Australian Government
Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Corporate Plan 2026–27

Including Annual Operational Plan 2026-27

Securing Australia's fishing future

Contents

Introduction

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority's (AFMA) Corporate Plan 2026–27 updates the previous Corporate Plan and outlines how we intend to deliver against our purpose over the next four years (2026–27 to 2029–30).

The Corporate Plan is AFMA's primary planning document. It outlines our purpose, the environment in which we operate, our priorities and activities, and the performance measures by which we will be held to account by the Australian community.

The key activities (described in section 2) and performance information (described in section 7) apply generally across the life of the Corporate Plan. These activities are not expected to change significantly in the next four years but will be reviewed, continuously improved, and updated annually. Greater specificity of actions to be taken in 2026–27 to deliver against the Corporate Plan are included through the incorporation of the AFMA Annual Operational Plan for 2026 (see section 8).

Statement of preparation by the Chief Executive Officer

I, Wez Norris, as the accountable authority of the Australian Fisheries Management Authority, present the AFMA Corporate Plan for the periods of 2026–27 to 2029–30, as required under section 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and Division 7 of the *Fisheries Administration Act 1991* (the Act). In accordance with section 72(1) of the Act, I consulted with the peak industry body, the Commonwealth Fisheries Association (CFA), prior to preparation of this Corporate Plan.

Helen Kroger	Wez Norris
Chairman, AFMA Commission	Chief Executive Officer, Accountable Authority of AFMA

1 Purposes

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA, the Authority) is established under the *Fisheries Administration Act 1991* (the FAA) to manage Australia's Commonwealth fisheries on behalf of the Australian community in accordance with the *Fisheries Management Act 1991* (the FMA). Our purpose is to pursue the ecologically sustainable development (ESD) of Commonwealth fisheries for the benefit of the Australian community.

1.1 Our outcome

Ecologically sustainable and economically efficient Commonwealth fisheries, through understanding and monitoring Australia's marine living resources and regulating and monitoringcommercial fishing, including domestic licensing and deterrence of illegal fishing. We deter and prevent illegal foreign fishing in the Australian Fishing Zone by carrying out education programs, cooperative enforcement operations, prosecution of offenders, destruction of confiscated boats, and capacity building projects.

1.2 Our values

In all our relationships, we uphold the Australian Public Service (APS) values. These are:

- Committed to service – we are professional, objective, innovative and efficient and we work collaboratively to achieve the best results for the Australian community and the Government.
- Ethical – we demonstrate leadership, are trustworthy, and act with integrity, in all that we do.
- Respectful – we respect all people, including their rights and their heritage.
- Accountable – we are open and accountable to our stakeholders across the Australian community.
- Impartial – we are apolitical and provide advice that is frank, honest, timely, and based on the best available evidence.
- Stewardship – we build capability, corporate knowledge, understand long-term impacts, and ensure AFMA's and the APS's sustainability for the future.

These values support our collaborative efforts with commercial, recreational and Indigenous fishers and other stakeholders across the Australian community.

1.3 Roles and responsibilities

As a regulatory authority and non-corporate Commonwealth entity, AFMA comprises the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the Commission, and AFMA staff.

The Commission is responsible for performing and exercising the domestic fisheries management functions and powers of the Authority including the determination of total allowable catches (TACs) and total allowable effort (TAEs), and domestic compliance and monitoring programs. The Commission comprises of six independent Commissioners and the CEO. Commissioners have expertise in public sector administration, natural resource management, economics, legal and governance matters, research, and fishing industry operations.

The CEO is responsible for exercising AFMA's foreign compliance functions and powers and is AFMA's accountable authority under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and the agency head for the purposes of the *Public Service Act 1999*.

Our staff are responsible for supporting the CEO to meet the CEO's responsibilities under the fisheries and broader legislation.

AFMA also provides fisheries management and compliance services to the Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority (PZJA) in respect of Torres Strait commercial fisheries. While these activities fall outside the purview of the AFMA Commission, they are undertaken under the budget, governance arrangements and performance measures in this Corporate Plan.

1.4 Corporate structure

AFMA is organised into four functional areas, with the following roles:

- Fisheries management teams: Deliver innovative, transparent, and flexible regulatory arrangements that ensure sustainability of fish stocks and the broader marine environment, while ensuring that barriers to commercial activity are appropriately mitigated.
- Fisheries operations teams: Deliver intelligence led, risk-based monitoring, control and surveillance and enforcement activities to support the integrity of regulatory measures.
- Fisheries information teams: Develop new and manage existing information products to inform regulatory practice in fisheries management and fisheries operations teams while administering industry-focussed client management.
- Corporate teams: Enable and expedite the work of technical fisheries branches through proactive delivery of supporting services and advice.

The AFMA Executive team, comprising the CEO, Deputy CEO, General Manager Fisheries Operations, and the Chief Operating Officer (COO), empowers the functional teams above through strategic leadership and relationship building within government and across industry, other fishing sectors and broader marine environment stakeholders.

1.5 Our objectives

Act and section	Summary of objective[1]
Fisheries Administration Act 1991 – section 6	Implement efficient and cost-effective fisheries management.
	Ensure the utilisation of fisheries and related activities is consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development. [2]
Fisheries Management Act 1991 – section 3	Where Australia has obligations under international agreements, ensure the utilisation of fish stocks and related activities in the Australian Fishing Zone (AFZ) and the high seas are carried out consistently with those obligations.
	To the extent that Australia has obligations under international law or agreements, ensure that fishing activities by Australian flagged vessels on the high seas are conducted consistently with those obligations. [3]
	Maximise net economic returns to the Australian community from the management of Australian fisheries.
	Ensure accountability to the fishing industry and the Australian community in the management of fisheries resources.
	Achieve government targets in relation to the recovery of AFMA's costs.
	Ensure that the interests of commercial, recreational, and Indigenous fishers are considered.
	Ensure, through proper conservation and management measures, that the living resources of the AFZ are not endangered by over-exploitation.
	Achieve optimum utilisation of the living resources of the Australian fishing zone.

Note 1: Objectives that AFMA 'must pursue' are shaded grey. AFMA must 'have regard to' the unshaded objectives.
Note 2: The principles of ecologically sustainable development are detailed in section 6A of the FAA.
Note 3: This objective is listed as one that AFMA must pursue in the FAA and as one that AFMA is to have regard to in the FMA.

In pursuing our objectives, we must ensure, as far as practicable, that measures adopted must not be inconsistent with the preservation, conservation, and protection of whales.

2 Strategic approach over the years ahead

Our purpose, outcome statement and activities provide the framework for our priority initiatives and the way we do our work. The Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry issued a Statement of Expectations (SOE)[1] to AFMA on 22 December 2025, and AFMA responded with its Statement of Intent (SOI)[2] on 20 March 2026. Together, these documents provide guidance on the strategic focus required to deliver that work in the context of the Government's priorities.

