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AFMADMW-1932364602-90603

Minutes

Meeting	South East Management Advisory Committee (SEMAC)		
Meeting Number	59	Dates	11-12 February 2026
Location	Melbourne	Time	9:00 AM
Members	Mr Clayton Nelson, Chair Ms Anissa Lawrence, Environment member Ms Sally Weekes, Senior Manager, AFMA Dr Sarah Jennings, Economics member Dr Paul McShane, Scientific member Mr Simon Boag, Industry member Mr Kyri Toumazos, Industry member Mr Will Mure, Industry member Mr Daniel Hogan, Industry member Ms Danielle Ghosn, Recreational member		
Apologies	Mr Jim Raptis Mr Phil Hough, Industry		
Invited Participants	Mr Keith Rowling, GABIA Dr Rik Buckworth, SharkRAG Chair		
Observers	Mr Ian Stockton, NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development Ms Rosie Katunar, NRE Tas Mr Jakob Fries, NRE Tas Mr Phil Hough, Industry Mr James Woodhams, ABARES Mr Tim Emery, ABARES		

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Agenda Item	Title/Topic/Issue	Notes, Action & Recommendations
1.	Preliminaries	<p>Welcome and apologies</p> <p>The Chair, Mr Clayton Nelson opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed participants. Meeting participants were informed that the meeting would be recorded for the purpose of assisting the preparation of meeting minutes.</p> <p>Adoption of agenda</p> <p>The Committee adopted the agenda with the following adjustments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional items from Industry member Simon Boag will be included in the managers update. • Item on Management of chondrichthyans of concern revised to a “for noting” item for Day 2. • Climate Risk Framework item slightly reordered to support online presenters. <p>The revised agenda was adopted as final.</p> <p>Minutes of previous meeting</p> <p>AFMA noted that the minutes from SEMAC 58 meeting held on 12 November 2025 are available on the AFMA Website</p> <p>Declarations of interests</p> <p>The Committee reviewed and confirmed declarations of interest as outlined in Table 1 of the Preliminary’s paper. Members with pecuniary interests in specific agenda items were advised they would be asked to leave the meeting during deliberations on those items. The Chair also reminded observers to raise hands before contributing and noted that members would be given speaking priority.</p> <p>This approach aligns with Fisheries Management Paper 1 – Consultative Committees and was supported by the Committee. Declared interests are recorded in the register of interest at Attachment B.</p> <p>Actions arising from previous meetings</p> <p>SEMAC noted the status of action items from previous meetings noting some items remain in progress, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pink Ling regionalisation - SEMAC revisited the issue of managing eastern and western stocks separately. SEMAC agreed to prioritise the regionalisation of pink ling and requested AFMA progress this work and include funding in the 2026-27 financial year’s budget

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic Monitoring (EM) cost reporting — detailed cost breakdown due by July. • OCS bugs regulation review — AFMA drafting a letter clarifying species interpretation for Victoria. • Wildlife interaction reporting — ongoing work to resolve discrepancies between logbook and EM reporting. • Dogfish closure boundary correction — amendments completed to remove overlap with marine parks. • Jack Mackerel DEPM process review — RAG recommendations noted; need for improved protocols to avoid missing peak spawning. • Out-of-session meeting required in March/April to consider the EM Directions. <p>The Committee agreed the actions list accurately reflected progress.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Action:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide a status update on the amendment to E-logs to allow for depredation to be recorded. </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pink Ling Regionalisation – SEMAC recommended AFMA include funding in the 2026-27 financial year’s budget to progress consideration of this issue. </div>
2	Managers Update (taken as read)	<p>The Manager’s Update was taken largely as read, with the Committee noting the following additional points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AFMA advised that the Electronic Monitoring (EM) privacy statement is in its final stages and scheduled for completion by the end of February. • Ongoing work with state fisheries agencies, particularly NSW, to better understand state-level impacts on depleted species, including factors contributing to increased state catches – AFMA highlighted that efforts to reinforce shared responsibility with the states have been ongoing for several years and continue to progress.
3	Industry Update (For Noting)	<p>The Industry Update was taken as read, with updates circulated to members prior to the meeting. Members provided several brief operational and environmental observations throughout the agenda, noting current operational pressures such as high fuel costs and weak market conditions for some products (including prawns), as well as variability in catchability linked to changing environmental conditions.</p>
4.	Climate Risk Framework –	<p>SEMAC received an overview of AFMA’s application of the draft Climate Risk Framework across eight SSSF species. SEMAC noted that the CRF</p>

