



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

AFMADMW-1932364602-88931

Minutes

Meeting	Scallop Resource Assessment Group		
Meeting Number	45	Dates	12 March 2025
Location	Online	Time	09:30-13:30
Members	Brendan Kelahe – Chair Don Bromhead – Scientific member Caleb Gardner – economic member John Cull – Industry Member Yvette Lamont – AFMA Member Alannah Wood – Executive officer		
Apologies	Jayson Semmens – scientific member Stuart Richey – Industry member		
Invited Participants	Brad Milic – Atlantic fisheries consulting group Matt Koopman – Fishwell consulting Ryan Day – UTAS Andrew Penney – Fishwell Consulting		
Observers	Sally Weekes – AFMA Steph Blake – ABARES Conor Clayton - ABARES		

Agenda Item	Title/Topic/Issue	Notes, Action & Recommendations
1.	Preliminaries	<p>1.1 Welcome and apologies</p> <p>The Chair, Brendan Kelaher, opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed participants. The Chair also facilitated the introduction of meeting participants and noted apologies, which is recoded in the table above. Meeting participants were informed that the meeting would be recorded for the purpose of assisting the preparation of meeting minutes.</p> <p>1.2 Declarations of interests</p> <p>The Scallop RAG noted, in line with Section 15 of <i>Fisheries Management Paper 1 – Consultative Committees (FMP1)</i>, the requirement for all meeting participants to declare relevant interests, not limited to pecuniary gain, regarding all agenda items proposed for ScallopRAG 45. Meeting participants discussed and agreed how declared interest would be managed. Declared interests and how they were managed at ScallopRAG 45 are recorded in the register of interest at Attachment A.</p> <p>1.3 Adoption of agenda</p> <p>The agenda was adopted as final (see Attachment B).</p> <p>1.4 Minutes of previous meeting</p> <p>AFMA noted that the minutes from ScallopRAG 44 meeting held on 6 June 2024 were distributed to ScallopRAG members for feedback prior to finalisation and are available on the AFMA website.</p> <p>1.5 Actions arising from previous meetings</p> <p>ScallopRAG noted the status of action items from previous meetings.</p> <p>A summary of actions and recommendations from ScallopRAG 44 are at Attachment C.</p>
2	Fishery Update	<p>ScallopRAG noted updates from AFMA and industry regarding current management arrangements and activities in the BSCZSF Updates from other relevant jurisdictions were also provided.</p> <p>2.1 AFMA Management</p> <p>2.2 Industry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation was carried out by the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water on oyster reefs of Southern Australia to assess this ecological community and any required conservation actions. • Industry initially fished in Tasmania waters however due to the ‘money store crisis’ the local market deteriorated rapidly. Because of this, fishing began off King Island and the scallops in this region were of a high quality. • Due to the deterioration in the local market processors were freezing product and operators reduced fishing trips. The market was mixed for processors with some having good markets and other not prepared to take the risk of holding too much product given the economic condition at the time. <p>2.3 Other Jurisdictions</p>

		<i>Victoria and Tasmania were invited but were unable to attend</i>
5	<p>FOR ADVICE</p> <p>2025 Biomass survey bed prioritisation</p>	<p>ScallopRAG noted the Biomass survey plan presented by Matt Koopman.</p> <p>ScallopRAG discussed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether it would be beneficial to include a bed from the western region to maintain a time series within this area consistent with the time series available in the East with the inclusion of The Hill North and North of Babel. • It was noted that one of the challenges of having a long time series in the West is the scallop boom and bust cycle in this region which it is prone too, where Flinders Island is an anomaly and keeps on producing. • Given that beds within approximately 60 kms of each other tend to show (on average) similar dynamics in terms of recruitment there could be potential to have sub region indicator beds that reflect what is happening to scallop beds within this radius. • The survey design outlines ten beds to survey plus one exploratory bed which Industry indicated could have the potential to be two new beds. Flinders Island North – The Sisters will be a backup bed should exploratory work prove unproductive. • AFMA provided information on the expression of Interest (EOI) process that had been undertaken to select the vessels to carry out the survey, as in previous years five applications were received with each of the vessels and operators considered suitable to undertake the survey. <p>ScallopRAG provided the following advice and recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In meeting the survey requirements and Industries preferences the RAG supported the recommendation of five boats carrying out the survey work. • In agreeing with the recommendations made by the BSCZSF Co Management Committee the RAG agreed with the beds selected for survey with the only change being to remove Three Hummocks South and replace with Blue Dot Extended to have a time series continuation in the western region. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p>Recommendation 1: The RAG recommended that the following beds be surveyed during the 2025 survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King Island 10 • Blue Dot Extended • Three Hummock South East • King Island Lavinia East • King Island Lavinia North • King Island – Exploratory bed small • King Island – Exploratory bed commercial • Apollo Bay – The Hill North • Flinders Island • Flinders Island South – North of Babel • Flinders Island – Exploratory Beds (potentially two beds) </div>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Flinders Island North – The Sisters <p><i>* Backup if Flinders Island exploratory sites don't yield a productive scallop bed.</i></p>
6	For Advice MSC Update	<p>ScallopRAG noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussed the harvest strategy and the harvest control rules with the RAG reiterated that they would like the rules tested before they are implemented. However, due to the cost of the multi strategy evaluation (MSE) project it may not receive funding from the AFMA Research Committee (ARC). If the MSE project does not get funded this year AFMA stated that it could potentially consider implementing the proposed HCRs and carry out testing at a later date. The fishery requires limit reference points (LRP) and harvest control rules that will act to reduce the catch if the stock starts declining. Empirical testing could potentially be undertaken by looking at historical patterns in the fishery under different circumstances that show reasonable protection of stocks. The BSCZSF Harvest Strategy Working group could lead the work on the BSCZSF Harvest Strategy (HS) and progress this into a project that may assist in an updated HS and meet MSC conditions.
7	For noting Research	<p>Scallop RAG noted the following:</p> <p>Andrew Pennys presentation on population dynamics;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on this research the harvest control rules could be revisited and amended to take into account this new information with it being agreed to hold a harvest strategy working group meeting to address this. <p>Ryan Day presented his recent research on scallops in the Bass Strait;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This included a current FRDC project looking at the Boom-and-bust cycle of scallop, carrying out video surveying in the Boags Marine Park and developing a machine to learn modelling to enable video analysis with offshore capabilities. Drop cameras might be a quick alternative to conducting dredge tows across a wide range and extend the current survey area. <div> <p>Action 1: Invite Andrew Penney to the June RAG meeting to further discuss the Population Dynamics project.</p> <p>Action 2: AFMA to convene a BSCZSF harvest strategy working group meeting to progress updating of the BSCZSF Harvest Strategy in particular HCRs and LRP ahead of the next RAG.</p> <p>Action 3: Ryan Day to provide reports on the three projects presented and invited to the June RAG to discuss the seismic survey project.</p> </div>
8	Other business	There was no other business raised.