This Corporate Plan and Annual Operating Plan responds to the requirements in Resource Management Guide 128 on Regulator Performance as well as the Government's regulatory reform and productivity agenda. The SOE and SOI have been fully integrated into our activities and this corporate plan. We also engage with other departments with a stewardship role for regulatory policy, practice and performance and contribute to whole-of-government efforts to enhance system coherence, particularly in combatting illegal foreign fishing, monitoring and compliance.

AFMA will approach its regulatory responsibilities through a lens of:

- improving productivity and reducing unnecessary regulatory burden through active engagement with risk and balancing different objectives in decision-making and review of existing regulation.
- supporting innovation and investment by removing unnecessary regulatory barriers to change or drivers of cost.
- demonstrating leadership across the broader marine and seafood policy landscape through proactive engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, especially by driving opportunities for cooperation with state and territory fisheries regulators.

Reducing regulatory duplication within government was a high priority and recurring theme at the Agricultural Productivity Roundtable hosted by the Minister in August 2025. This will be a high priority throughout the life of this plan, and AFMA will engage with the Department of Environment, Energy, Climate Change and Water and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to identify opportunities to reduce and remove current areas of duplicated assessment and regulation.

Our strategic approach is also fundamentally shaped by our resourcing and financial sustainability. Over the course of this plan, AFMA will be strategically reviewing its capability, mandate and resourcing to ensure we can fulfill our purpose. This will include a range of work, such as:

- Reviewing our charging and cost recovery framework to ensure that our funding is sustainable, fit-for-purpose and compliant with Government policy.
- Seeking further expenditure efficiencies through the roll-out of technology such as Electronic Monitoring of fishing activity (EM).
- Identifying opportunities to share costs and functions with other fisheries regulatory agencies.
- Cautiously exploring what AFMA's role may be in a wider remit than present, potentially including new fisheries management responsibilities and regulation of aquaculture in Commonwealth waters.

[1] https://www.afma.gov.au/corporate-and-reports/statement-expectation-minister-collins-mr-norris-dec-2025
[2] https://www.afma.gov.au/corporate-and-reports/statement-intent-2026

3 Key activities

Our purpose (Corporate Plan 2026–27) - To pursue the ecologically sustainable development (ESD) of Commonwealth fisheries for the benefit of the Australian community.

Our outcome statement (Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) 2026–27 - Outcome 1: Ecologically sustainable and economically efficient Commonwealth fisheries, through understanding and monitoring Australia's marine living resources and regulating and monitoring commercial fishing, including domestic licensing and deterrence of illegal fishing.

Our linked programs (PBS 2026–27)

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry - Program 1.4: Fishing Industry & Program 2.1: Biosecurity and Export Services
Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water - Program 2.1: Conserve, protect, sustainably manage and restore Australia's natural environment
Department of Home Affairs - Program 3.4: Border Enforcement

Our key activities

Management of Commonwealth fisheries consistent with principles of ecological sustainable development.	Maximise net economic returns to the Australian community from the management of Commonwealth fisheries.	Compliance with Commonwealth fisheries laws and policies and relevant international fishing obligations and standards.	Deliver effective, cost efficient and accountable management of Commonwealth fisheries resources.
• Developing management arrangements that: ○ Support the implementation and review of Commonwealth fisheries policies including the Harvest Strategy and Bycatch Policies. ○ Implement AFMA's Ecological Risk Management Framework. ○ Recover overfished stocks and prevent overfishing. ○ Ensure commercial, recreational and Indigenous fishing information is used to the extent possible in decision making. • Investing in and applying monitoring, scientific and economic research to decision making on fish stocks, sub-stocks, species (target and non-target species) and the impact of fishing on the marine environment.	• Reviewing management arrangements to respond to government priorities on productivity and regulatory improvement. • Exploring opportunities to streamline fisheries assessment and management • Reviewing management arrangements in conjunction with external factors that may limit fishing to ensure overall regulation is fit for purpose. • Understanding impacts of resource allocation between commercial, recreational, and Indigenous fishers.	• Operating an effective compliance and enforcement regime encompassing: ○ Measures to maximise voluntary compliance. ○ Risk-based, intelligence driven, and targeted domestic operations. ○ Building and maintaining strategic links and relationships with relevant law enforcement agencies. • Operating effective foreign fisheries compliance enforcement and capacity building by: ○ Implementing strategies to deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) foreign fishing in Australian waters and on the high seas where Australia has an interest. ○ Delivering capacity building programs internationally and providing technical input to support key regional and international fishing bodies.	• Strategically reviewing AFMA's role, function and resourcing strategy. • Reviewing business processes and systems, information flows and financial management arrangements through: ○ Assessing and mitigating high financial and operating risks. ○ Seeking opportunities to cooperate with other Departments and agencies to optimise spending. ○ Trialling new and cost-effective methods of collecting essential data. • Increasing AFMA accountability and stakeholder engagement through: ○ Continual review of management advisory committees (MACs) and resource assessment groups (RAGs).