<p>species assessments for selected SESSF species</p> <p>Presenter: Natalie Couchman</p>	<p>will be implemented over the next few years with a priority given to higher risk species.</p> <p>Presentation Points:</p> <p>AFMA reported that four species—Orange Roughy East, Gummy Shark, Bight Redfish, and Blue-eye Trevalla (slope)—were assessed as <i>very low or low climate risk</i>. SERAG recommended that no immediate response, beyond periodic review of existing data collection and monitoring programs, is required. SharkRAG recommended for gummy shark that no response is required at this time.</p> <p>Elephant Fish was assessed as <i>medium climate risk</i>, with long-term vulnerability driven by projected climate-driven declines. SharkRAG recommended that the monitoring and data collection programs for elephant fish should be reviewed to ensure they are capable of detecting changes in risk profiles, and that further work be undertaken to better understand the climate drivers for this stock. Members highlighted the need for more proactive management options, including improved data on total mortality, in particular recreational catch and potential early triggers rather than relying solely on monitoring.</p> <p>Two species—Jackass Morwong (East) and John Dory—were identified as <i>extreme climate risk</i>, with climate-driven impacts considered a dominant factor limiting recovery. SERAG supported the ongoing development of rebuilding strategy for these stocks, to be informed by the compilation of available information on the drivers impacting on each stock including climate change impacts and evidence of regime shifts and the implications for reference pint and rebuilding timeframes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members acknowledged that some stocks may not recover as expected under future climate conditions and supported ongoing work to develop long-term strategic approaches for such species. • Members noted the significant efforts already undertaken by both the Commonwealth Government and industry to manage the stock and expressed support for SERAG’s advice, including the need to better understand the recent increase in NSW catch of Jackass Morwong (East). The Committee agreed that ongoing review of the effectiveness of existing management measures remains essential, particularly given both stocks’ sensitivity to climate change. Members also highlighted the importance of ensuring reliable discard estimates through Electronic Monitoring (EM) to improve future assessments and management of these and other SESSF stocks. <p>Royal Red Prawn was assessed as <i>high positive climate risk</i>, with climate change projected to have a positive impact on abundance. SERAG recommended no response, beyond ongoing data collection, monitoring and periodic updates to the stock assessment, is required. SEMAC supported retaining its trigger-species status, noting the need to ensure assessment timing aligns with MSC certification requirements.</p>
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		<p>Discussion highlights:</p> <p>Members discussed the use of environmental indicators (e.g., weak upwelling, marine heatwaves) and emphasised the need to ensure such observations are interpreted only when species-specific, noting that general environmental descriptions may not always be relevant to individual stock assessments. AFMA confirmed the information on climate and ecosystem indicators included in the CRF assessments are provided as broader context only and are not used to assign risk scores.</p> <p>Industry raised concerns that some environmental statements in the draft species reports did not clearly link to the biology or behaviour of the species being assessed (e.g., dispersal patterns not applicable to Bight Redfish). They asked AFMA to refine species-specific relevance in future reporting. AFMA agreed this distinction is important.</p> <p>Members raised the issue of the large algal bloom in South Australia and its impact on elasmobranchs (zero catches of School/Gummy Shark and rays in some areas). They questioned how acute events—such as blooms and marine heatwaves—are captured in the CRF and future assessments, noting possible cumulative climate impacts on nursery and pupping areas. It was noted that where information is available on impacts of such environmental events, that can be incorporated into CRF assessments. AFMA agreed this issue warrants further information-sharing with PIRSA and may require additional monitoring.</p> <p>Concerns were raised about the lack of discussion at SharkRAG regarding the algal bloom impacts, despite evidence of ecological change. Members encouraged AFMA to engage with states and bring relevant data into future RAG and CRF discussions.</p> <p>Members questioned whether the CRF sufficiently differentiates between short-term environmental shocks and long-term climate-driven trends, and how such differences inform species scoring and management responses. AFMA reiterated that the framework accounts for long-term climate vulnerability, while short-term anomalies are captured through contextual reporting and RAG deliberations.</p> <p>A broader discussion followed on climate-limited recovery, with members suggesting that some species (e.g., Jackass Morwong, John Dory) may not be able to rebuild under forecast climate conditions. They suggested the CRF should support decisions to revise rebuilding targets or acknowledge ecological regime shifts where appropriate. AFMA agreed this will be a consideration during implementation.</p> <p>Members expressed concern about the CRF's emphasis on monitoring for medium-risk species (such as Elephant Fish), arguing this may lead to reactive instead of proactive management. They suggested early triggers, decision rules, or additional data collection for species flagged as climate-vulnerable. AFMA confirmed that proactive measures are permitted under the CRF.</p>
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5	<p>Interim SESSF Harvest Strategy Framework</p> <p>Presenter: Michelle Henriksen</p>	<p>Following AFMA’s presentation on the Interim Harvest Strategy Framework (HSF), members discussed several key issues relating to the framework’s practical application and future development including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the assigned discount factors to the assessment tiers must be applied strictly, or whether RAGs have flexibility to classify assessments differently based on uncertainty (e.g., Royal Red Prawn being treated as Tier 4 despite using a surplus production model) – AFMA advised that the tier definitions are a guide, not rigid rules, and that stock assessors and RAGs can recommend the most appropriate tier where assessments do not neatly fit the criteria. • Whether discount factors assigned to each Tier level (e.g., 10% for Tier 3) are intended to be fixed values and whether RAGs may recommend higher buffers for species if warranted by

		<p>uncertainty – AFMA confirmed discount factors are defaults, and RAGs may recommend alternative discounts where appropriate.</p> <p>A comment was raised about recent changes to ISMP and FIS programs and whether the interim (HSF) should be updated to reflect their current roles. AFMA noted this broader review of the Harvest Strategy document will occur following completion of the multi-species harvest strategy (MSHS) project.</p> <p>AFMA acknowledged that while some elements could be reworded for clarity, the current interim framework aims to provide stability until more detailed work on buffers and multi-species MSE testing is completed.</p> <p>SEMAMC supported the proposed revisions to the interim HSF, while noting the future need for substantial work on buffer development. SEMAMC agreed the interim framework improves clarity and precaution while providing flexibility for species-specific refinement until the multi-species harvest strategy is finalised.</p> <div data-bbox="560 904 1437 1128" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>3. SEMAMC provided support for revisions of the interim HSF noting that the updated framework will guide management until the MSHS is finalised.</p> </div>	
6.	<p>TAC Recommendations for the 2026-27 SESSF season</p> <p>Presenters: Lianos Triantafillos, Mark Grubert</p>	<p>SEMAMC worked through each species by reviewing AFMA’s presentations, RAG advice, new analyses, industry observations, and climate-risk considerations. Final recommendations for each species are outlined in attached Attachment D, with further notes included below for those species that prompted extended discussion.</p> <p>School Shark</p> <p>SEMAMC considered AFMA’s update on the new CKMR-linked GLM analysis, which showed a substantially higher estimated population growth rate (exceeding 5% per year) compared with earlier assessments, providing strengthened evidence that the long-term rebuilding strategy is working. Members noted supporting signals—including increased CPUE, reports of wider distribution, and higher discards coinciding with improved EM reporting—while acknowledging that the stock remains overfished and listed as conservation dependent.</p> <p>AFMA outlined the proposed 446 t three-year incidental bycatch TAC, based on a conservative 5% growth rate and noting a high probability that actual growth may be higher.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members discussed the need to closely monitor for evidence of targeting, given the substantial TAC increase and the risk that 	

