



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

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Minutes

Meeting	Northern Prawn Fishery Management Advisory Committee (NORMAC)		
Meeting Number	90	Dates	1 July 2025
Location	Brisbane/Online	Time	8:15am
Members	<p>Mr Geoff Richardson – Chair</p> <p>Mr Brodie Macdonald – AFMA Member</p> <p>Mr Bryan van Wyk – Industry Member</p> <p>Mr Gregory Albert – Industry Member</p> <p>Mr Ian Boot – Industry Member</p> <p>Mr Phillip Robson – Industry Member</p> <p>Mr Michael O’Brien – Industry Member</p> <p>Dr Denham Parker – Scientific Member</p> <p>Dr Ian Knuckey – Scientific Member</p> <p>Dr Geoffrey Muldoon – Environment/Conservation Member</p> <p>Mr Kelvin Montanaro – Executive Officer</p>		
Apologies	Nil		
Invited Participants	Ms Annie Jarret - NPFI		
Observers	<p>Mr Brandon Meteyard – NPFI PM</p> <p>Darci Wallis – AFMA NPF Manager</p> <p>Wez Norris – AFMA CEO</p> <p>Sevaly Sen – AFMA Commissioner</p> <p>Scott Spencer – AFMA Commissioner</p> <p>Sally Troy – AFMA Commissioner</p> <p>Brett McCallum – AFMA Commissioner</p> <p>Natalie Couchman – AFMA</p> <p>Tamre Sarhan – AFMA</p>	<p>Lachlan Baker – AFMA</p> <p>Toby Patterson – CSIRO</p> <p>David Carter – Industry</p> <p>Stuart Nesbit – Industry</p> <p>Andy Pendergast - Industry</p> <p>Norm Peovitis – Industry</p> <p>Rohan Polomka – Industry</p> <p>Ken Hartley – Industry</p> <p>Beau Anderson – Industry</p>	

Agenda Item	Title/Topic/Issue	Notes, Action & Recommendations
1.	Preliminaries	<p>1.1 Welcome and apologies</p> <p>The Chair, Mr Geoff Richardson, opened the meeting with an acknowledgement of Country and welcomed participants. The Chair also facilitated the introduction of meeting participants and noted apologies, which are recorded 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>NORMAC noted, in line with Section 3.4.3.1 of Fisheries Management Paper 1 – Management Advisory Committees (FMP1), the requirement for all meeting participants to declare relevant interests, not limited to pecuniary gain, regarding all agenda items proposed for NORMAC 90. Meeting participants discussed and agreed how declared interest would be managed. Declared interests and how they were managed at NORMAC 90 are recorded in the register of interest at Attachment B.</p> <p>NORMAC noted that there was a separate agenda item 4 (2025 Total Allowable Effort (TAE) Setting), allowing industry to be present for discussions under agenda item 3 (2025 NPF Stock Assessment). Industry members, invited participants and observers left the room. NORMAC agreed that industry members could be present for discussion of agenda item 4 but not for the TAE recommendation. Industry conflicts of interest were also identified for agenda item 6 (NPF Structural Adjustment) and 7 (EM in the NPF). It was agreed that industry would be involved in full discussion but would leave the room for any final recommendations. Industry was advised of these arrangements once they returned to the meeting.</p> <p>1.3 Adoption of agenda</p> <p>The agenda was adopted as final (see Attachment A), noting that some items may be moved because of presenter availability.</p> <p>1.4 Minutes of previous meeting</p> <p>NORMAC noted that the minutes from NORMAC 89 on 7 June 2024 had previously been approved/ confirmed by members and are available on the AFMA website.</p> <p>1.5 Correspondence</p> <p>NORMAC noted relevant correspondence since NORMAC 89.</p> <p>1.6 Actions arising from previous meetings</p> <p>NORMAC noted the status of action items from previous meetings. They also noted an update that a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by AFMA and CSIRO following a letter from former NORMAC Chair Mr John Glaister – the letter was provided to NORMAC in the suite of meeting papers. The MOU outlines the mutually agreeable strategic research initiatives between AFMA and CSIRO and also stipulates a set of co-investment rate principles to apply to CSIRO research project proposals. Members sought advice on the co-contribution detail of the MOU funding agreement.</p>