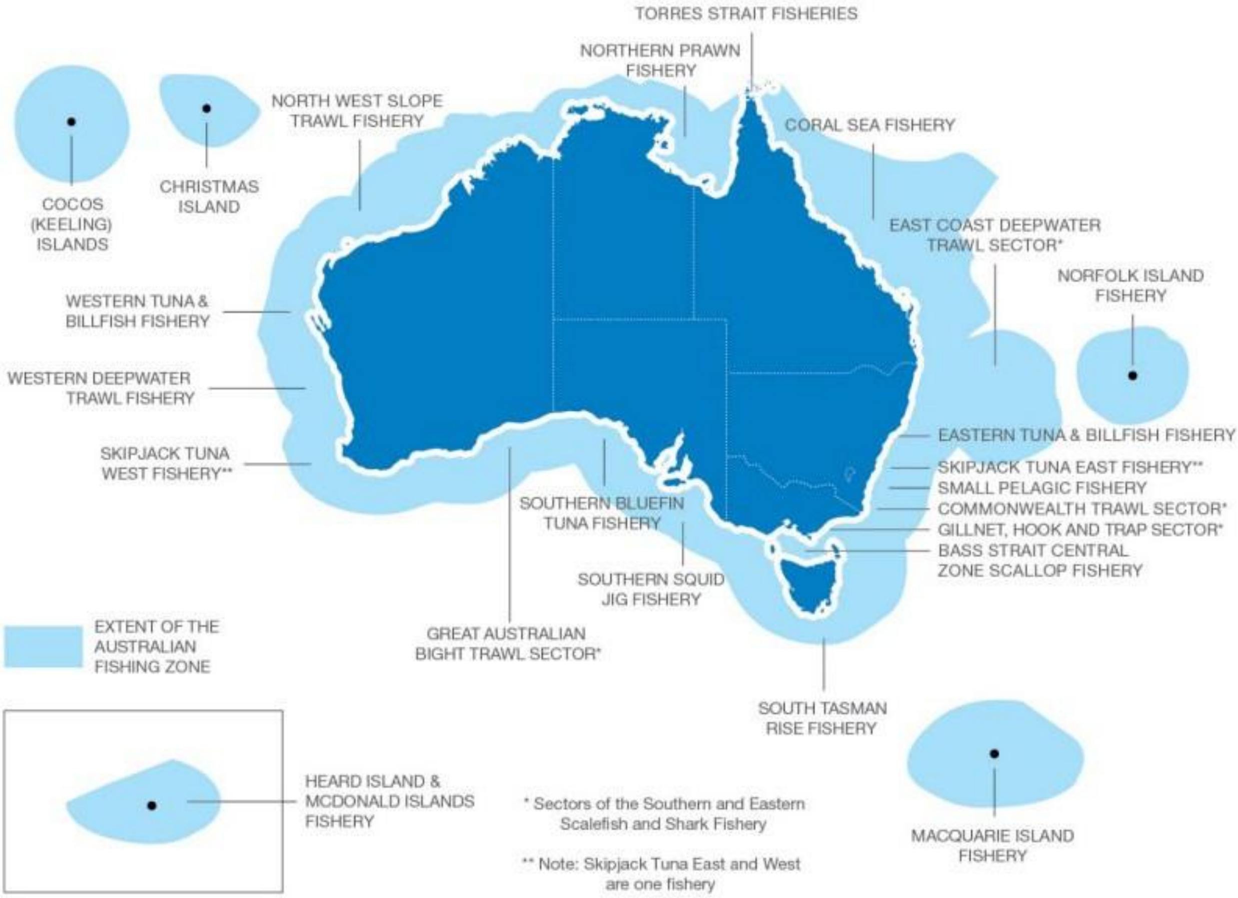
4 Operating context

4.1 Operating environment

We operate in fisheries from the northern-most waters of Australia to Antarctica. We manage the majority of commercial fisheries from three nautical miles from shore to the extent of the Australian Fishing Zone (AFZ). This includes commercial fisheries that form part of international fisheries management arrangements (for example tuna). The States and the Northern Territory manage recreational, traditional indigenous, coastal commercial fisheries, as well as inland fishing and aquaculture. Responsibility for management of fisheries is agreed through Offshore Constitutional Settlement arrangements between the Commonwealth and each State or Territory.

Through our foreign compliance functions, we work together with other Australian Government agencies and our international counterparts to deter illegal fishing in the AFZ.

Figure 1: Map of AFMA managed Commonwealth fisheries



4.2 Regulatory landscape

To achieve our regulatory outcomes, we must maintain a contemporary understanding of the public sector and the Government's expectations of regulators. We are actively committed to minimising the regulatory burden of management and compliance, while ensuring that legislative obligations continue to be met. We implement practical initiatives and reforms that advance deregulation efforts and encourage investment where possible. We take a stewardship approach to managing fisheries regulation in line with the Government's broader commitment to stewardship across the Australian Public Service, and the Government's ongoing regulatory reform agenda.

Our regulatory context is informed by the six principles of regulatory best practice and the Australian Government's Regulatory Policy, Practice and Performance Framework. In line with this Framework, we increasingly embed user-centred, targeted and risk-based, evidence-driven and digitally enabled approaches into our regulatory processes to ensure that regulation is modern, accessible and outcomes-focused. We also recognise the importance of responsive regulation–adjusting regulatory posture according to risk, behaviour and context– to support voluntary compliance and maintain proportionality across our enforcement activities. Our co-management arrangements exemplify this responsiveness.

We are funded by a combination of government appropriations, cost-recovered levies, fee-for-service charges, revenue from services delivered to other government agencies, and other administered income. We ensure that all regulatory functions are appropriately cost recovered. The AFMA Cost Recovery Implementation Statement (CRIS) outlines the cost of activities that we undertake, the attribution of those costs and the mechanisms through which they are recovered.

We review and publish the CRIS annually to reflect and communicate any changes to AFMA's cost recovery model and to update revenue and financial estimates. We are also contributing to the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) led Portfolio Charging Review to ensure our cost recovery arrangements reflect the Australian Government Charging Framework and Department of Finance Cost Recovery Guidelines and to support optimisation of cost recovery charges.

4.3 Industry status and outlook

The commercial fishing industry throughout Australia is facing a growing level of uncertainty and pessimism. While there are examples of fisheries, operators or businesses that are largely unaffected, the industry at large is characterised by declining fleet size, reduced catch and effort, ageing vessels, inconsistent labour supply and externally driven high operating costs (such as fuel and freight). These factors combine to provide very poor profitability at the business level. Despite this, the fishing industry continues to contribute substantially to downstream generation of Gross Domestic Product.

These challenges are particularly exacerbated by the Middle East Regional Conflict. While that conflict may not persist through the life of this plan, the operational shocks such as loss of staff due to decreased fishing, will take some time to recover from. In 2025-26, a significantly higher-than-usual number of AFMA levy payers defaulted on payments, providing a dire indication of the state of at least some parts of the industry.

Smaller fleets, supported by the strong resource base that comes from having most Commonwealth fish stocks in a sustainable state, can still provide food security, economic generation and social contribution.

However, those fleets need freedom to operate efficiently, including the flexibility to move between areas and fisheries unconstrained by legacy regulation that was designed around the previous heavier fishing intensity. AFMA's focus on productivity and regulatory improvement will assist to reprofile the risks that fishing poses to the marine environment to pave the way for this increased operational agility.

Some specific external drivers of the industry outlook include:

Competition for marine space – 'spatial squeeze'

Retaining secure access to productive fishing grounds across Australia's marine estate is a significant challenge for commercial fisheries. For the Commonwealth fishing industry, the main sources of pressure come from the offshore renewable energy sector (wind farm proposals), petroleum acreage release and seismic surveys, and new, expanded or rezoned Marine Protected Areas. The AFMA Corporate Plan 2025-2028[3] provides additional details on this issue and AFMA's role.

Climate Change

Climate change is affecting Australia's marine life from individual species to entire ecosystems. Southeast Australian waters are a 'hotspot' for climate-driven ecosystem changes. However, valuable species that are sensitive to climate change are found in all AFMA fisheries and there is increasing evidence that climate change has already affected several commercially important fish stocks. We recognise the risks that climate change poses to Australia's Commonwealth fisheries and we will continue ensuring our management activities respond to these risks.