		<p>higher allowances may unintentionally incentivise targeted fishing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee acknowledged operational challenges caused by higher School Shark abundance, including avoidance difficulties that affect crew retention and efficient fishing practices. • Members noted that the incidental bycatch TAC will be governed by a set of breakout rules to ensure continued alignment with the School Shark Rebuilding Strategy. • SEMAC noted that the breakout rules will be assessed annually, and the bycatch TAC will be reviewed during the 3-year period if any rule is activated. • SEMAC considered the approach conservative, offers stability for industry while key scientific research is completed and aligns with AFMA's legislative obligations by ensuring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ continued stock rebuilding; ○ improved economic returns to industry and the Commonwealth; and ○ adaptive, evidence-based management. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Consistent with the SharkRAG (November 2025) advice, SEMAC supported an incidental bycatch TAC of 446 tonnes for the next 3 fishing seasons noting the five break out rules will mitigate risk, while allowing the fishery to benefit from improvements in stock performance.</p> <p>SEMAC also supported revising the catch ratio from 1:5 to 1:3 to account for the increase in the school shark TAC, noting that all other management measures remain in place to reduce the risk of targeting and that a targeting analysis will be undertaken periodically to monitor if there is any targeting of school shark.</p> <p>SEMAC supported no under-catch or over-catch provisions, and a determined amount of 2 tonnes.</p> </div> <p>Gummy Shark</p> <p>SEMAC noted Gummy Shark remains very healthy, with all sub-stocks well above target biomass and no sustainability concerns.</p> <p>Previous TAC reductions were linked only to School Shark constraints; and with School Shark indicators improving, members agreed there is no longer a need to constrain the Gummy TAC, supporting use of the three-year average RBC.</p>
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		<p>Members recognised that banked quota (~136 t) from previous reductions provides operational flexibility and supports adopting the full RBC-based TAC.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>SEMAC supported the TAC at 1,595 tonnes for the 2026–27 fishing season based on the three year average RBC, on the basis that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it is consistent with SharkRAG advice • there is no longer a requirement to constrain the gummy shark TAC to reduce school shark catch • there is minimal risk in adopting this RBC due to the accumulation of 136 tonnes of ‘uncaught’ gummy shark quota in 2024-25 SESSF fishing season when it was constrained for school shark. <p>SEMAC noted the gummy shark stock assessment will be deferred to prioritise the completion of the age-structured CKMR population model for school shark in 2026.</p> <p>Under-catch and overcatch provisions were supported at 10%, and a determined amount of 2 tonnes.</p> </div> <p>Blue Grenadier</p> <p>AFMA outlined the updated assessment which placed Blue Grenadier biomass at close to 100% of unfished levels, but significant retrospective pattern issues and model instability meant the stock could not remain at a Tier 1 for this cycle and was re-classified to Tier 2.</p> <p>The model instability was linked partly to missing length-frequency data, because the assessment year did not align with the data-processing year, a problem several members stressed must be avoided in future assessments. AFMA agreed that future assessments must be aligned with data-processing years to prevent this issue.</p> <p>SEMAC noted that the recommended TAC was derived from the three-year average RBC (15,643 t) minus the Tier 2 - 5% discount and discards, resulting in a TAC of 14,650 t</p> <p>A key concern raised by industry was the stark difference between spawning and non-spawning catchability. Members noted that while biomass may be high, non-spawning season catch rates for some operators are potentially uneconomic.</p> <p>Members clarified that the concern is not that freezer boats are unprofitable — but that off-season fresh sector economics decline sharply when biomass is allowed to fall from B100 towards the target proxy (B48).</p>
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		<p>Several members requested AFMA investigate an MEY-aligned target specifically for this species.</p>
		<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>SEMAC recommended a TAC of 14,650 t with 10% over-and-undercatch and a determined amount of 2 t (first year of a 3-year RBC).</p> <p>SEMAC supported a review of the appropriateness of the MEY proxy for this species noting the biomass is well above the target yet the CPUE for the wet boat sector is potentially unprofitable and that some fresh and freezer boat operators have expressed concern about further reductions to the biomass under the SESS Harvest Strategy as the stock is fished down toward the target reference point.</p>
		<p>Orange Roughy East)</p> <p>AFMA presented the updated Eastern Zone Orange Roughy assessment, incorporating new age data and the 2024 acoustic-optical survey noting that the revised model was accepted by SERAG.</p> <p>Members noted that recent TAC undercatch in the East reflects freezer-trawler participation patterns, rather than changes in stock condition.</p> <p>Allocation Between Zones - East vs Southern zone (Pedra Branca).</p> <p>The MAC reviewed the standard 93/7 allocation split between the Eastern Zone and Pedra Branca.</p> <p>Industry questioned the value of continuing to allocate 7% when the assessment is believed to be entirely based on the Eastern Zone biomass and the Southern Zone has little practical fishing opportunity. Subject to confirmation that there is no risk to the stock, members agreed that the issue then becomes a management decision, not a scientific one, and supported reducing the allocation to better reflect current access and avoid unnecessarily locking up catch.</p>
		<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>SEMAC recommended a TAC of 1207 t, resulting from 96.5% of the RBC 1251 t being allocated to the East and 3.5% (44 t) to the Pedra Branca area. With 100% undercatch, 0% over catch and a determined amount of 2 t for Orange Roughy East.</p> <p>SEMAC supported the concept of reducing the allocation for Pedra Branca from 7% of the Eastern Zone TAC to 3.5% (44 t), subject to scientific advice that this poses no risk to the Eastern Zone stock and an assessment of the impact of this approach on SFRs.</p> <p>SEMAC noted that this approach maximises the potential for the Eastern Zone RBC to be fully caught in a more cost-effective manner given the</p>

