence of algal blooms, however, there was a fly-over in January and February in search of the gene tagged fish west of Ward Island.
- 13. The longline industry representative informed the SBTMAC that the east longline sector had a very good SBT season. SBT Zones have been in-place early in the season and moved to the highest point on the east coast in a number of years. The representative also commented on the interaction between recreational and commercial fishers by noting that the relationship has developed well in the east coast fishery with the example where commercial boats do not collect bait in certain areas that are then left for the recreational sector.
- 14. In responding to issues raised by industry with regards to negative interactions with recreational fishers, the recreational member noted that from a national perspective there should be rules based actions and those found to be breaking rules should be penalised.

There have been reports of positive interactions in the longline sector and there is further education that can be done should there continue to be issues with the commercial farming sector. It was noted that there have been no issues with charter fishing groups as there is a respect of and abidance with the rules in place. The only issues seem to involve a small group of recreational fishers south of Kangaroo Island.

15. The State Government invited participant informed the SBTMAC that the South Australia Police and Fisheries have been notified of certain interactions and noted this issue has moved beyond fisheries management and now incorporated maritime safety.

ASBTIA and PIRSA to liaise with maritime safety to identify what can be done to resolve issues occurring from recreational and commercial fishing interactions. **(Actions arising 1)**.

2.2: Informal report from the recreational sector member

16. The recreational member provided an update on the recent recreational catches of SBT. Tasmanian catches have been low mainly due to declining effort with Swordfish fishing becoming more popular. Tagging in Tasmania during the 2015/16 period was around 1,000 tags with the numbers down to 300 this year and an average weight of those tagged being around 40kgs. South Australia didn't see as many of the larger fish as usually seen, with effort in Victoria, which is usually the highest effort state, also lower this year. Victoria is also where the largest concerted effort of resource sharing discussion between recreational fishers and commercial fishers has occurred. The Tuna Champions project will be critical in this state.
17. The recreational member also noted the strong tag and release ethic in SA and hopes to get the same ethos into the recreational sectors in the other states. The member also noted that the Minister launched the Tuna Champions program a few months ago in Hobart, and the website was close to 'going live' at the time of the meeting. The member noted the importance for industry to be positive and support the program and surveys, particularly over the next 12 months, to get the message on education spread amongst the recreational sector and raise community expectations.
18. Industry members queried the congregation of 8-12kgs class found around the Portland area and whether this is a late arrival. The recreational member noted that the past 4 to 5 years have been fairly similar. The scientific observer noted these fish coming through were being forced further east into Victoria because of higher recruitment in the last decade whereas during years with lower recruitment these fish have mainly stayed in the GAB.
19. The recreational member noted industry's comment on finding practical ways to change community expectations and the conversations around perception of keeping fish as a trophy. This is a bigger discussion for outside the SBTMAC, but it concerns the discussion on bag limits and mortality rates and the push for the education program to overall reduce mortality.

2.3: AFMA report on SBT catches in the farm and longline sector

20. The AFMA observer presented the report on SBT catches in the farm and longline sector, noting that 5,123t of SBT was put into farms, compared to 4,683t the previous year which is the highest since 2007. Longline catches were also high this year; 27 vessels caught SBT in the ETBF with just over 1,000t to date caught. This compares to 649t in the 2016/17 season and 58t in 2011/12. He also noted that there is 148t still available but quota was hard to come by at this stage. A number of companies caught over 100t with one boat catching as much as 200t.

21. The range of SBT has moved higher up the east coast this year, as previously noted by industry members, and has been as high as north of Coffs Harbour with the SBT Zone still set at the time of the meeting off Newcastle, which is unusually high for this time of year.
22. Industry members queried how the remainder of the quota is managed at the end of the season as the availability begins to get scarce. This was the situation in the 2011/12 season when available quota was difficult to attain for the farm sector. Most of the operators in the longline sector, however, are opportunistic and it was noted it is unlikely that there will be a pre-commitment in the purchasing of quota for next season. AFMA's concerns are assuring there is quota available to cover the bycatch of SBT when targeting Yellowfin tuna in the ETBF. The AFMA member responded to a query on the use of EM in the fishery and explained that boats that do not have EM and SBT quota are not able to enter the SBT Zone when set.