		<p>A summary of actions and recommendations from NORMAC 90 are at Attachment C.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>Fishery Update</p>	<p>2.1 Industry report</p> <p>NORMAC noted a verbal update from industry members and observers, key discussion points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued economic hardship faced by industry, with high costs for fishing and low prawn prices, although some operators reported a recent increase to prawn prices with less domestic product on the market. • The international market has been challenging, with exchange rates also influencing profitability. • 2025 was an unusual season with the lowest level of vessel participation during a banana prawn season; some operators have been fishing in other fisheries to remain profitable. • 2025 environment conditions were anomalous, with the late arrival of the monsoon, more smaller prawns offshore and ‘green water’ (layer of freshwater above salt due to limited mixing). • Higher than usual numbers of smaller, lower value prawns were seen (20/30 grade), with industry agreeing in week two of the season to implement a voluntarily closure in the Sweers area from 11th April to 1st May. • It was proposed that smaller operators are generally better able to adjust operations in response to poor economic conditions (i.e. lower overheads). • Industry raised concerns about the impact of the <i>Ocean with David Attenborough</i> documentary, especially in the context of recent commitments by the Australian Government to designate 30% of the Australian EEZ as ‘highly protected’ marine protected areas by 2030. • Industry remains committed to being environmentally and sustainably responsible. <p>NORMAC also noted the NPMI update, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Crew Member Observer (CMO) program continues to exceed annual endangered, threatened, and protected (ETP) species data collection targets/ CMO KPIs. • There has been continued improvement in logbook reporting of ETP species by skippers. • In line with the NPMI Harvest Strategy decision rules, the banana prawn fishery season closed early on 25 May 2025 due to the MEY trigger limit not being met in the second reporting period. It was noted that most vessels had left the fishery by the end of the reporting period. • All NPMI data management/reconciliation has been undertaken as required, including revisions to the NPMI economic survey to reduce errors and increase consistency with data provided. • Five vessels continue to deploy data loggers to provide temperature at depth data (under the FishSOOP project). • Two vessels maintained electronic monitoring (EM) systems during the 2025 banana prawn fishing season. • NPMI engagement with key Indigenous groups in the region continues. • Sawfish tagging/tissue sampling efforts continue to support the close-kin-mark-recapture (CKMR) and post capture survivability projects.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orders for NPF broodstock collection remain similar to 2024, with one vessel contracted by NPF to provide broodstock to prawn farms in 2025. <p>NORMAC recognised the efforts of NPF in managing the CMO program and emphasised its importance to ongoing data collection and sustainability of the fishery.</p> <p>2.2 Banana Prawn Eastern Gulf Productivity</p> <p>NORMAC noted a presentation from CSIRO on the potential causes of the recent poor banana prawn catches in the eastern Gulf of Carpentaria (GoC), specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The timing and volume of rainfall is the key variable influencing banana prawn recruitment, with the importance of multiple rain events highlighted – both early season rainfall (Nov/Dec), in addition to the usual, larger, later rainfall (Jan/Feb). • Temperature was also highlighted as a key potential factor for prawn recruitment, with longer periods of higher temperatures potentially reducing recruitment success. • Hypotheses for the recent eastern GoC poor recruitment were considered, noting that the volume and timing of rainfall were likely the ultimate drivers. Proximate drivers may include higher predation on juvenile prawn aggregation around river mouths and longer periods of increased inshore temperature due to late rainfall delaying flushing out of prawns/water mixing. <p>NORMAC discussed the results of the presentation. Key points included that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the CSIRO presentation was helpful to understand poor banana prawn catches in 2025, industry noted that catches had been low in the eastern GoC for the past three years. • Poor water quality was a potential hypothesis for longer term catch trends for banana prawns in the Eastern GoC, although no conclusions could be made. • Industry noted that a persistent layer of freshwater was present nearshore, which may be due to the late monsoon arrival and less wind/cyclone activity. • Prawns are a variable species, with periods/areas of poor productivity previously seen in the fishery (up to 5 years in some cases). • The existing NPF adaptive management structure allows more flexibility than most other fisheries to take account of key environmental/other indicators in the future. Further, the multispecies nature of the fishery allows industry to adjust targeting and focus on species/areas based on annual availability of species. <p>2.3 AFMA management update</p> <p>NORMAC noted an update from AFMA on the management of the NPF, including the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Wildlife Trade Operation (WTO) conditions to date have been met, with others on track. • WTO condition 5 was recently updated to broaden its scope beyond a review of the spatial/temporal coverage of the AFMA observer program, and to extend the timeframe for completion to align with the development of the NPF Data Strategy due in mid-2026.
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3	2025 NPF Stock Assessment	<p>3.1 Northern Prawn Resource Assessment Group (NPRAG) Chair Update</p> <p>The NPRAG Chair provided an update on its recent May meeting to NORMAC, noting the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognising the significant amount of work was undertaken by the CSIRO stock assessment Team in a Tiger non-assessment year. • Concerns on the impact for the NPF with the revised timing of ABARES Fishery Status Report (FSR) releases, with potential for 2-3 year lags in data/stock assessment being used in the FSR assessment. • AFMA Action to identify the reason for some identified discrepancies in ETP reporting figures across various reporting sources. • Outcomes of the annual retrospective review of the banana prawn MEY in-season trigger, with generally a strong correlation between the estimated and actual prawn/fuel prices. Although these have differed more in the last couple of years due to recent economic uncertainties, the 2025 differences resulted in a more precautionary maximum economic yield (MEY) trigger. • The <i>Northern Prawn Fishery Annual Research Statement 2026-27</i> was discussed, with the following revisions agreed for the current research priorities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Economic sensitivity analysis remained a high priority.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Artificial intelligence (AI) advances were considered as important (including potential applications to EM), but with a more holistic view rather than an NPF specific view. ○ Scampi analysis was no longer considered a priority. ● Relevant WTO and Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification conditions were met, with work ongoing to meet sawfish requirements. ● The redleg banana prawn ecological risk assessment (ERA) was endorsed, noting that there was a need to update the tiger prawn and common banana prawn ERAs. ● Changes to targets under a revised <i>Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy</i> (CHSP) were considered a possibility, meaning the NPRAG needs to consider the future utilisation of MEY targets in the NPF. <p>3.2 Tiger prawn stock assessment</p> <p>Scientific member Dr Denham Parker (CSIRO), provided a series of presentations on the tiger prawn stock assessment, summarised below.</p> <p><i>Summary of the NPF Tiger prawn catch and effort data and the fishery independent survey data.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Compared to 2023, grooved tiger prawn catches increased by 10% (with a 3% increase in nominal effort) while brown tiger prawn catches and nominal effort significantly decreased by 41% and 58% respectively. ● Blue and red endeavour prawn catches increased by 23% and 10% respectively (compared to 2023). ● The 2025 recruitment survey indices for grooved and brown tiger prawns were lower than 2024 (4.33 and 3.15 respectively). ● The 2025 recruitment survey indices for blue and red endeavour prawns were lower than 2024 (1.58 and 0.51 respectively). <p><i>Results from 2024 tiger prawn stock assessment with updated economic data</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The 2024 tiger prawn stock assessment base case scenario was run using revised economic data provided by Dr Tom Kompas. ● Fishery average capital value per vessel was also revised based on ABARES published statistics. ● There were notable changes to economic data compared with the 2024 stock assessment inputs, including a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 22% reduction to tiger prawn prices to \$21.71/kg. ○ 45% reduction in vessel fuel costs to \$2,623/vessel/day. ○ 70% increase in capital value per vessel to \$928,190. ● The large change in capital value was a result of this value being “indexed” for several years (i.e., proportional increases applied to the initial value) due to data not always being available from n ABARES surveys. This latest value is calculated based on the most recent information available from ABARES. This value has no influence on TAE results but altered the profitability estimates of the fishery. ● The key outputs of the revised model were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No change for the NPF’s sustainability – only economic parameters were changed. ○ Increase in the maximum economic yield (MEY) and increased projected negative profit (due largely to the revised capital values). ○ The revised model estimated a higher 2030 TAE of 5,557 effort days (compared to 4,509 days from the 2024 assessment).
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<p>4</p>	<p>2025 TAE Recommendation</p>	<p>In addition to the stock assessment outputs under Agenda Item 3, NORMAC considered the following advice in its formulating of the NPF 2025 TAE:</p> <p><i>NPRAG recommendations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4,014 tiger prawn effort days, accepting the outcomes of the revised 2025 stock assessment model results. • 412 boat days for the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf fishery, using the 2024 redleg banana prawn assessment outputs.