		<p>distance to Pedra Branca fishing grounds and limited effort in recent years in this area.</p> <p>Orange Roughy West</p> <p>The Committee considered the proposal to convert the long-standing 200 t research catch allowance in the Western Zone into a 200 t commercial TAC.</p> <p>Members noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TAC is equivalent to a RCA but administered via SFRs, with the intent of improving fishing practices while also providing a return to SFR holders. • The 200 t is less than the mortality that was permitted under the 200 t RCA and 60 t bycatch limit set for the past five years in this zone. • Setting a TAC for a depleted species is inconsistent with the SESSF HS but that OR presents a unique situation in terms of it being a highly aggregating species that needs to be targeted in order to collect data and that in this situation, the recommended approach better achieves AFMA objectives • Members also highlighted the need for continued close monitoring of catches to ensure the transition does not increase effort beyond the historically low and stable levels. No objections were raised to the proposed TAC, and the Committee acknowledged that the scientific advice supports the continuation of this small, precautionary catch limit. <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>SEMAC supported a TAC of 200 t for the purposes of ongoing data collection to support the stock assessment for this zone.</p> <p>Under/over catch provisions remain at zero per cent with a determined amount.</p> <p>Redfish</p> <p>The Committee noted that Redfish remains a depleted stock and continues to be managed under a very low bycatch TAC, with no new assessment available this year. Scientific advice indicates no evidence of recovery, and the stock remains subject to strict rebuilding objectives.</p> <p>Members were presented with two TAC options aimed at strengthening current arrangements under which rebuilding to at least its limit reference point, can occur. These were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a TAC of 5 tonnes to allow for some retention of incidental catches: or • a TAC of 0 tonnes <p>SEMAC noted RAG advice around needing to constrain mortality as much as possible.</p>
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		<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>SEMAC supported the 5 t bycatch TAC option with a move on provision as this prevents targeting, reduces the risk of discarding and supports ongoing data collection while the move on rule aims to reduce overall total mortality.</p> <p>Royal Red Prawn</p> <p>The Committee noted that Royal Red Prawn continues to be a well-performing stock, with biomass estimated at ~97% of unfished levels under the recently completed assessment. The species received a high positive climate-risk rating, reflecting modelled increases in abundance under projected environmental conditions.</p> <p>Industry and scientific members noted that the stock is a Trigger Species, meaning assessments are required more frequently than for other Tier 5 species. SEMAC discussed the interaction between trigger-species requirements and MSC certification needs and agreed that AFMA should maintain clarity on how assessment cycles align with certification expectations.</p> <p>While the model outputs suggest strong stock status and no sustainability concerns, members supported maintaining the current TAC structure, noting that the species is already managed conservatively relative to its positive stock trajectory. No operational or ecological issues were raised that would warrant a change in TAC this year.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Supported the long term average TAC of 462 t and maintaining as a trigger species with a catch trigger of 347 t.</p> <p>Finally, SEMAC noted that should a stock assessment be undertaken solely for the purpose of meeting MSC conditions that the cost of the assessment should be recovered directly from the MSC recipient.</p> <p>For all other SESSF species considered under Agenda Item 6, the Committee’s deliberations and recommendations are provided in Attachment D</p>
7.	<p>SPF TAC Recommendations</p> <p>Presenter: Yvette Lamont</p>	<p>The Committee considered the SPFRAG advice and AFMA’s recommended TACs for SPF species for the 2026–27 fishing season. The Committee worked through key points in the methodology and rationale behind the RBC and TAC calculations.</p> <p>Key discussion points:</p> <p>Status of tier levels under the Harvest Strategy - The Committee noted that Blue Mackerel West, Jack Mackerel West, Redbait East and West</p>

		<p>remain at the same tiers as the previous season, while updated DEPM surveys placed Australian Sardine and Blue Mackerel East at Tier 1 for 2026–27.</p> <p>Revised biomass estimation methodology - Members discussed SPFRAG’s newly refined method that uses spawning area as the primary index of abundance, combined with multi-year parameter estimates. SEMAC noted that this approach is consistent with the SA sardine fishery and reduces the risk of failed surveys (e.g., the 2024 Jack Mackerel East survey).</p> <p>Jack Mackerel East: The revised biomass estimate moves the stock effectively into Tier 1 (Year 2). Members noted uncertainties remain, but the approach is considered precautionary due to large spawning area and supporting CPUE trends (~1.8× higher than the 1990s).</p> <p>SEMAG noted that SPFRAG is supporting an FRDC reproductive biology study for Jack Mackerel to better understand spawning fraction variability, and has recommended establishing adaptive monitoring with industry to confirm spawning timing before future DEPM surveys.</p> <p>Revised biomass estimation methodology concerns requiring future RAG consideration - The Committee noted that there was ongoing discussion in the RAG regarding the revised methodology of pooling data and asked to be kept informed of the outcomes of that discussion.</p> <hr/> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>5. SEMAG supported the SPF TAC Recommendations for 2026-27 noting the need for further RAG discussion regarding the calculation of confidence intervals around biomass estimates in light of the refined methodology for calculating biomass.</p>
8.	<p>Multi Species Harvest Strategy</p> <p>Presenter: Daniel Corrie</p>	<p>SEMAG received a brief update on the Multi-Species Harvest Strategy (MSHS) project. AFMA advised that development work is underway, with a technical workshop scheduled for May 2026, intended to gather broad stakeholder input. Members noted that the MSHS will address issues not fully covered in the interim harvest strategy, including buffer testing, data program roles (ISMP/FIS) and management of interacting and climate-limited stocks.</p> <p>The committee supported pursuing the three elements presented as future components of the harvest strategy design process, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formal integration of closures offering risk equivalency • multi-species management approaches • robustness testing for climate change.

		<p>The Committee supported the planned approach and noted that further opportunities for MAC and RAG engagement will occur as the project progresses.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 5px;"> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>6. SEMAC supported the updates to the Multi Species Harvest Strategy framework for the SESSF.</p> </div>
9.	<p>Update on the Management of Chondrichthyans of concern</p> <p>Presenter: Sally Weekes</p>	<p>SEMAC noted the update provided by AFMA and that AFMA would seek its advice at the April 2026 meeting on this matter.</p>
10.	<p>Changes to SESSF Trawl Boat SFR conditions – Crustaceans in NSW waters.</p> <p>Presenter: Mark Grubert</p>	<p>SEMAC noted AFMA’s update on upcoming changes to SESSF Trawl Boat SFR conditions to reflect New South Wales OCS arrangements prohibiting the take of certain crustaceans south of 33°31’S. AFMA advised that a new concession condition will be added from 1 May 2026 to align Commonwealth conditions with NSW regulations. No further issues were raised, and the item was noted.</p>
11.	Other Business	No comments
Next Meeting/Meeting Close		<p>Out of session date proposed April 14th or 22nd April.</p> <p>SEMAC 60: 14th July (calendar invite sent out to members)</p> <p>SEMAC 61: 29 Oct 1</p> <p>SEMAC 62: Feb 9-10</p> <p>OUT OF SESSION Date to be set for mid-April teleconference to go through EM direction - AFMA to circulate mid-April options (including 14 April and 22 April) for members to confirm out of session.</p>
Close of meeting		The Chair closed the meeting at 13.32 pm.