Agenda Item 3: CCSBT

No members had any potential conflict of interests to declare under this item.

3.1: Outcomes from the CCSBT Operating Model and Management Procedure Technical Meeting and 23rd Extended Scientific Committee meeting (September 2018)

23. The Scientific member advised he will circulate a report summarising the outcomes of the meeting but he reminded members that the outcomes are not public until the end of the Commission meeting.
24. The MAC noted the evaluation of exceptional circumstances for the current Management Procedure (MP). No exceptional circumstances were raised at the meeting and an unchanged global TAC was recommended to the CCSBT Commission. There is also a new MP in development with progress continuing. The developers were given new targets in their objectives. The old objective to recover the stock to 20% of B₀ by 2035 (with 70% probability of this being achieved) is still a performance measure.
25. However, there is now exploration to achieve a higher biomass return by 2035, generated by a faster recovery of the species than was previously predicted. The instruction to the developers was to look at biomass of 25%, 30%, 35% or 40% by 2035 and achieve some TAC stability or an increase. Early work suggests that 25% and 40% are unlikely, with either 30% or 35% looking more likely and similar to the MSY estimates for SBT, noting new data will be available mid-2019. CSIRO will be leading the development of the MP from Australia's perspective with the aim being for the implementation of a new MP by October 2019.
26. The MAC also noted that there was strong recognition at the CCSBT SC of the close kin work to understand the size of the spawning stock, and recognition of the tagging work was acknowledged amongst members. There was discussion on ensuring there is observer coverage on vessels other than Australian vessels. The member informed the MAC that the CCSBT will revise the strategic research program in 2019, this has been effective at ensuring the genetics projects remain on the agenda.
27. SBTMAC noted that the CCSBT Operating Model and Management Procedure technical meeting had been very productive.

3.2: Update on progress towards a new Management Procedure

28. Members noted discussions on progress towards a new Management Procedure was combined with the update from the CCSBT Scientific Committee meeting.

Agenda Item 4: Research issues

4.1: Proposed 2019/20 research program and priorities

29. The AFMA observer provided the SBTMAC with the background to the research programs and priorities for discussion, including an explanation of the paper for presentation at the upcoming AFMA Research Committee meeting to decide new funding proposals. This included:
- a) **Intersessional science and the otoliths project**
 - b) **Development of the new management plan** - Ms Preece noted that the project is funded by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources through to December 2020
 - c) **Evaluation of SBT direct ageing requirements for the Australian longline fishery** - As the longline sector has increased in recent years, there was a determination that age data will need to be developed in the modelling. This is scheduled to finish 31 May 2019 and will be looked at in more depth next year.
 - d) **Development of independent size at age** - The scientific member provided a reminder to the SBTMAC on this project, and noted that this is a project pursued by the CCSBT to collect gonad samples not from the spawning grounds or through the winter months. A workshop is planned in Indonesia in April 2019. AFMA's funding is for one attendee to this workshop and the histology for the project.
 - e) **Close kin work** - Dr Campbell gave a summary of the project, including a break-down of the funding structure between CCSBT and CSIRO. There was a query from industry as to whether there could be any scope to look at the migration of juveniles, particularly in light of the industrial work undertaken throughout the GAB.
 - f) **Changing the Trajectory** – tracking the story of SBT since the 1950s through all sectors, many of those on the SBTMAC were taking part in the documentary. The AFMA member also noted this documentary is important to get the message across that good fisheries management does work, and SBT is a good example of this.
30. The AFMA observer provided an update on the new funding proposed. SBTMAC noted that the first new project for ARC funding, the SBT Inter-sessional science project is essential research and that it contributes significantly to Australia's understanding of the dynamics of the SBT stock that will then flow to the Committee .
31. SBTMAC noted that in regards to the second proposed new research project, due to changes in fishing practices a review of the otolith collection protocols may be necessary to ensure that 100 samples continue to be collected. It was agreed that AFMA, Industry and CSIRO will meet to discuss the issue.
32. AFMA, industry representatives and CSIRO will review the current otolith collection protocols to ensure adequate sampling continues for the development of the new management plan. **(Action arising 2)**