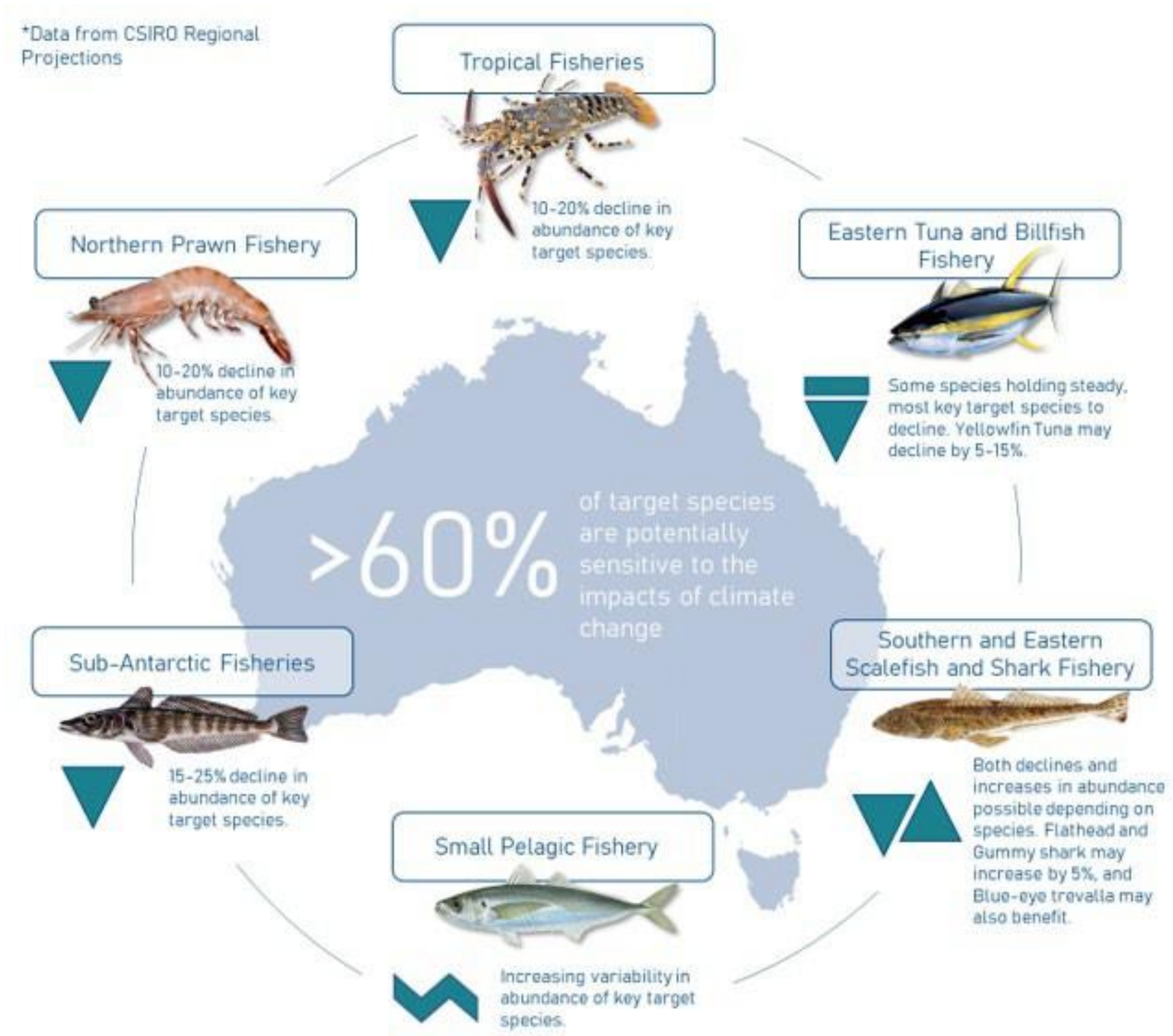
Following a three-year iterative development and trial process involving world-leading experts and fishery stakeholders, the Climate Risk Framework (CRF) was approved by the AFMA Commission in September 2025 and is being implemented progressively across Commonwealth fisheries over the coming three years. The CRF ensures that available climate risk information is routinely considered when providing management advice to the AFMA Commission. Figure 2 shows generalised projections for selected fisheries from 2020 to 2040. Through this program, AFMA is positioning itself to detect emerging changes early and respond proactively as they arise.

We will continue strengthening the integration of climate considerations into our decision-making processes, including Commission meetings, management advisory committees and resource assessment groups.

At the same time, we are mindful that fisheries management decision making alone cannot mitigate changes to the marine ecosystem where they are driven by external environmental change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change projections indicate that fish production will be further affected within the coming decade to the point where management advice could be rendered invalid if climate change considerations are not incorporated. To address this, we are actively engaging in cross-government policy discussions to promote a regulatory environment that accounts for non-fisheries drivers of change to species and ecosystems, helping ensure our objectives remain achievable.

[3] https://www.afma.gov.au/corporate-and-reports/afma-corporate-plan-2025-2028

Figure 2: Projected climate change footprint in Commonwealth Fisheries 2020–40



4.4 Assessment and monitoring

The issues described above driving a smaller fishing footprint, coupled with AFMA's active intervention to prevent fishing impacts on at-risk species, have a secondary impact of deteriorating the data that has traditionally been relied upon for fisheries assessment and monitoring.

At the same time, industry contraction can strengthen incentives to adopt more robust and efficient assessment approaches, including substantial investment into expanding Electronic Monitoring systems across all Commonwealth managed fisheries. These approaches support third-party certification (such as the Marine Stewardship Council accreditation), which in turn improve competitiveness in markets with increasingly sustainability-conscious consumers.

AFMA will continue to seek more independent and cost-effective ways to provide assurance of fishery sustainability, including the active assessments of alternate means of fishery assessment through fishery independent data and enhanced ecosystem modelling.

Upgraded assessment and monitoring arrangements include collection of broad environmental data, routine implementation of new methods such as genetic stock assessment tools and use of ecosystem models, rather than single species assessment models. In the coming year AFMA will focus on building relationships across state and territory regulators to enhance integration of fisheries management including collaborative data collection, assessment and information sharing.

4.5 Illegal fishing

Global and regional economic pressures continue to contribute to the incidence of illegal foreign fishing in Australian waters. The Australian Government has committed $3 million of additional funding in 2026–27, which will enable AFMA to undertake a range of compliance operations, investigate and prosecute illegal fishers as well as engage with the Indonesian Government on proactive deterrent strategies. This is part of a larger program to enhance Australia's northern presence, in partnership with Australian Border Force.

4.6 Technology: innovating while managing risk

The development and deployment of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is accelerating across the economy including government. The benefits of adopting AI include more efficient and accurate operations, stronger data analysis to support evidence-based decision-making, and improved service delivery for people and businesses. We currently use AI to enhance our administrative actions, workplace productivity and to support corporate and enabling functions. We continue to investigate the use of AI for image processing as part of our Electronic Monitoring Program.

Consistent with expectations of government to be an exemplar of safe and responsible adoption and use of AI technologies, we published our first Artificial Intelligence Transparency Statement in 2025. We will continue to review this regularly or when we make a significant change to our approach to AI, or when any new factor impacts this statement.