		<p><i>NPFI advice</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported the recommended tiger prawn TAE of 4,014 effort days, implemented through in-season monitoring of effort with a season closing date agreed between AFMA and NPFI as the effort approaches the TAE. A closure notification period of two weeks was used in 2024, although further advice will be sought from industry members on the minimum lead time required by industry. <p><i>AFMA advice</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AFMA noted that it would require a minimum period of <u>at least two business days</u> to implement the season closure through a closure direction amendment. <p>NORMAC also noted the following discussion points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on the latest tiger prawn data presented by CSIRO, the effort on brown tiger prawns has been substantially lower in recent years, particularly 2024. Noting this, NORMAC agreed that specific management arrangements are not currently required for brown tiger prawns. <p>Industry members were present for the discussions on this item, leaving the room before the final recommendation was made.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Action 3: NPFI to advise AFMA of the minimum notice period required by industry prior to the fishery closing.</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Recommendation 1</p> <p>NORMAC supported the following management arrangements for the 2025 tiger prawn season:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) A TAE of 412 boat days for redleg banana prawn fishery. b) A TAE 4,014 boat days for tiger prawn fishery, monitored in-season through the same process used in 2024. AFMA and NPFI will agree on a season closure date as the effort approaches the TAE, implemented through an AFMA Direction. </div>
<p>5</p>	<p>Performance monitoring report</p>	<p>NPFI provided the draft 2024 <i>NPF Performance Monitoring Report</i>, with NORMAC noting the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NPF Performance Monitoring Framework was initially developed to determine when a structural adjustment was required in the fishery, based on key biological and economic indicators agreed by NPFI, NPRAG and NORMAC. It was noted that the key indicators must be breached over three consecutive years to trigger a required management response under the framework. There is a contradiction between the data outputs/forecasts from the ABARES economic surveys and the NPFI economic survey, particularly in terms of the ABARES projected 2023/24 NER. ABARES advice is that they are pivoting to a non-survey method for calculating GVP and NER for Commonwealth fisheries. It's unclear what the implications of that approach will be future NPMR's.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2024 NPRM results show that only one indicator has been breached in a single year. • NORMAC agreed that the NPF Performance Monitoring Framework should be reviewed given it has been in place for over 10 years. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Action 4: Review the NPF Performance Monitoring Framework, led by NPFI, in consultation with AFMA and other relevant experts for NPRAG and NORMAC consideration.</p> </div>
6	NPF structural adjustment	<p>Following brief updates from AFMA and NPFI on structural adjustment within the NPF, NORMAC discussed the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NPF has experienced severe economic hardship for several years due to high input costs and low prawn prices. Similar negative economic impacts have also been seen in other wild-capture fisheries around Australia. • Formal NPFI discussions about the potential need for and the various structural adjustment options have been ongoing since March 2024. • NPFI commissioned an independent economic analysis of the fleet, with the key outcome being that a structural adjustment would have significant economic benefits though increased profitability and potential environmental benefits (e.g. through reduced carbon emissions). • Currently, all external structural adjustment funding options, either through a government funded buyback or low interest government loans, have been exhausted. The majority of NPFI shareholders agree that additional debt should not be taken on through an industry-funded buyback. • NPFI considered that any change to the current gear SFR management system would be time consuming, costly and would not address the current economic conditions of the fishery. • The final option considered by NPFI was a compulsory reduction in gear statutory fishing right (SFR)/headrope values to facilitate a reduction in the total number of vessels in the NPF. • It was noted that overall, there is little difference between an industry-funded buyout versus a compulsory SFR value reduction, as both require industry to go into debt (it just differs where the debt sits within industry). • A unanimous NPFI position could not be reached on either the need for, or preferred approach for, structural adjustment in the fishery. • The majority of NPFI shareholders agreed with the principle that at least some level of compulsory SFR value reduction was required in the fishery. • Companies have different capacity to respond to structural adjustment and remain operational without reducing vessel numbers especially smaller operators/companies. Any structural adjustment needs to consider the potential equity issues (including differing impacts between large and small operators). AFMA noted that management decisions need to consider fishery-wide objectives and underlying principles of fairness and equity • Pending the outcome of the current Commonwealth Harvest Strategy Review, there may be additional flexibility associated with reviewing the current MEY target for the fishery.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjustment to SFR values is not always downwards. Previous adjustment in SFR/headrope values has been both upwards and downwards. Decreases occurred between 2000 and 2004, and increases occurred in 2008/09. • Industry members expressed the importance of a prompt decision on any structural adjustment to provide certainty for industry to make informed choices. <p>The Chair noted that in the absence of a majority industry position, NORMAC was not able to provide a recommendation on a preferred structural adjustment approach in the NPF. Given that, NORMAC agreed that all structural adjustment discussions and available information (including calculations/figures considered by NPFI at its recent meeting) would be provided to the AFMA Commission to inform their structural adjustment discussions/decision at its upcoming meeting in mid-August.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Action 5: NPFI to provide AFMA with all available information related to structural adjustment, including SFR values and analysis of structural adjustment scenario modelling.</p> </div>