Attachment A – Adopted agenda

Day 1: Wednesday 11 February 2026

Time (AEDT): 9:00

Location: Radisson on Flagstaff Gardens Melbourne and Microsoft Teams

Chair: Mr Clayton Nelson

Teams Link: [Click here to join the meeting](#)

Start (Duration)	Item	Purpose	Presenter/s
9:00 (30 min)	1. Preliminaries		
	1.1. Welcome and apologies	For ACTION	Chair
	1.2. Declarations of Interest	For ACTION	Chair
	1.3. Adoption of agenda	For ACTION	Chair
	1.4. Minutes from previous meetings	For NOTING	Chair
	1.5. Actions arising from previous meetings	For NOTING	EO
09:30 (15 min)	2. Manager's Update (taken as read)	For NOTING	Sally Weeks
09:45 (15 min)	3. Industry Update (taken as read)	For NOTING	Industry
10:00	Morning Tea		
10:15 (1hr)	4. Climate Risk Framework - species assessments for selected SESSF species	For ADVICE	Daniel Corrie
11:15 (45 min)	5. Interim SESSF Harvest Strategy Framework	For ADVICE	Michelle Henriksen
12:00 (45 min)	Lunch		
12:45 (2hr 15 min)	6. SESSF TAC recommendations for 2026–27	For ADVICE	Lianos Triantafyllou Mark Grubert Jennifer Power Geary
15:00 (15 min)	Afternoon Tea		
15:15 (50 min)	6. SESSF TAC recommendations for 2026–27 (contd.)	For ADVICE	AFMA
16:45 (15 min)	Review of action items	For ADVICE	Membership

Day 2: Thursday 12 February 2026

Time (AEDT): 9am

Location: Radisson on Flagstaff Gardens Melbourne and Microsoft Teams

Chair: Mr Clayton Nelson

Teams Link: [Click here to join the meeting](#)

Start (Duration)	Item	Purpose	Presenter/s
09:00 (50 min)	6. SESSF TAC recommendations for 2026–27 (contd.)	For ADVICE	AFMA
10:30 (15 min)	Morning Tea		
10:45 (45 mins)	7. SPF TAC recommendations for 2026–27	For ADVICE	Yvette Lamont
11:30 (1.5 hrs)	8. Multi Species Harvest Strategy	For ADVICE	Daniel Corrie
13:00 (45 mins)	Lunch		
13:45 (10 mins)	9. Update: Management of chondrichthyan of concern	For Noting	AFMA
13:55 (15 Mins)	10. Changes to SESSF Trawl Boat SFR conditions – Crustaceans in NSW waters	For NOTING	Mark Grubert
14:10 (15 min)	11. Other Business	For NOTING	Chair
14:25 (15 min)	Review of action items and next meeting	For ADVICE	Membership
14:40	Close of meeting		

Attachment B – Register of interests

Table 1. SEMAC meeting 59 member, invited participant and observer declarations of interest.

Name	MAC position / organisation	Declared interests	Relevant agenda item(s)
Mr Clayton Nelson	Chair	Chair Member of Seafood Industry Australia Independent consultant	
Ms Anissa Lawrence	Environment member	No pecuniary interest Director of TierraMar Ltd Independent consultant Undertakes contracts for a number of Conservation NGOs, government departments, non-government agencies and the private sector on a range of fishery related matters Conservation member on SharkRAG, SPFRAG, SEMAC, Spencer Gulf Prawn RSC and the South Australian Rock Lobster MAC Chair of Ocean Future Fund Inc.	
Daniel Hogan	Industry member	Managing director - Toberfish Pty Ltd Owner/Operator – FV Zeehaan CTS Trawl Licence & Quota Holder Non-Beneficiary Director – SETFIA Industry member for SERAG	Agenda 6
Mr Will Mure	Industry member	Sole Director of Mures Fishing P/L	Agenda 6

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		<p>Commonwealth fish receiver permit</p> <p>Tasmania fish processing licence</p> <p>Scalefish hook boat SFR, SEQ Quota Holding Permits, Auto longline fishing permit</p> <p>High Seas permit</p> <p>Blue eye trevalla SFRs, Ling SFRs, Ribaldo ITP</p> <p>Mixed species Individual Transferable Quotas (ITQs) and SFRs</p> <p>Member of various fishing related associations including Seafood Industry Australia (SIA), South East Trawl Fishing Industry Association (SETFIA), Southern Shark Industry Alliance (SSIA), Tasmanian Seafood Industry Council (TSIC)</p> <p>Industry member on SERAG</p>	
Dr Paul McShane	Scientific member	<p>Chair of SERAG and a member of SEMAC and SESSFRAG.</p> <p>No pecuniary interest in the SESSF.</p> <p>Principal of Global Marine Resource Management Pty Ltd.</p> <p>Adjunct Professor (Fisheries and Aquaculture) College of Science and Engineering, James Cook University.</p>	
Dr Sarah Jennings	Economic member	<p>Economics member on SESSFRAG.</p> <p>Member of AFMA Economics Working Group.</p> <p>Independent economics consultant.</p> <p>Member on SA MSFMAC</p>	