Alongside positive change, cyber-attacks are growing in number, speed, and sophistication. Australia's Cyber Security Strategy 2023–2030 sets out the action needed across the Australian economy to create a more secure online world for Australians, their businesses, and the essential services on which they all depend. AFMA continues to implement a range of strategies to ensure the protection of our systems, industry data, and information.

4.7 Commonwealth Climate Disclosure

The Commonwealth Climate Disclosure is the Government's policy for Commonwealth entities and companies to publicly report on their management of climate-related risks and opportunities. As a Tranche 3 Commonwealth entity, AFMA is required to report Year 1 Simplified Requirements in 2026–27 and Full (Year 2) Simplified Requirements in 2027–28. The Simplified Requirements, relating to AFMA's organisational risks and opportunities, will be provided as a climate statement in an appendix to AFMA's Annual Report 2026–27.

5 Capability

Our people are our greatest asset. AFMA's capability requirements remain broadly consistent over the life of this Plan. Our workforce will continue to require strong regulatory, operational, scientific, governance and stakeholder engagement capability, supported by an adaptable and collaborative culture.

5.1 Workforce

Our workforce strategy will focus on maintaining a stable, values-based APS workforce, while building the specific capabilities needed to meet emerging demands. We will continue to prioritise direct employment for core functions wherever possible and use contingent labour only where there is a clear business need, consistent with APS workforce policy settings.

As part of our commitment to ensuring that our resource base is sustainable and is deployed to maximum affect in pursuit of our purpose, AFMA will be conducting an ongoing capability review to align our human resource capacity with the functions that are most needed to deliver sustainable fisheries and robust public sector governance.

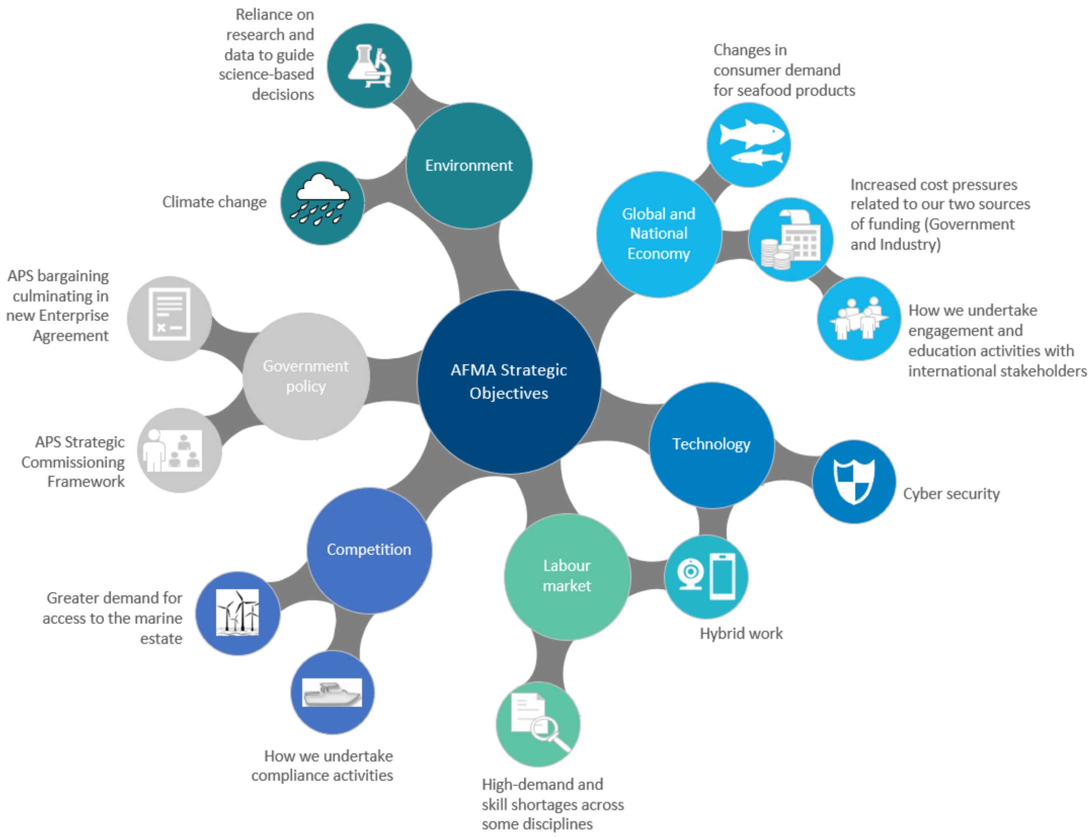
AFMA will prioritise capability uplift and the attraction of people with the right skills, maturity and values for a small and specialist agency. Given the limited career development pathways available in a small organisation, retaining capability will remain a challenge, and workforce planning will need to be responsive to both immediate business needs and longer-term sustainability.

To support these priorities, AFMA will focus on:

- strengthening workforce and organisational design to ensure roles, teams and structures are aligned to current and future operating requirements;
- using natural turnover as an opportunity to review capability needs and ensure recruitment decisions support organisational sustainability;
- attracting and retaining people with the right level of experience, judgement and adaptability for a small regulatory agency;
- improving efficiency through better systems, policies and practices that reduce administrative burden and support more consistent ways of working; and
- maintaining workforce continuity through knowledge transfer, succession planning and documentation of critical business processes.

AFMA will continue to invest in workforce initiatives that support a capable, resilient and adaptable organisation, with a particular emphasis on getting the right mix of skills, experience and organisational design to deliver outcomes efficiently. In 2026-27, AFMA will undertake steps to strengthen capability by embedding the seven principles outlined in the *APS Strategic Commissioning Framework* into HR and Procurement Policies and Procedures. AFMA's greatest reliance on outsourcing for core work is in the Human Resources job family, and this will be focus for 2026-27. In addition to our focus on the capability of our workforce, AFMA will reinforce our commitment to work health and safety; wellbeing and fostering a workplace culture of respect, collaboration and professionalism. Our work will have regard to the external drivers impacting AMFA's workforce set out in Figure 3.

Figure 3: External drivers impacting AFMA's workforce



5.2 Infrastructure

AFMA maintains a small national property footprint, with offices in Canberra, Darwin, Waiben (Thursday) Island and Lakes Entrance. This infrastructure supports our operational presence, enables engagement with regional communities and stakeholders, and provides the facilities required to deliver our regulatory, compliance and fisheries management functions.

Over the life of this Corporate Plan, our focus will be to ensure our property portfolio remains fit for purpose, safe, accessible and aligned with AFMA's current and future operational priorities. This will include developing a strategic property plan to guide future accommodation, infrastructure and investment decisions across our office, regional and residential property portfolio, having regard to whole-of-government property policy, including the Commonwealth Property Management Framework and relevant Australian Government property reporting and planning requirements.