7	EM in the NPF	<p>AFMA presentation</p> <p>The AFMA member, Mr Brodie Macdonald, provided a presentation on EM implementation in the NPF, with NORMAC noting the following key discussion points:</p> <p><i>Decision-making process</i></p> <p>The following process would be undertaken to inform the decision on EM implementation in the NPF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NORMAC consideration of EM implementation in the NPF at this meeting, including the draft NPF EM Trial Report. • Potential further discussion at an additional virtual meeting scheduled for 1 August. • AFMA Commission to consider all available information/advice and decide on EM implementation at its 12-13 August 2025 meeting. <p><i>EM in AFMA fisheries</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EM programs are currently mandated in several Commonwealth fisheries, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery (SESSF) ○ Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) ○ Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery (WTBF) ○ Gillnet, Hook and Trap Fishery (GHAT) ○ Small Pelagic Fishery (SPF) • The major driver for EM implementation in these fisheries was the need to implement cost-effective ETP monitoring requirements, with the primary objective being to verify logbook data (e.g. retained /discarded catch, ETPs or mitigation device deployment). • Introduction of EM can initiate important feedback loops that can improve reporting practices. • EM review rates differ between/within fisheries, although on average are around 5-10% of fishing effort.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The costs of managing the EM Program are attributed through the levy base. • AFMA received \$10.1 million in funding from 2021-22 for EM to be expanded across Commonwealth fisheries to collect fine-scale at-sea fishing data. • AFMA is currently considering the future approach for the supply/servicing of EM systems, either sourcing a single provider (as currently) or having contracts with multiple suppliers. The EM review component will be brought in-house to AFMA. <p><i>NPRAG perspective</i></p> <p>The NPRAG Chair provided a summary of NPRAG discussions on EM implementation in the NPF, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide adequate advice, the NPRAG must at minimum discuss data requirements for the NPF and receive full costings for potential EM implementation. • The fundamental rationale for implementing EM in the NPF was not clear and in addition insufficient information had been provided on whether EM would add, augment, or replace data collection in the NPF. • The implementation of EM in the NPF has the potential to have a significant impact on current data collection, potentially resulting in loss of longer-term data series. <p>NORMAC discussed the potential applications and implementation of EM in the NPF, noting the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data errors in the supporting ABARES analysis were identified just prior to the meeting, which will be corrected and revised ABARES and AFMA reports to be provided at the 1 August meeting. • Concerns were raised regarding the capability of EM to provide data equivalent to the current data collection programs it would replace, with agreement that EM must, at minimum, provide species-level identification of ETP species. • The EM costings provided exclude the required additional biological sampling programs, with this information required before any informed decision can be made. • There is significant recent research underway to reduce fishery impacts on key ETP species, including development of mitigation options aiming to reduce interactions. • Several unknown elements that need to be considered prior to any decision to implement EM in the NPF, with general agreement that any EM implementation decision is not taken in isolation but as part of the broader review of the data and monitoring requirements in the NPF. • Overall, the net positive benefits for EM implementation have not yet been demonstrated, especially noting the uncertainty around, and potentially significant impacts to the current NPF data series. • AFMA noted that there will never be a situation where the AFMA Commission would have perfect information to support a decision on EM implementation. • The applications of EM in other Commonwealth fisheries were at least partially to verify ETP reporting (with low levels of reported ETP interactions). However, there are already ETP reporting programs in the NPF and reasonably high levels of ETP interactions reported in logbooks.
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economies of scale benefits provided through assumed implementation of EM in remaining major Commonwealth fisheries will influence costings per fishery. • Industry noted that while the trial shows EM implementation is possible in the NPF, this does not necessarily mean that it is a cost-effective alternative, appropriate or justified. • Industry raised concerns with the estimated cost increases (~\$50,000 annually), which exclude costs for required additional biological sampling, under the current challenging economic circumstances and a potential structural adjustment. <p>NORMAC agreed to revisit the topic of EM implementation in the NPF at its 1 August virtual meeting, prior to the AFMA Commission’s August 2025 meeting. To support further NORMAC consideration, AFMA agreed the following information would be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised ABARES figures/data to correct the identified data errors in the analysis. • As much additional detail as possible (noting the timeframes) on the need for and costings of alternative biological sampling options. • A revised draft NPF EM Trial Report, incorporating the updated ABARES information and biological sampling costings. • If possible, advice from either NPRAG or a NPRAG sub-group on the revised information above – noting this may not be possible within the limited timeframes). <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Action 6: AFMA to get the identified data errors corrected and provide updated figures/tables within a revised draft NPF EM Trial Report.</p> <p>Action 7: If possible, AFMA to seek NPRAG or NPRAG data sub-group group input on the revised draft reports. These will be provided for NORMAC consideration at its 1 August meeting.</p> </div>
8	Climate Adaptation	This item was delayed until the next NORMAC meeting.
9	Ecological Risk Assessment	This item was delayed until the next NORMAC meeting.
10	Research Project update	<p>Updates under 10.1 and 10.2 were delayed until the next NORMAC meeting.</p> <p>10.3 Narrow sawfish FRDC CKMR project update</p> <p>Dr Toby Patterson (CSIRO) presented preliminary results from the narrow sawfish FRDC CKMR project to NPRAG. Key findings included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 754 sawfish viable samples were available, approximately 300 of which were collected during the FRDC project. • There was a wide spatial coverage and apparent female bias in sampling. • 42 samples did not pass CSIRO’s data quality control check, possibly resulting from species misidentification or duplicates. • 13 kin pairs were detected using the CSIRO ‘kinference’ package: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 7 half-sibling pairs ○ 4 full-sibling pairs ○ 4 parent-offspring pairs