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		No pecuniary or other interest in the SESSF	
Ms Danielle Ghosn	Recreational member	<p>Recreational member of SEMAC & SPFRAG</p> <p>Independent Consultant and Scientific Officer of the NSW Game Fish Tournament Monitoring Program.</p>	
Mr Simon Boag	Industry member	<p>Industry member on SERAG.</p> <p>Executive Officers to SETFIA, SSIA, SPFIA, Commonwealth Scallop and Eastern zone Rock lobster.</p> <p>SETFIA and SSIA receives funding from AFMA to complete projects under co-management agreements.</p> <p>Undertakes contracts as an independent consultant.</p> <p>Member of the investment committee for the Australian fisheries investment trust</p> <p>SSIA is engaged by AFMA to collect shark industry biological data.</p> <p>Atlantis undertakes work to assist shared marine space developers (wind, oil etc) understand the fishing industry.</p> <p>Atlantis undertakes other work within the fishing industry from time to time including on MSC assessments.</p> <p>SETFIA is the PI on the orange roughy east AOS.</p>	Agenda 6 & 7

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		<p>SETFIA is engaged by participants within the W ORS research fishery to collect biological samples.</p> <p>SETFIA is engaged by AFMA under co-management to undertake a variety of tasks including snapper management, ling management, future industry data collection and consultation.</p> <p>Investment committee member of a large fund that owns fishing rights including SBT, ling and flathead.</p>	
Mr Kyriakos Toumazos	Industry member	<p>Chief Executive Officer (South Australian Northern Zone Rock Lobster Fishermen's Association Inc.);</p> <p>Director of Southern Sea Eagles Pty Ltd;</p> <p>Director of Southern Fisheries Pty Ltd;</p> <p>Director Health Balance Pharmacies Pty Ltd;</p> <p>Member South Australian Boating Facility Board;</p> <p>Member of Shark Resource Assessment Group (AFMA);</p> <p>Member of South East Management Advisory Committee;</p> <p>Member of AMSA Regional Safety Committee;</p> <p>Director Southern Shark Industry Alliance;</p> <p>Director PACK Investments Pty Ltd;</p> <p>Director Cruickshank's Corner Developments Pty Ltd;</p>	Agenda 6

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		Director Cruickshank's Corner Commercial Pty Ltd; Director Seafood Industry Australia;	
Mr Jim Raptis	GAB Industry member	Operates two boats in the GABT Fishery and owns four GABT SFRs as well as quota in the SESSF President of GABIA.	
AFMA			
Ms Anna Willock	AFMA Deputy Chief Executive Officer.	No interest, pecuniary or otherwise	
Ms Sally Weekes	AFMA Demersal and Midwater Senior Manager– AFMA SEMAC member –	No interest pecuniary or otherwise.	
Ms Rebecca Jol	AFMA Senior Management Officer, Demersal and Midwater Fisheries. Executive Officer SEMAC	No interest pecuniary or otherwise.	
Dr Mark Grubert	AFMA Manager SPF, Scallop and Squid.	No interest, pecuniary or otherwise.	
Mr Lianos Triantafillos	AFMA Manager-Gillnet, Hook and Trap (GHAT) and High Seas (SPRFMO) Fisheries,	No interest, pecuniary or otherwise.	
Ms Yvette Lamont	AFMA Senior Management Officer SPF, Scallop and Squid.	No interest, pecuniary or otherwise.	

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Ms Michelle Henriksen	AFMA Senior Management Officer Gillnet, Hook and Trap (GHAT)	No interest, pecuniary or otherwise.	
Mr Daniel Corrie	AFMA, Senior Manager - Climate Adaptation and Strategic Reform	No interest, pecuniary or otherwise.	
Ms Jennifer Power-Geary	AFMA Senior Management Officer, Demersal and Midwater Fisheries. Executive Officer SESSFRAG	No interest, pecuniary or otherwise.	
Ms Audrey Kent	AFMA, Senior Management Officer. Executive Officer (EO) of SERAG.	No interest, pecuniary or otherwise.	
Ms Natalie Couchman	AFMA, Manager. Climate Adaptation and Strategic Reform	No interest, pecuniary or otherwise.	
Mr Will Bowman	AFMA, Manager South East Trawl & Great Australian Bight Trawl Manager	No interest, pecuniary or otherwise.	

Invited Participants

Dr Rik Buckworth	Chair of SharkRAG.	<p>Director of Sea Sense Australia Pty Ltd</p> <p>Scientific Member – NPRAG Member – Data Working Group for the GABTF</p> <p>Adjunct Professor – Charles Darwin University Current or anticipated projects with government agencies, CDU and</p>	
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		<p>fishing industry for projects in the NT, Qld and Commonwealth fisheries.</p> <p>Researcher involved particularly in stock assessment research. No pecuniary or other interest in the SESSF shark fishery.</p>	
Mr Keith Rowling	GABIA	<p>Owner – Bluefin Consulting</p> <p>Associate – NMAC(SA) Pty Ltd</p> <p>Executive support of Great Australian Bight Industry Association (GABIA)</p> <p>Executive officer of Charter Boat Association of South Australia (CBASA)</p> <p>Executive officer of Southern Fishermen’s Association (SFA)</p> <p>Executive support of Saint Vincent Gulf Prawn Boat Owner’s Association (SCGPBOA)</p> <p>Executive support of South Australian Professional Fishers Association (SAPFA)</p> <p>Marine Scalefish Fishery Management Advisory Committee (MSFMAC) – CBASA member</p> <p>Allocation Review Committee – Commercial fishing representative</p> <p><i>SERAG - Industry member</i></p> <p><i>Structural Adjustment Assessment Panel (SAAP) - Industry member</i></p>	Agenda 6

Observers

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Mr Ian Stockton	DPI NSW	No pecuniary interest in the fishery	
Ms Rosie Katunar	Fisheries Manager Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania	No pecuniary interest in the fishery	
Mr Jakob Fries	DNRE Tas	No pecuniary interest in the fishery	
Mr Phil Hough	Vessel Manager/Skipper, Peter and Una fishing Co.	Pecuniary interests are limited to the extent of being an employee of a fishing company.	
Mr James Woodhams	Employed by ABARES	No pecuniary interest in the fishery	
Mr Tim Emery	Employed by ABARES	No pecuniary interest in the fishery.	