Close of meeting	The Chair closed the meeting at 13:11.
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Attachment A – Register of interests

Name	RAG/MAC position / organisation	Declared interests	Relevant agenda item(s) and how they will be managed
Brendan Kelaher	Chair	No interest in the fishery pecuniary or otherwise.	
Jayson Semmens	Scientific member	Scallop Research Group Leader, Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies. Organisation is known to submit research funding applications for consideration by ScallopRAG	
Don Bromhead	Scientific member	No interest in the fishery pecuniary or otherwise.	
Stuart Richey	Industry member	Holds Commonwealth and State fishing concessions, Commonwealth fish receiver permit and State processing licences.	
John Cull	Industry member	Holds Commonwealth and State concessions.	
Caleb Gardner	Economic Member	Employee of IMAS, UTAS. Organisation is known to submit research funding applications for consideration by ScallopRAG.	
Yvette Lamont	AFMA member	AFMA employee. No interest in the fishery pecuniary or otherwise.	
Alannah Wood	Executive officer	AFMA employee. No interest in the fishery pecuniary or otherwise.	
Andrew Penney/Matt Koopman	Invited participant, Fishwell Consulting	Fishwell Consulting employee. Fishwell have undertaken the BSCZSF survey since 2015. Fishwell also submit research funding applications and	

		undertake research projects for Commonwealth, State and International fisheries agencies and other organisations including fishery associations and private companies. This includes catch and effort data from the BSCZSF. No other interest in any commercial fisheries.	
Brad Milic	Invited participant, Atlantis Fisheries Consulting Group	Contracted by Atlantis Consulting, representing industry clients.	
Sally Weekes	Observer	AFMA employee. No interest in the fishery pecuniary or otherwise.	
Ryan Day	Observer	Employee of IMAS, UTAS. Organisation is known to submit research funding applications for consideration by ScallopRAG.	

Attachment B – Adopted agenda

Meeting 45 – 12 March 2025			
Approximate time	Item	Purpose	Lead presenter
10:00 (20 min)	Agenda item 1. Preliminaries		
	1.1 Welcome and apologies	For action	Chair
	1.2 Declaration of interests	For action	Chair
	1.3 Adoption of agenda	For action	Chair
	1.4 Minutes of previous meeting	For action	Chair
	1.5 Action Items from previous meetings	For action	AFMA
	1.6 Compliance and Observer Coverage	For noting	AFMA
	1.7 ERA and Bycatch and Discard Workplan	For noting	AFMA
10:20 (60 min)	Agenda item 2. 2025 Biomass Survey Bed Prioritisation	For advice	AFMA member
10:35 (15 min)	Morning Tea		
10:50 (45 Mins)	Agenda Item 3. MSC Update	For Advice	AFCG
11:35 (70 min)	Agenda item 4. Research	For discussion	
	4.1 Population biology and bed dynamics presentation		Fishwell – Andrew Penney
	4.2 Boag marine park survey presentation		IMAS - Ryan Day
12:45 (15 min)	Agenda item 5. Other Business	For noting	All Members
13:00	End of meeting		

Attachment C - Summary of Actions and Recommendations

Agenda Item	No.	Action	Agency/Person Responsible	Timeframe
2	1	<p>The RAG recommended that the following beds be surveyed during the 2025 survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King Island 10 • Blue Dot Extended • Three Hummock South East • King Island Lavinia East • King Island Lavinia North • King Island – Exploratory bed small • King Island – Exploratory bed commercial • Apollo Bay – The Hill North • Flinders Island • Flinders Island South – North of Babel • Flinders Island – Exploratory Beds (potentially two beds) • Flinders Island North – The Sisters (back up bed dependent on time) <p><i>* Backup if Flinders Island exploratory sites don't yield a productive scallop bed.</i></p>	Fishwell	Prior to next RAG
Agenda Item	No.	Recommendation	Agency/Person Responsible	Timeframe
7	1	Invite Andrew Penney to the June RAG meeting to further discuss the Population Dynamics project.	AFMA	Prior to next RAG
7	2	AFMA to convene a BSCZSF harvest strategy working group meeting to progress updating of the BSCZSF Harvest Strategy in particular HCRs and LRP ahead of the next RAG.	AFMA	Prior to next RAG
7	3	Ryan Day to provide reports on the three projects presented and invited to the June RAG to discuss the seismic survey project.	AFMA	Prior to next RAG