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide separation between half-sibling pairs suggested wide dispersal, however, there were no cross-GoC matches. • The results estimated a population of narrow sawfish breeding adults of 50,237 individuals (with large confidence intervals between 4,263 and 604,243). Although there is more certainty in a higher population estimate than a lower one. • The uncertainty in the population estimates would be reduced through additional samples, which could be collected in a few years based on recent interaction rates. <p>NORMAC discussed the research outcomes, noting the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPRAG was highly supportive of work undertaken and continuing sampling to improve analysis and reduce uncertainty in population estimates. • The preliminary CKMR results suggest a larger than expected population of narrow sawfish. • Dr Geoffrey Muldoon (Conservation Member) noted that due to the spatial distribution of narrow sawfish, that future changes in spatial and temporal management may be more effective than further gear modification. • NPFI expressed that industry is committed to undertaking continued sampling and tagging work and highlighted positive results from recent gear mitigation trials. • Recent work by Dr Richard Pillans may add to available information for various sawfish species in Northern Australia. • In addition to continued sampling, improved information on growth/life history parameters would reduce uncertainty in the CKMR analysis, with a potential option of improved ageing data from tooth samples.
11	MSC Conditions / NPF Sawfish Plan	This item was delayed until the next NORMAC meeting.
12	Other business/next meeting	NORMAC agreed that due to time limitations, remaining agenda items 8, 9, 10 and 11 would be moved to the next meeting. They also noted that the next NORMAC meeting was scheduled to take place via Microsoft Teams on 1 August 2025.
Close of meeting		The Chair closed the meeting at 4:58pm.