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Attachment C: Summary of Actions and Recommendations

Agenda Item	No.	Action	Agency/Person Responsible	Timeframe
1.	1.	Provide a status update on the amendment to E-logs to allow for depredation to be recorded.	AFMA	Next Meeting
		Recommendation		
1.	1.	Pink Ling regionalisation: SEMAC recommended AFMA include funding in the 2026-27 financial year's budget to progress consideration of this issue.		
4.	2.	SEMAC supported all Climate Risk Framework (CRF) assessments and recorded the following key points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elephant Fish – highlighted ongoing gaps in recreational catch data, noting this issue extends beyond just this species. Jackass Morwong (East) – acknowledged the significant management efforts by the Commonwealth and industry, and supported SERAG advice, including the need to further investigate the increased NSW catch. SEMAC also emphasised the ongoing importance of reviewing the effectiveness of management measures and prioritise EM implementation and analysis protocols ensuring robust discard estimates for depleted/at-risk species. 		
5.	3.	SEMAC provided support for revisions of the interim HSF noting that the updated framework will guide management until the MSHS is finalised.		
6.	4.	SEMAC's TAC recommendations for the SESSF are provided at Attachment D (TAC recommendations for SESSF species during 2026-27 season) which contains the full set of TACs considered by the Committee.		
7.	5.	SEMAC supported the SPF TAC Recommendations for 2026-27 noting the need for further RAG discussion regarding the calculation of confidence intervals around biomass estimates in light of the refined methodology for calculating biomass.		
8.	6.	SEMAC supported the updates to the Multi Species Harvest Strategy framework for the SESSF.		

Attachment D

Species category	TAC recommendations for SESSF species during the 2026-27 season
Shark Species	<p>School Shark</p> <p>Consistent with the SharkRAG (November 2025) advice, SEMAC supported an incidental by-catch TAC of 446 t for the next 3 fishing seasons noting the five break out rules will mitigate risk, while allowing the fishery to benefit from improvements in stock performance.</p> <p>The breakout rules will be assessed annually, and the bycatch TAC will be reviewed during the 3-year period if any rule is activated.</p> <p>The MAC supported revising the catch ratio from 1:5 to 1:3 to account for the increase in the school shark TAC, noting that all other management measures remain in place to reduce the risk of targeting and that a targeting analysis will be undertaken periodically to monitor if there is any targeting of school shark.</p> <p>SEMAC considered the approach conservative, offers stability for industry while key scientific research is completed and aligns with AFMA's legislative obligations by ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continued stock rebuilding; • improved economic returns to industry and the Commonwealth; and • adaptive, evidence-based management. <p>No under-catch or over-catch provisions, and a determined amount of 2 t.</p> <p>Gummy Shark</p> <p>SEMAC supported the TAC at 1,595 t for the 2026–27 fishing season based on the three year average RBC, on the basis that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it is consistent with SharkRAG advice • there is no longer a requirement to constrain the gummy shark TAC to reduce school shark catch • there is minimal risk in adopting this RBC due to the accumulation of 136 t of 'uncaught' gummy shark quota in 2024-25 SESSF fishing season when it was constrained for school shark. <p>SEMAC noted the gummy shark stock assessment will be deferred to prioritise the completion of the age-structured CKMR population model for school shark in 2026.</p> <p>Under-catch provision of 10%, an over-catch provision of 10%, and a determined amount of 2 t.</p>

<p>Trigger species</p>	<p>SEMAC recommended maintaining the TACs (or catch limit) for the trigger species below:</p> <p>Alfonsino (TAC 1,017 t, Catch Trigger (CT) 50 t) Smooth Oreo cascade (150 t, CT 50 t) Elephant Fish (114 t, CT 86 t) Smooth Oreo other (90 t, CT 68 t) Ocean Perch (318 t, CT 236 t) Ribaldo (393 t, CT 295 t) Saw Shark (525 t) Blue-eye Trevalla Seamount (36 t, CT 27 t) Gemfish W (180 t, CT 135 t) Boarfish ECDWT (200 t catch limit, CT 10 t) Orange Roughy – Cascade (397 t, CT 295 t)</p> <p>Under-catch provision of 10%, an over-catch provision of 10%, and a determined amount of 2 t.</p>
	<p>Royal Red prawn (TAC 462 t, CT 347 t)</p> <p>Supported the long term average TAC and maintaining as a trigger species.</p> <p>SEMAC noted that should a stock assessment be undertaken solely for the purpose of meeting MSC conditions that the cost of the assessment should be recovered directly from the MSC recipient.</p> <p>Blue grenadier</p> <p>SEMAC recommended TAC of 14,650 t with 10% over-and-undercatch and a determined amount of 2 t (first year of a 3-year RBC).</p> <p>SEMAC recommended a review of the appropriateness of the MEY proxy for this species noting the biomass is well above the target yet the CPUE for the wet boat sector is potentially unprofitable, and both fresh and freezer boat sectors are concerned about further reductions to the biomass under the SESS Harvest Strategy as the stock is fished down to achieve the target reference point.</p> <p>Orange Roughy East</p> <p>SEMAC recommended a TAC of 1207 t, resulting from 96.5% of the RBC 1251 t being allocated to the East and 3.5% (44 t) to the Pedra Branca area. With 100% undercatch, 0% over catch and a determined amount of 2 t for Orange Roughy East.</p> <p>SEMAC supported the concept of reducing the allocation for Pedra Branca from 7% of the Eastern Zone TAC to 3.5% (44 t), subject to scientific advice that this poses no risk to the Eastern Zone stock and an assessment of the impact of this approach on SFRs.</p> <p>SEMAC noted that this approach maximises the potential for the Eastern Zone RBC to be fully caught in a more cost-effective manner given the distance to Pedra Branca fishing grounds and limited effort in recent years in this area.</p> <p>Orange Roughy South</p>