4.2: Research Mortality Allowance

33. SBTMAC noted that Australia did not request any Research Mortality Allowance for 2018. Members were provided with a report on the recently completed wild health assessment of southern bluefin tuna titled - *Overview of recent research on health of southern bluefin*

tuna. The AFMA observer reminded the SBTMAC on the process for determining mortality.

Agenda Item 5: Compliance issues

No members had any potential conflict of interests to declare under this item.

5.1: Compliance update

34. The AFMA member gave an update for both domestic and international compliance. The domestic farm sector received a couple of inspections from AFMA earlier this year, with no compliance issues noted for further action. An industry member queried what the targets were of the inspections, with the AFMA member providing some information such as logbook reporting and 100 fish sampling completed appropriately as some examples. He also indicated that Commonwealth Fisheries Officers are authorised under the *Maritime Powers Act 2014*, where Officers specialise in fisheries but can perform functions under the maritime powers including customs. The AFMA member went through the pricing schedule for compliance actions including those for joint operations with the states.
35. In the longline sector, all boats in the ETBF are required to have fully functioning Electronic Monitoring to enter SBT zones. There has been some discarding of dead fish but otherwise there has been high compliance. An industry representative queried how AFMA can determine high levels of compliance with 10% viewing of the EM footage. The AFMA member informed the SBTMAC of the process including that where there is footage viewed with a possible compliance action, footage from the preceding six months can be viewed for compliance purposes. EM provided AFMA with a better indication of compliance levels through viewing consistency in vessels use of mitigation devices, such as torilines. AFMA is working with a range of countries to get EM adopted more broadly and is pursuing the use of EM in the WCPFC and IOTC.
36. The AFMA member also provided information on compliance operations outside Australian waters. In the Pacific, Australia participates in boarding and inspections where genetic samples have been collected (with some of these samples going to CCSBT). In the IOTC there are no boarding and inspection regimes but observers are required on transshipping boats with information also going to CCSBT with scope to investigate infractions identified. Websites such as *Globalfishwatch* are also making it easier to identify global fishing operations.

Agenda Item 6: Domestic management issues

6.1: Progress towards accounting for all forms of mortality and 2018/19 Total Allowable Catch

37. The AFMA observer introduced this agenda item and provided the SBTMAC with background to Australia's progress towards accounting for all types of mortality against the national allocation and recommendation to the Commission on TACs.
38. The background included details from the 2014 CCSBT meeting where there was agreement to account for all sources of mortality, including recreational and artisanal catch by 2018. Australia informed CCSBT in 2017 it would set aside 250t to begin to account for recreational mortality. This was approved by the AFMA Commission with industry voluntarily agreeing to set aside 250t. The AFMA Commission did note, however, that any changes to this allocation would need to take into account outcomes from the national recreational survey, the FRDC survey of non-market value of recreational fishing, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) discussions between the Commonwealth and the

states, and the Tuna Champions project. Results of these projects are due to be reported mid-2020.