Attachment A – Adopted agenda

Time (AEST): 8:15am to 5:15pm

Location: View Brisbane, Kingsford Smith Dr &, Hunt St, Hamilton

Chair Name: Geoff Richardson

Time	Item	Purpose	Presenter
8:15 (45 min)	Agenda item 1. Preliminaries		
	1.1 Welcome and apologies	For noting/action	Chair/EO
	1.2 Declaration of interests		
	1.3 Adoption of agenda		
	1.4 Minutes from previous meeting		
	1.5 Correspondence		
	1.6 Actions arising from previous meetings		
9:00 (45 min)	Agenda item 2. Fishery update		
	2.1 Industry report	For information	NPFI/Industry
	2.2 Banana Prawn Eastern Gulf Productivity		CSIRO
	2.3 AFMA Management update		AFMA
	2.4 Environment/Conservation update		Geoffrey Muldoon
9:45 (1 hr)	Agenda item 3. 2025 NPF Stock Assessment		
	3.1 NPRAG Chair update	For information	Ian Knuckey
	3.2 Tiger Prawn	For discussion	CSIRO
	3.3 Redleg Banana Prawn		
15 min Morning Tea during Agl. 3 (at 10.15)			
11:00 (30 min)	Agenda Item 4. 2025 TAE Recommendation	For recommendation	AFMA
11:30 (15 min)	Agenda item 5. Performance Monitoring Report	For discussion	NPFI
11:45 (1 hr)	Agenda item 6. NPF Structural Adjustment		NPFI/AFMA
12:45 (30 min)	Lunch		
1:15 (1 hr)	Agenda item 7. EM in the NPF	For recommendation	AFMA
2:15 (1 hr)	Agenda item 8. Climate adaptation		