5.3 ICT capability

Our ICT infrastructure must remain modern, functional, and secure, to enable our staff to effectively engage, communicate, and interact with a broad and diverse range of internal and external individuals, groups, organisations, and government departments.

Efforts over the last 12-18 months have uplifted our ICT infrastructure to a modern and sustainable level, including significant investment in deployment and configuration automation that will enable the continued modernisation of systems and services. These will remain priorities over the course of this plan.

6 Risk oversight and management

AFMA's Enterprise Risk Management Framework in Figure 4 outlines our approach in accordance with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy. A recent uplift of our framework embeds sound practices and proactive management of risk into daily operations and introduces quarterly functional risk reporting into the executive, strengthening our organisational resilience in responding to risk. The uplift also establishes a connection between enterprise risk and AFMA's legislative objectives and introduces a level of rigour by documenting accepted risk and / or proposing mitigation and actively monitoring those items.

Our Audit and Risk Committee, supported by our internal legal team, continues to provide independent advice to the Accountable Authority to uphold an effective governance, risk management and compliance framework. We know not all risk can be eliminated, nor should they be. We embrace opportunities for innovation and efficiency by accepting appropriate risk where it aligns with our objectives.

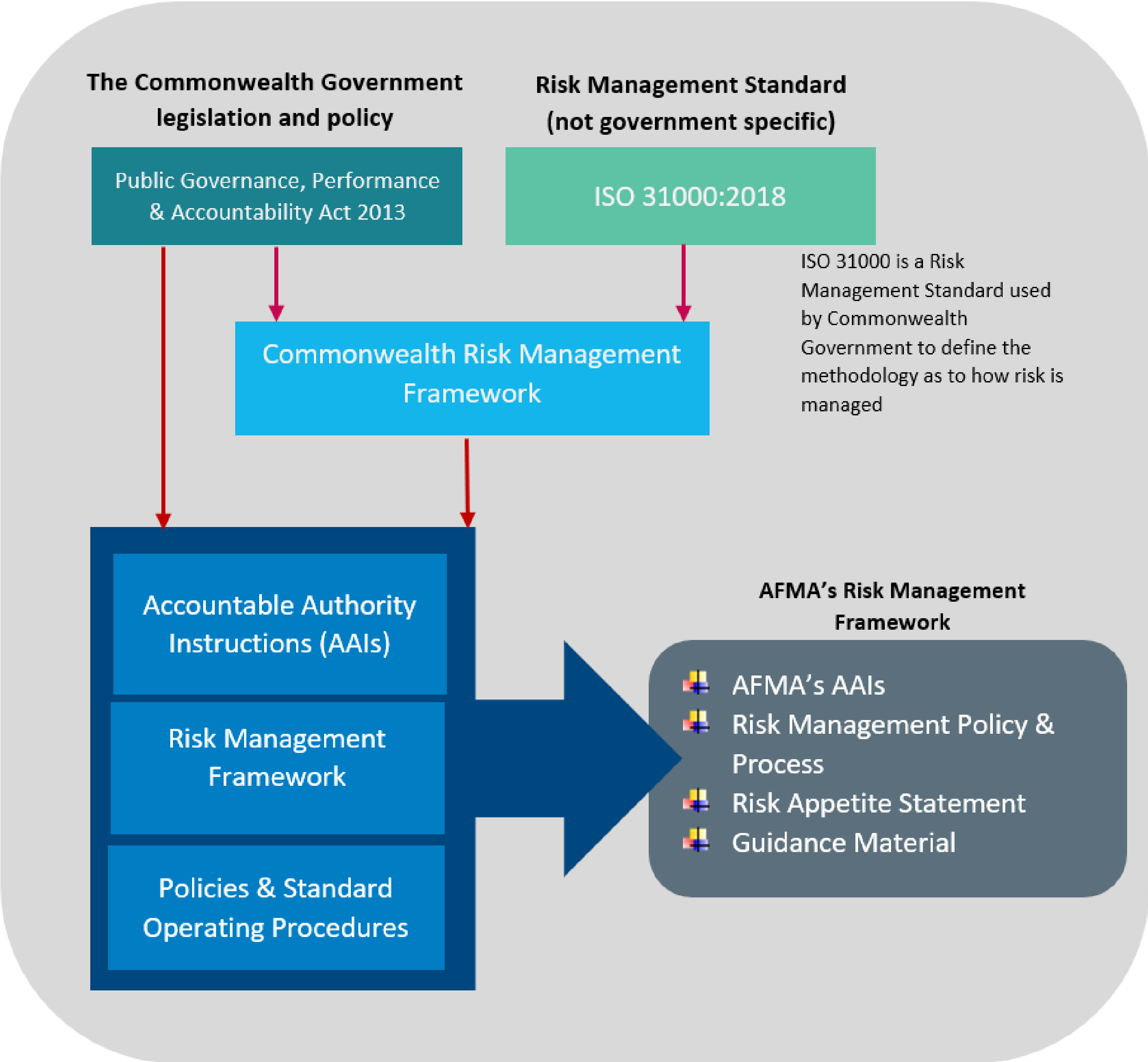
Key areas of enterprise risk relate to:

- Fisheries regulatory risk – ensuring our management performance is not undermined by:
    - declining quality and quantity of fisheries data to inform monitoring and assessment;
    - climate driven ecosystem change; or
    - illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing.
- Technology – adequately mitigating cyber-security threats and ensuring investment into technology is sufficient to maintain fit-for-purpose tools and infrastructure.
- Finance – ensuring that AFMA's appropriation and cost recovery revenue is sustainable and matches the expenses required to deliver robust fisheries management and corporate governance.
- People and culture – ensuring that AFMA has the skills and capabilities required and provides a safe environment as the basis for positive workplace culture.

Management strategies, controls and work priorities are in place for each of the key areas of enterprise risk and include:

- Continuing to implement AFMA's Climate Risk Framework (CRF) across Commonwealth fisheries to strengthen monitoring and assessment;
- Implementing Supporting Border Security, a $3 million program in 2026-27, in partnership with Home Affairs and Australian Border Force to combat illegal foreign fishing;
- investing in cyber-security expertise to respond to identified threats and address vulnerabilities;
- partnering with the Department to undertake independent assessment and review of AFMA's financial sustainability;
- undertaking a capability and functional review of AFMA's workforce and workplace culture.

Figure 4: AFMA's Risk Management Framework



7 Cooperation

To ensure a sustainable, productive and profitable fishing industry, we engage with DAFF, including on scope for reform and improvement and the ongoing DAFF-led reviews of the Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy and the Commonwealth Fisheries Bycatch Policy. This cooperation ensures our regulation is consistent with government policy and that our Minister is informed about our activities and performance in the portfolio. It also ensures that Australia's policy positions on international fisheries are informed by AFMA, and that our implementation of international measures is best practice.