39. The AFMA observer gave a brief description of these four projects.

- a) The survey to estimate recreational catch of SBT – results expected to be available by mid-2020. The contract was given to UTAS which will work at the boat ramps interviewing recreational fishers. The scientific member spoke to the methodology including industry concerns around the exaggeration of catch reported.
- b) Economic survey and the assessment non-market value of SBT catch by recreational fishers. The AFMA observer clarified that this project aims to quantify community value, the money that recreational fishers are prepared to spend and the motivation for SBT fishing. Industry raised concerns on the purpose of the project with the AFMA observer explaining that the project has potential implications for future resource sharing discussions.
- c) MOU discussions with states. The MOU is proposed to encompass SBT resource sharing considerations and the development of a management approach for SBT, consistent with its conservation status. It also outlines a joint review, before October 2021, of the adequacy of management approaches for recreational SBT catch.
- d) The Tuna Champions project aims to ensure SBT fishers are encouraged to act as stewards of the fishery, and to actively contribute to the knowledge of the species. The MAC noted that the Al McGlashan documentary *Changing the Trajectory* is part of this broader, multifaceted strategy to educate both recreational fishers and the general public about SBT.

40. The SBTMAC moved to the options of how Australia will account for all types of mortality as a result of discarding. The AFMA observer noted the recent changes to discards that clarified shark damaged SBT that are not fit for human consumption can be discarded.. Where fish are discarded, fishers are required to do so in full view of the EM camera. All other discards are deducted from individual quota.

41. Discard mortality will be discussed at the 2018 CCSBT and the options for accounting for forms of mortality were presented (including the reduction from national quota allocations) as compared to how other countries account for discard mortality. The SBTMAC supported AFMA's preferred approach, which was to account for discard mortality deducting this from the individuals' quota holdings rather than from the national quota.

42. In regards to monitoring the discard mortality in ensuring this is deducted off quota, AFMA has a range of tools available for managing this process in the SBT fishery including deducting numbers from quota or disallowing fishing in the SBT Zones. With the review of logbook compared to EM footage, AFMA identified there was accurate reporting of SBT discards by operators in the longline sector. The AFMA member reiterated that while there is 10% of EM footage reviewed after each trip, operators do not know which parts are being reviewed. The risk to operators who do not report figures accurately is that they may then have months of EM footage viewed and this could potentially result in further infractions identified for the boat.

43. The AFMA observer informed members that the AFMA Commission is due to meet on 31 October 2018 to discuss, among other things, the setting of TACs for the 2019/20 season. Australia's current TAC is set at 6,165t with a commitment from industry not to catch 250t to account for all forms of mortality.

44. In agreeing to this commitment, ASBTIA stated that it:

- a) would voluntarily ensure the commercial take of SBT in the 2018 season is reduced by 250t (that will not attract undercatch) and that ASBTIA will hold this amount of quota on the SFR register;
- b) understands that if condition a) is not subsequently met then the voluntary arrangement would cease and the TAC for the 2019 season would be reduced to a level to at least accommodate the balance of the 2018 season commitment as well as any set aside amounts decided by the Commission; and
- c) understands that the voluntary arrangement above would be subject to review before the 2019 season TAC is set; and
- d) understands that formal set asides for recreational mortality will be decided following consideration of the recreational surveys and these will be reflected in the TAC setting process; and
- e) understands that the set-aside would not impact on the levies and other cost recovery from industry for the upcoming season; and
- f) agrees that there would no catching against the voluntary 250t set aside held by ASBTIA and ASBTIA would not take action that would otherwise trigger carryover arrangements for undercatch in relation to the set aside.

45. The SBTMAC then agreed to recommend to the AFMA Commission that,

- the TAC should be set at 6,165t. for the next two years,
- the industry set aside of 250t. apply for the next two years.

It was noted that these recommendations could be reviewed in the event that new information became available following the first year.

6.2 Excess catch allowance

46. The AFMA observer introduced this agenda item and gave a brief background explanation of the issue noting it was discussed in detail when AFMA conducted a review of overcatch and undercatch arrangements across all Commonwealth fisheries in 2016.