Time	Item	Purpose	Presenter
	8.1 Risk Framework Species Assessment	For discussion	AFMA
	8.2 Tiger MICE Project	For information	CSIRO
3:15 (15 min)	Afternoon Tea		
3:30 (30 min)	Agenda item 9. Ecological Risk Assessment		
	9.1 Redleg Banana Prawn ERA	For endorsement	AFMA
	9.1 NPF ERM Response		
4:00 (45 min)	Agenda item 10. Research Project Update		
	10.1 Integrated Fishery-Independent Data Program	For information	CSIRO
	10.2 Bycatch Monitoring Project		CSIRO
	10.3 Sawfish Projects		CSIRO
4:45 (15 min)	Agenda item 11. MSC Conditions Update / NPF Sawfish Plan		NPFI
5:00 (15 min)	Agenda item 12. Other business/Next meeting		AFMA
5:15	Meeting Close		

Attachment B – Register of interests

Name	RAG/MAC position / organisation	Declared interests
Mr Geoff Richardson	Chair	Mr Richardson is the Chair of the Northern Prawn Fishery Management Advisory Committee (NORMAC) and Sub-Antarctic Fisheries Management Advisory Committee (SouthMAC). Mr Richardson has no interests pecuniary or otherwise.
Mr Brodie Macdonald	AFMA Member	Employed by AFMA. No interest, pecuniary or otherwise.
Mr Bryan van Wyk	Industry Member	Industry member – NPRAG Employed by Austral Fisheries, a company with SFR holdings in the fishery.
Mr Gregory Albert	Industry Member	NPF Statutory Fishing Right (SFR) holder
Dr Denham Parker	Scientific Member	Scientific member – NPRAG & NORMAC Employed by the CSIRO and through the organisation has in the past, and may in the future, receive funding for research related to the fishery. Research provider involved particularly in stock assessment research in NPF.
Dr Ian Knuckey	Scientific Member	Positions: Director –Fishwell Consulting Pty Ltd Director –Olrac Australia (Electronic logbooks) Chair –Northern Prawn Fishery Resource Assessment Group Chair –Tropical Rock Lobster Resource Assessment Group Chair –Victorian Rock Lobster and Giant Crab Assessment Group

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		<p>Chair –Gulf of St Vincent’s Prawn Fishery MAC Research Scientific Committee</p> <p>Chair – Spencer Gulf King Prawn Fishery Economic Sub-committee</p> <p>Scientific Member –Northern Prawn Management Advisory Committee</p> <p>Scientific Member –Gulf of St Vincent’s Prawn Fishery Management Advisory Committee</p> <p>Scientific Member –Tropical Tuna Resource Assessment Group</p> <p>Scientific Member – SESSF Resource Assessment Group</p> <p>Member –The Geelong Agri Collective</p> <p>Involved in an EM project for state trawl fishery.</p>
Mr Phillip Robson	Industry Member	<p>Industry member – NPRAG</p> <p>Employee of A Raptis and Sons, responsible for managing NPF vessels & an NT demersal fish trawler.</p> <p>Has provided charter for scientific surveys in NPF in the past and may in future.</p>
Mr Michael O’Brien	Industry Member	<p>Commercial fishing licence holder in the NT Demersal Fishery.</p> <p>General Manager, Australia Bay Seafoods Pty Ltd</p> <p>FRDC Seafood Industry Safety Initiative (SISI), Member.</p> <p>Stay A Float trusted Advocate.</p>
Mr Ian Boot	Industry Member	<p>Industry member – NPRAG & NORMAC</p> <p>Managing Director of Austfish, a company that operates NPF vessels.</p> <p>Has a commercial interest in the fishery. NPF broodstock permit holder. Participates in scampi fishing.</p>
Dr Geoffrey Muldoon	Environment/ Conservation Member	<p>Employed by Global Fishing Watch, Senior Manager, Blue Foods.</p> <p>No interest, pecuniary or otherwise.</p>