AFMA also works closely with State and Northern Territory fisheries regulators to ensure that shared stocks are appropriately managed and to seek management efficiency, where possible. The industry trends discussed in Section 4 create a stronger than ever need for more active collaboration between jurisdictions, including sharing data and services.

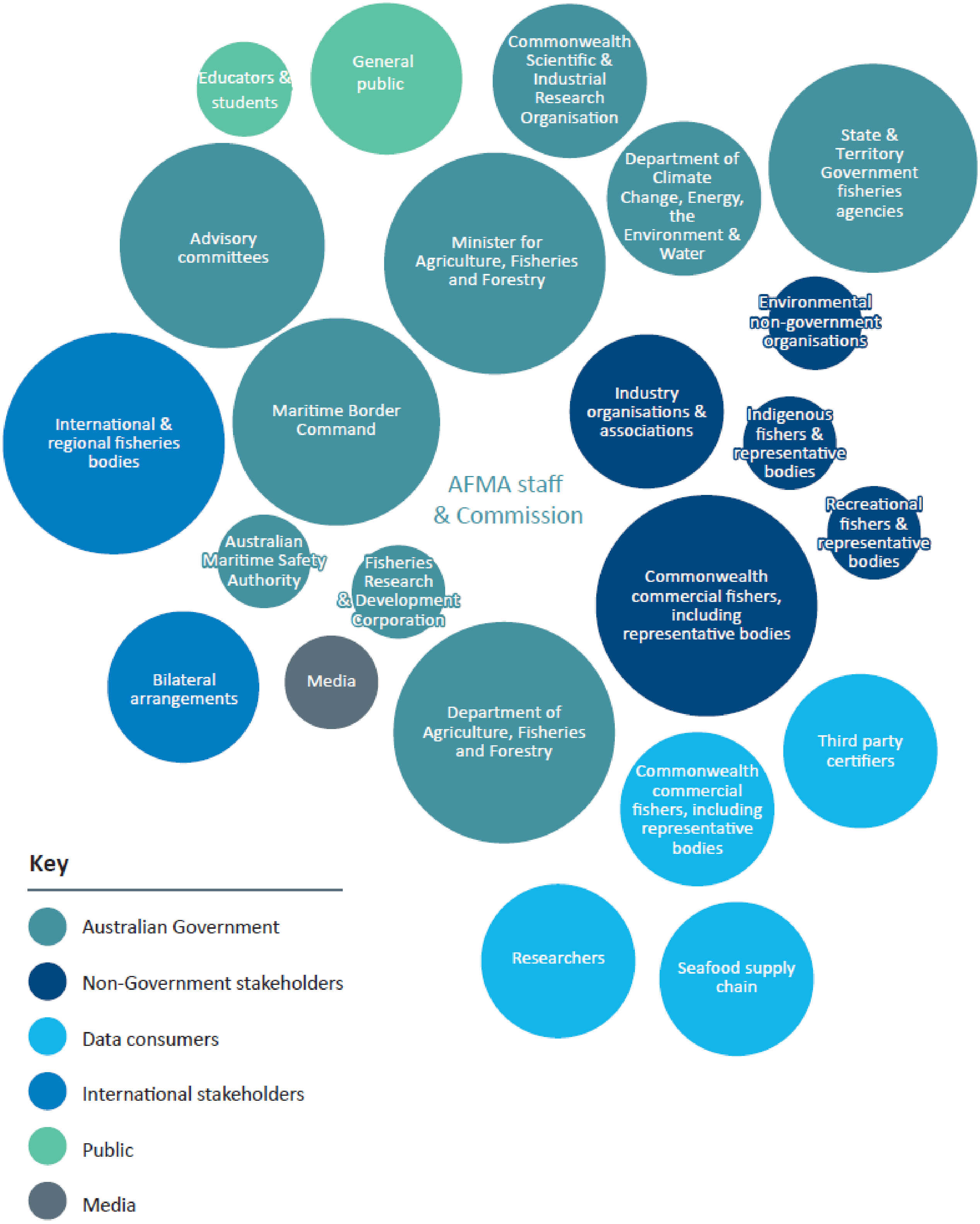
We work closely within Maritime Border Command, a multi-agency taskforce led by Australian Border Force, and supported by relevant agencies, to coordinate the surveillance of, and responses to, civil maritime threats including illegal foreign fishing. We work directly with neighbouring governments to improve their ability to monitor and control fishing activities in their own waters. We also collaborate with international partners to implement and strengthen regional fisheries frameworks and exchange information to address illegal fishing on a larger scale.

We engage with the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water to ensure Commonwealth fisheries data and impacts inform the department's policy and regulatory decision making, as well as on matters relating to environmental accreditation, such as Wildlife Trade Operation requirements. The priority over the life of this plan will be to better streamline these processes to reduce regulatory duplication.

We provide fisheries management, licensing and domestic compliance services for the PZJA under the *Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1984.* Decisions under this legislation are made by the PZJA, which includes the Commonwealth Fisheries Minister (Chair), the Queensland Fisheries Minister and the Chair of the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) Board.

We maintain regular contact with the Chair and Board of the Commonwealth Fisheries Association (CFA) as the peak body prescribed under the FAA. We also regularly interact with the fishery-specific members of the CFA both on an informal basis and through formal consultative structures such as Management Advisory Committees (MACs).

Our stakeholders



The larger the circle the more interest or influence the stakeholder has.

8 Performance

Our performance measures for 2026–27 are presented below. Our targets are the same for each of the reporting periods covered by this Corporate Plan. We plan to continue our incremental improvements of these measures and targets over the next four years.

Principles of regulator best practice
Continuous improvement and building trust AFMA activities: Fisheries outcomes are independently assessed and published annually, creating transparency, accountability, and a basis for improvement.
Risk based and data driven AFMA activities: Decisions and regulatory implementation are underpinned by best available science and operational information and analysis of risk and uncertainty.
Collaboration and engagement AFMA activities: Decisions are supported by expertise and stakeholder-based collaboration through formal and informal processes.

What will be measured?	2026–27 target	2027–28 to 2029-30 targets
1. Percentage of Total Allowable Catch, Total Allowable Effort determinations, or comparable measures, that are based on scientific assessments by resource assessment groups/ management advisory committees.	Greater than or equal to 95 per cent.	Greater than or equal to 95 per cent.

Methodology:
Analyse the total number of TAC, TAE determinations or comparable measures which are based on RAG/MAC scientific assessments and subsequently approved by the AFMA Commission.

What will be measured?	2026–27 target	2027–28 to 2029-30 targets
2. Percentage of fisheries with an Ecological Risk Management (ERM) response in place.	100 per cent of fisheries have an ERM response in place.	100 per cent of fisheries have an ERM response in place.

Methodology:
Analyse the number of regulated fisheries expected to be assessed, as published in the ERA schedule available at https://www.afma.gov.au/fisheries-management/management-tools/ecological-risk-management-strategies, and the number of actual fisheries assessments.