47. In 2017 SBTMAC considered a paper on the issue and agreed that AFMA would discuss the proposal with the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAWR) and attempt to come up with a solution that would be acceptable both domestically and internationally. AFMA, ASBTIA and DAWR have met and discussed the issue, with the industry member outlining support for the AFMA Commission to set a Determination in the 2018-2019 of an excess catch allowance of 5% up to a maximum of 100 tonnes for any one farming company. Industry members noted that this will allow for flexibility to manage the variable nature of the numbers of fish in the pontoons at a given time.

48. The AFMA member noted that the provision can currently achieve the 100t overcatch by changing company structure but this would be very difficult for industry and for AFMA to regulate. AFMA and the Department of Agriculture therefore support industry's suggestion for an excess catch allowance of 5% up to a maximum of 100 tonnes or whichever is lower.

6.3: Proposed changes to CCSBT CDS forms

49. The AFMA observer provided the SBTMAC with background on the CDS forms. He explained that there are two forms – the catch tagging form and catch monitoring form. The catch tagging form is electronic and submitted end of season. Industry noted this is a step in the right direction. The catch monitoring form needs to be completed with every

consignment of fish. Some companies only complete a few catch monitoring forms and some have multiples daily.

50. AFMA agreed to provide the MAC with a cost benefit analysis of implementing an electronic system for catch monitoring forms. (**Action arising 3**).

6.4: SBT budget issues –2017/18 SBT budget

51. The AFMA member provided the MAC with a summary of the budget for the SBT Fishery in the 2017/18 financial year. Members noted that the AFMA Cost Recovery Implementation Statement (CRIS) specifies what costs for management activities should be recovered from fishing concession owners and what should be funded by government. Government policy requires AFMA to review and update its cost recovery arrangements at least every five years. Subsequently AFMA has developed the 2017 CRIS which represents an update upon the previous 2010 CRIS.
52. The implementation of the 2017 CRIS has resulted in a range of significant changes to AFMA’s cost recovery arrangements from the 2010 CRIS. These changes, combined with the new activity based costing approach, will make direct comparison of the 2017-18 budget to the 2016-17 budget difficult. In future years comparisons should be easier.
53. SBTMAC noted that the SBTF cost recovered budget had increased by \$225,437 and this was mainly due to the SBT monitoring contract costs for the ranching sector increasing due to the change under the new CRIS from being 50% cost recovered to 100% cost recovered. Licensing costs have also increased due to an increase in managing the Catch Documentation Scheme and the costs being calculated on actual expenditure in recent years.
54. Policy support costs have also being included in all AFMA fisheries for the first time in the 2017/18 budget.
55. Members noted Table 2 in the document titled AFMA 2017 CRIS 2017-18 budget explains all the activities that AFMA undertakes and for which costs are cost recovered and the amount that is government funded (around \$5.4 million from industry \$2.8 million government funded). Members noted that activities associated with CCSBT, foreign fisheries, compliance and indigenous activities are all government funded.
56. The AFMA member outlined the cost-recovered components of the 2017-18 SBT Fishery budget.

ACTIVITY GROUP	SBT FISHERY COSTS 2017-18	SBT FISHERY FEE FOR SERVICE
A. Management of domestic commercial fisheries	\$325,069	
D. Policy support (based on number of FTEs)	\$32,357	
G. Data collection and management (80% industry recovered)	\$627,647	

H. Research (previously each project assessed individually now 75% industry and 25 % government includes hard parts and CCSBT inter sessional science)	\$168,685	
I. Licensing / registration and revenue collection (licensing transaction and overheads)	\$46,674	\$1,780
TOTAL	\$1,200,432	\$1,780
TOTAL LEVY BASE	\$1,198,652	

57. Industry acknowledged that the budget process is rigorously done by the SBT section but expressed concern at the sudden increase and would have preferred a staged increase. Industry also questioned the costs for the policy section. The AFMA member noted that the policy costs include a component of operational policy, economic advice, environmental management, legal services such as quota administration, bycatch and discards policies and managing protected species issues.