	<p>SEMAC recommended 75 t TAC with 0% under and over catch (44 Pedra, 31 incidental TAC) for Orange Roughy South.</p> <p>Orange Roughy West</p> <p>SEMAC supported a TAC of 200 t for the purposes of ongoing data collection to support the stock assessment for this zone.</p> <p>The MAC noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that this TAC is equivalent to a RCA but administered via SFRs, with the intent of improving fishing practices while also providing a return to SFR holders. • The 200 t is less than the mortality that was permitted under the 200 t RCA and 60 t bycatch limit set for the past five years in this zone. • Setting a TAC for a depleted species is inconsistent with the SESSF HS but that OR presents a unique situation in terms of it being a highly aggregating species that needs to be targeted in order to collect data and that in this situation, the recommended approach better achieves AFMA objectives <p>Under/over catch provisions remain at zero per cent with a determined amount of 2 t.</p> <p>Bight Redfish</p> <p>SEMAC supported a TAC of 873 t with U/O-catch set at 10% and a determined amount of 2 t noting the re-categorisation for the 2022 assessment to Tier 2 under the revised HSF, and application of the 5 % discount factor. Further, that the assessment update has been deferred until 2028.</p> <p>SEMAC noted GABIA concern about the TAC being impacted from an administrative decision and its preference for the stock to remain as a Tier 1 until a new assessment is undertaken.</p> <p>Deepwater Flathead</p> <p>SEMAC supported a TAC of 940 t, the 3rd year of a 3-year MYTAC with under and over catch provision of 10% and a determined amount of 2 t.</p> <p>Redfish</p> <p>SEMAC noted RAG advice around needing to constrain mortality as much as possible.</p> <p>SEMAC supported a 5 t bycatch TAC with a move on provision as this prevents targeting, reduces the risk of discarding and supports ongoing data collection while the move on rule aims to reduce overall total mortality.</p> <p>Flathead</p> <p>SEMAC supported ongoing constraint on flathead to reduce mortality of Jackass Morwong. SEMAC supported a TAC at 2,333 t with U/O-catch set at 10% and determined amount of 2 t.</p>
<p>Depleted species (reviewed annually)</p>	<p>Blue Warehou</p>

	<p>SEMAM supported a TAC of 30 t with Under/Over catch set at 0% and a determined amount of 2 t</p> <p>SEMAM noted the TAC is higher than recent catches of Blue Warehouse however a more in depth review of catches would need to be undertaken before downward adjustments can be made without risking increased discarding due to fishers being unable to locate/acquire required quota. Further, that given the incidental nature of catches, a TAC adjustment would not result in a reduction in mortality.</p> <p>Gemfish East</p> <p>SEMAM noted the TAC is higher than recent catches of Gemfish East however a more in-depth review of catches would need to be undertaken before downward adjustments can be made without risking increased discarding due to fishers being unable to locate/acquire required quota. Further, that given the incidental nature of catches, a TAC adjustment would not result in a reduction in mortality.</p> <p>Jackass Morwong</p> <p>SEMAM supported a TAC of 50 t with Under/Over catch set at 0% and a determined amount of 2 t</p> <p>SEMAM noted the outcome of the Climate Risk Assessment for Jackass Morwong was Extreme High Risk and that documenting the impact of climate for this stock and any implications for reference points and rebuilding timeframes needs to be undertaken. This work will then inform the development of the rebuilding strategy.</p> <p>SEMAM Noted the importance of EM in improving discard estimates of depleted species generally.</p> <p>John Dory</p> <p>SEMAM supported a TAC of 60 t with Under/Over catch set at 0% and a determined amount of 2 t.</p> <p>SEMAM noted the outcome of the Climate Risk Assessment for John Dory was High Risk and that documenting the impact of climate for this stock and any implications for reference points and rebuilding timeframes needs to be undertaken. This work will then inform the development of the rebuilding strategy.</p> <p>SEMAM Noted importance of EM in improving discard estimates of depleted species generally.</p>
<p>Species/stocks with no change to TAC</p>	<p>DW Shark West</p> <p>SEMAM recommended maintaining a TAC of 327 t with 10% over and undercatch for Deepwater Shark West, as the 3rd year of a 3-year RBC.</p> <p>DW Shark East</p> <p>SEMAM recommended maintaining a 2-year TAC of 24 t with 10% over-and-undercatch for Deepwater Shark East.</p>

	<p>Pink Ling</p> <p>SEMAC supported a TAC of 1539 t, consistent with the HS. SETFIA continues to manage the constraint on eastern stock. SEMAC recommended continued support for consideration of pink ling regionalization.</p> <p>Blue Eye Trevalla</p> <p>SEMAC supported a TAC at 279 t, consistent with the HS. SEMAC noted anecdotal reports from industry regarding lack of recruitment and that the assessment is moving towards a Tier 1 assessment.</p>
	<p>Orange Roughy (Albany and Esperance)</p> <p>SEMAC supported the incidental bycatch TAC of 50 t continue for the 2026-27 season with 0% over and undercatch and a determined amount of 2 t. SEMAC also supported to continue with the 200 t RCA</p> <p>Mirror Dory</p> <p>SEMAC supported the roll over of a TAC at 334 t with 10% under and over catch and a determined amount of 2 t.</p> <p>Oreo Basket</p> <p>SEMAC supported the TAC at 137 t with 10% under and over catch and a determined amount of 2 t.</p> <p>Silver Trevally</p> <p>SEMAC supported the TAC at 25t with 10% under and over catch and a determined amount of 2 t.</p> <p>Silver Warehou</p> <p>SEMAC supported the TAC at 350 t with 10% under and over catch and a determined amount of 2 t.</p> <p>School Whiting</p> <p>SEMAC supported the TAC at 1,202 t with 10% under and over catch and a determined amount of 2 t.</p>
<p>Non-Quota Species</p>	<p>Orange Roughy (ECDWT)</p> <p>SEMAC supported a TAC of 50 t with Under/Over catch set at 0% and a determined amount of 2 t</p> <p>Hagfish</p> <p>SEMAC supported a TAC at 80 t noting SERAG concerns about continuing to maintain the TAC at 80 t without improved data collection and the need to have this resolved as soon as possible.</p> <p>There are no undercatch or overcatch provisions for non-quota species</p>