	What will be measured?	2026–27 target	2027–28 to 2029-30 targets
	3. The number of stocks identified as overfished that have specific rebuilding actions in place.	100 per cent of stocks identified as overfished have a specific rebuilding action in place.	100 per cent of stocks identified as overfished have a specific rebuilding action in place.

Methodology:
Analyse the number of 'AFMA-only' fish stocks that ABARES reports (in the Fishery Status Reports) are overfished, and the number of stocks with a specific rebuilding action in place.

	What will be measured?	2026–27 target	2027–28 to 2029-30 targets
	4. Fisheries that maintain accreditation under Part 13A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.	100 per cent of export fisheries maintain accreditation.	100 per cent of export fisheries maintain accreditation.

Methodology:
Analyse compliance of WTO-accredited Commonwealth fisheries with relevant legislative requirements.

	What will be measured?	2026–27 target	2027–28 to 2029-30 targets
	5. The number of stocks with target reference points based on Maximum Economic Yield.	No change or increase.	No change or increase.

Methodology:
Analyse basis for target reference points for Commonwealth fish stocks.

	What will be measured?	2026–27 target	2027–28 to 2029-30 targets
	6. Net Economic Return as assessed in the ABARES Fishery Status Reports.	Positive trend over rolling three-year average.	Positive trend over rolling three-year average.

Methodology:
Analyse Net Economic Return data and commentary from published annual ABARES Fishery Status Report.

	What will be measured?	2026–27 target	2027–28 to 2029-30 targets
	7. Identification of priority national compliance risks and activities and development of treatment programs for those priority risks and activities.	100% of published national compliance risks and activities have operational and treatment programs in place.	100% of published national compliance risks and activities have operational and treatment programs in place.

Methodology:
Analyse activities to treat national compliance risks that are identified as priorities in the National Compliance and Enforcement Program 2026–28 that is published on our website.

	What will be measured?	2026–27 target	2027–28 to 2029-30 targets
	8. Investigation of illegal foreign fishing in Australian waters to support prosecutions.	90 percent of briefs referred to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions (CDPP) for illegal foreign fishing offences proceed to prosecution.	90 percent of briefs referred to the CDPP for illegal foreign fishing offences proceed to prosecution.

Methodology:
Analyse the number of prosecutions undertaken by CDPP compared to total number of AFMA briefings.

	What will be measured?	2026–27 target	2027–28 to 2029-30 targets
	9. Compliance rate with Australia's international fisheries obligations that AFMA implements as assessed by International Fisheries Management Organisations.	Greater than 90 per cent.	Greater than 90 per cent.

Methodology:
Analyse compliance rate with international fisheries obligations.

	What will be measured?	2026–27 target	2027–28 to 2029-30 targets
	10. Cost recovery budget.	At or below 2005–06 once adjusted for Consumer Price Index (CPI).	At or below 2005–06 once adjusted for CPI.

Methodology:
Analyse latest year total CRIS amount and CPI adjusted baseline.

	What will be measured?	2026–27 target	2027–28 to 2029-30 targets
	11. Engagement with legislated peak body.	Commonwealth Fisheries Association (CFA) is satisfied that meaningful opportunity is given to contribute to planning, delivery, and reporting.	CFA is satisfied that meaningful opportunity is given to contribute to planning, delivery, and reporting.

Methodology:
Analyse CFA views and opinions on elements of AFMA's engagement.

9 Annual Operational Plan

Australian Government
Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Annual Operational Plan 2026–27

Regulator Performance Guide principles	Continuous improvement, building trust	AFMA activities to meet Regulator Performance Guide principles	Fisheries outcomes are independently assessed and published annually, creating transparency, accountability, and a basis for improvement.
	Risk based and data driven		Decisions and regulatory implementation are underpinned by best available science and operational information and analysis of risk and uncertainty.
	Collaboration and engagement		Decisions are supported by expertise and stakeholder-based collaboration through formal and informal processes.

	Theme	Summary
We deliver regulatory services according to applicable fisheries legislation	Regulatory improvement	Issue and fishery-specific reviews of existing and proposed regulation in accordance with AFMA's Statement of Expectations (SOE) and Statement of Intent (SOI). Focus on understanding real risk posed by fisheries and tailoring management accordingly, without compromising sustainability objectives. Work with government partners to reduce regulatory duplication and inefficiency.
	Illegal foreign fishing	Contribute to the prevention, deterrence and elimination of illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing by foreign vessels in the Australian waters, in accordance with the Australian Government Civil Maritime Security Strategy and Illegal Foreign Fishing Strategy.
	Information	Enhance the value of AFMA's data and information through continual improvement in fisheries and corporate data systems, including tools and communities of practice to ensure rapid and accurate production and dissemination of analysis products.
	Organisational capability	Support the delivery of AFMA's operations and information through uplift and modernisation of AFMA's ICT infrastructure and cyber security posture. Review AFMA's existing organisational structure and core capabilities to ensure workforce strategy and development are future-ready. Delivering robust financial and HR planning and administration to demonstrate robust governance and corporate support to business areas.
	Organisational sustainability	Working with government and industry to identify sustainable and appropriate charging and appropriation frameworks, including streamling cost recovery processes. Cautiously exploring additional functions that AFMA may be well placed to discharge.
	Electronic Monitoring	Complete expansion of Electronic Monitoring (EM) into new fisheries, including finalising transition to internal footage review. Review and adjust intelligence and compliance approach to fisheries that embrace the new data reality. Continuous evolution in data collection, management and governance including the Implementation of additional data collection regimes – with improved discard estimation and biological data. Negotiate service provision arrangements to other government entities.

Consistent with section 77 of the *Fisheries Administration Act 1991*, this Annual Operational Plan relates to the reporting period commencing on 1 July 2026. It sets out the particulars of the action that we intend to take in order to give effect to, or further, the goals in the Corporate Plan applicable to this period. We do not intend to determine, or otherwise institute, a plan of management during 2026–27.

10 Appendix A – List of requirements

AFMA's Corporate Plan 2026–29 has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of:

- subsection 35(1) of the PGPA Act 2013, and
- subsection 16E(2) of the PGPA Rule 2014.

The table details the requirements that need to be met by AFMA's corporate plan and the page reference in the corporate plan that corresponds with each requirement.

Requirements	Page(s)
Introduction	3
– Statement that the plan is prepared for paragraph 35(1)(b) of the Act	3
– The reporting period for which the plan is prepared	3
– The reporting periods covered by the plan	3
Purposes	4
Key activities	7
Operating context	8
– Environment	8
– Capability	15
– Risk oversight and management, and the key risks and how those risks will be managed	16
– Cooperation	19
– Subsidiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Performance	21
– Performance measures (for each reporting period covered, with basis for assessment of performance over time)	21–24
– Targets for each performance measures (if reasonably practicable to set a target)	21–24