58. SBTMAC noted the 2017/18 SBT Fishery budget.

6.5: Environment update

59. The SBTMAC noted that since SBTMAC 40, the Minister for the Environment gazetted a Declaration of an Approved Wildlife Trade Operation (WTO) and an Amendment to the List of Exempt Native Specimens (LENS) for the Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery on 12 December 2016 to expire 13 December 2019. The WTO is subject to six conditions which were all expected. Industry indicated that they had hoped for a 5 year WTO but noted that only 3 year exemptions are given to any fishery with conservation dependent species. The AFMA member clarified that this is for exporting to confirm that Australia's fisheries are sustainable and adhere to strict environmental conditions.

60. SBTMAC noted that there had been a breach of the Seabird Threat Abatement Plan (TAP) requirements off Tasmania. The AFMA member noted that seabird mitigation is an important issue and AFMA will be working with all operators to ensure the TAP requirements are met. The AFMA member also noted that officers from the bycatch team within AFMA are likely to visit ports and reiterate the need for effective mitigation measures during the pre-season in areas of high seabird interactions.

61. The AFMA member advised the SBTMAC that the changes to the Marine Park areas came into effect on 1 July 2018.

62. Members noted that AFMA is often asked to provide comments on proposed petroleum and related activities which may interact with fishing or have potential effects upon the fishing industry. Activities include petroleum / mineral exploration, burial at sea, sea dumping, marine farming development and boat scuttling. When responding to enquiries AFMA now requests that the applicant contact the appropriate industry bodies.

63. Industry noted that there is a lot of work being done by AFMA on climate change effects on the fishery.

AFMA will provide an update on climate change work being undertaken for future SBTMAC meetings. **(Actions arising 4).**

Agenda Item 7: Other business

64. The state member informed the SBTMAC that the Management Plan for South Australia charter fisheries is ready for mid-term review and will be made available for public comment shortly.
65. An invited participant noted that the World Fisheries Congress is scheduled for Adelaide in 2020, and advised that SBT will be well represented.

Agenda item 8: Next meeting

66. SBTMAC members noted that the next meeting would be face-to-face before the June management procedures meeting in Seattle next year. The EO is to liaise with CSIRO for appropriate dates closer to the time.
67. The SBT Chair thanked the members and participants and closed the meeting at 2:35pm.

Attachment A

**Meeting of the Southern Bluefin Tuna
Management Advisory Committee
(SBTMAC 42)**



Tuesday 25 September 2018

9:00 am – 4.00pm

Port Lincoln Hotel, Port Lincoln

DRAFT Agenda

- 1. Preliminaries/matters arising**
 - 1.1 Opening remarks/apologies/acceptance of agenda
 - 1.2 Pecuniary interest declaration
 - 1.3 SBTMAC 41
 - 1.4 Action arising SBTMAC 41 and intersessional work
- 2. State of the Fishery**
 - 2.1 Informal industry report on the 2017/18 catching season, markets and outlook
 - 2.2 Informal report from the recreational sector member
 - 2.3 AFMA report on SBT catches in the farm and longline sector
- 3. CCSBT**
 - 3.1 Outcomes from CCSBT Operating Model and Management Procedure Technical Meeting and 23rd Extended Scientific Committee meeting (September 2018).
 - 3.2 Update on progress towards a new Management Procedure
- 4. Research issues**
 - 4.1 Proposed 2019/20 research program and priorities
 - 4.2 Research Mortality Allowance
- 5. Compliance issues**
 - 4.1 Compliance update and outcomes
- 5 Domestic management issues**
 - 6.1 Progress towards accounting for all forms of mortality and 2018/19 Total Allowable Catch
 - 6.2 Excess catch allowance
 - 6.3 Proposed changes to CCSBT CDS forms
 - 6.4 SBT budget issues - 2017/18 SBT budget
 - 6.5 Environment update (includes Seabird Threat Abatement Plan Update and WTO approval)
- 6. Other Business**
- 7. Next meeting**