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Ms Annie Jarrett	NPFI	CEO – NPFI Commonwealth Fisheries Association Director Chair – Australian Council of Prawn Fisheries (ACPF) Member of the FRDC selection panel. Invited participant - NORMAC No pecuniary interests Represents the interests of industry
Brandon Meteyard	NPFI	Employed by NPFI. No pecuniary interests. Represents the interests of industry.
Darci Wallis	AFMA	Employed by AFMA. No interest, pecuniary or otherwise.
Wez Norris	AFMA	Employed by AFMA. No interest, pecuniary or otherwise.
Sevaly Sen	AFMA	Employed by AFMA. No interest, pecuniary or otherwise.
Scott Spencer	AFMA	Employed by AFMA. No interest, pecuniary or otherwise.
Sally Troy	AFMA	Employed by AFMA. No interest, pecuniary or otherwise.
Brett McCallum	AFMA	Employed by AFMA. No interest, pecuniary or otherwise.
Natalie Couchman	AFMA	Employed by AFMA. No interest, pecuniary or otherwise.
Tamre Sarhan	AFMA	Employed by AFMA. No interest, pecuniary or otherwise.
Lachlan Baker	AFMA	Employed by AFMA. No interest, pecuniary or otherwise.

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Toby Patterson	CSIRO	Employed by the CSIRO and through the organisation has in the past, and may in the future, receive funding for research related to the fishery. Currently involved in the Sawfish CKMR project. Research provider involved particularly in stock assessment research in NPF.
David Carter	Austral Fisheries	Austral Fisheries CEO a company with SFR holdings in the fishery. No pecuniary interests.
Stuart Nesbit	Austral Fisheries	Austral Fisheries Chief Financial Officer a company with SFR holdings in the fishery. No pecuniary interests.
Andy Prendergast	Austral Fisheries	Employed by Austral Fisheries, a company with SFR holdings in the fishery. No pecuniary interests.
Norm Peovitis	WA Seafoods	Employed by WA Seafood, a company with SFR holdings in the fishery. No pecuniary interests.
Rohan Polomka	WA Seafoods	Employed by WA Seafood, a company with SFR holdings in the fishery. No pecuniary interests.
Ken Hartley	A Raptis and Sons	A Raptis and Sons CEO, a company with SFR holdings in the fishery. No pecuniary interests.
Beau Anderson	A Raptis and Sons	Employed by A Raptis and Sons, a company with SFR holdings in the fishery. No pecuniary interests.

Attachment C - Summary of Actions and Recommendations

Agenda Item	No.	Action	Agency/Person Responsible	Timeframe
2	1	NPF Management Team to liaise with the AFMA Observer Team on future coverage/ targets for observer trips noting that the scampi fishery is a very low priority for SO coverage across the fishery.	AFMA	Prior to next NPRAG meeting
3	2	AFMA to provide the NPRAG endorsed <i>Northern Prawn Fishery Annual Research Statement 2026-27</i> to NORMAC for endorsement at its next meeting.	AFMA	At August meeting
4	3	NPFI to advise AFMA of the minimum notice period required by industry prior to the fishery closing.	NPFI	Following meeting
5	4	Review the NPF Performance Monitoring Framework, led by NPFI, in consultation with AFMA and other relevant experts for NPRAG and NORMAC consideration.	NPFI/AFMA	Mid-2026 Note: Resource dependent
6	5	NPFI to provide AFMA with all available information related to structural adjustment, including SFR values and analysis of structural adjustment scenario modelling.	NPFI	Following meeting
7	6	AFMA to get the identified data errors corrected and provide updated figures/tables within a revised draft NPF EM Trial Report.	AFMA	Following meeting
7	7	If possible, AFMA to seek NPRAG or NPRAG data sub-group group input on the revised draft reports. These will be provided for NORMAC consideration at its 1 August meeting.	AFMA	Following meeting
Agenda Item	No.	Recommendation	Agency/Person Responsible	Timeframe
4	1	<p>NORMAC supported the following management arrangements for the 2025 tiger prawn season:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A TAE of 412 boat days for redleg banana prawn fishery. b) A TAE 4,014 boat days for tiger prawn fishery, monitored in-season through the same process used in 2024. AFMA and NPFI will agree on a season closure date as the effort approaches the TAE, implemented through an AFMA Direction. 	AFMA	Out-of-session decision by AFMA Commission in July