



Australian Government
Australian Fisheries Management Authority



**Bass Strait Central Zone
Fishery Management Advisory
Committee (ScallopMAC)**



Meeting 28 (Teleconference)

Minutes

Date: 21 February 2017

Attendance

Name	Membership
John Pollock	Chair
Associate Professor Brendan Kelaher	Scientific member
Allan Barnett	Industry member
Steve Mantzaris	Industry member
Stuart Richey	Industry member
Andrew Watts	Industry member
Sally Weekes	AFMA member
Bill Lussier	Invited Participant, Victoria
Claire Taylor	Executive Officer (AFMA)
Bob Lister	Observer
Apologies	
John Hammond	Industry member
Dr Sylvia Zukowski	Environment member
James Parkinson	Invited Participant, Tasmania

1. Preliminaries

1.1 Welcome and apologies

The Chair opened the meeting at 10:00am and welcomed members to the teleconference. The Chair noted apologies from John Hammond, Dr Sylvia Zukowski and James Parkinson.

1.2 Declarations of interest

ScallopMAC members updated and confirmed their interests as follows:

Participant	Membership	Interest declared
John Pollock	Chair	No interest, pecuniary or otherwise, in the fishery.
Assoc/Prof Brendan Kelaher	Research Member	ScallopRAG Chair and research member on SharkRAG. No interest, pecuniary or otherwise, in the fishery.
Allan Barnett	Industry Member (Tasmania)	Holds Commonwealth and State concessions, a Commonwealth fish receiver permit and operates a scallop processing plant.
John Hammond	Industry Member (Tasmania)	Holds Commonwealth and State concessions.
Steve Mantzaris	Industry Member (Victoria)	Operates a scallop processing plant.
Stuart Richey	Industry Member (Tasmania)	Holds Commonwealth and State concessions.
Andrew Watts	Industry Member (Victoria)	Holds Commonwealth and State concessions.
Dr Sylvia Zukowski	Environment Member	No interest, pecuniary or otherwise, in the fishery.
Sally Weekes	AFMA Member	AFMA Manager for the BSCZSF. No interest, pecuniary or otherwise in the fishery.

Participant	Membership	Interest declared
James Parkinson	Invited Participant (Tasmanian government)	Fisheries Management Officer in Tasmania. No interest, pecuniary or otherwise, in the fishery.
Bill Lussier	Invited Participant (Victorian government)	Manager of the scallop fishery in Victoria. No interest, pecuniary or otherwise, in the fishery.
Claire Taylor	Executive Officer	No pecuniary interest in the fishery.
Bob Lister	Observer	Chief Executive Officer, Scallop Fishermen's Association of Tasmania

Every industry member declared an interest in Agenda Item 4 and left the teleconference separately while the MAC determined whether the member could participate in the discussion and make recommendations regarding this item during the meeting. In each case the MAC determined each member's contribution would be valuable and that they should take part in discussions and recommendations for Agenda Item 4.

1.3 Adoption of Agenda

ScallopMAC adopted the agenda at **Attachment A** with the addition of membership of the Co-management Committee under other business (agenda item 5) and the process regarding the default opening in the Harvest Strategy at agenda item 4.1.

2. Meeting Administration

2.1 Confirmation of record of previous meeting

ScallopMAC noted the finalised minutes of the previous meeting of 23 June 2016 are published on the AFMA website.

2.2 Actions arising from previous meetings

The AFMA member gave an update on the progress of action items arising from previous ScallopMAC meetings (**Attachment B**).

Action: AFMA to send Stuart Richey a copy of the letter from the ScallopMAC and ScallopRAG Chairs that thanked John Richey and his crew for their work on the 2016 survey.

2.3 Correspondence

ScallopMAC noted there had been no correspondence between AFMA and ScallopMAC since the last meeting.

3. Fishery update

3.1 AFMA management

The AFMA member provided an update to ScallopMAC.

- The 2016 fishing season had the highest catch in over 15 years, with 2885 tonnes of the 3000 tonnes total allowable catch (TAC) being caught. There was an AFMA media release and AFMA had interviews with ABC Rural Gippsland and ABC Hobart.

- The new AFMA Cost Recovery Implementation Statement (CRIS) has been approved and will be used as the basis for the 2017-18 cost recovered fisheries budgets. The draft budget will be sent to ScallopMAC in early March.
- Associate Professor Brendan Kelaher is the new ScallopRAG Chair and scientific member on ScallopMAC.
- ScallopMAC members were reminded to sign up to Govdex to access meeting papers and minutes.
- AFMA is planning a research workshop for March 2017 to inform the areas and structure of the 2017 biomass survey, consider the outcomes of recently completed research and inform the development of the strategic research plan for the fishery.

3.2 Tasmanian State Government management

Bob Lister provided an update on the Tasmanian scallop fishery.

- The Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water & Environment Fisheries will soon seek expressions of interest from scallop fishers to undertake exploratory survey harvesting around Tasmania. There will be six defined survey areas with a state wide maximum of 300 tonnes. The surveys are expected to start on 1 April 2017.
- Biotoxins have caused issues in the past few years and will be monitored closely throughout the season.

3.3 Victorian State Government management

Bill Lussier provided an update on the Victorian scallop fishery.

- In 2013-14 a 135 tonne TAC was put in place, for the three years prior to that it was a zero tonne TAC. The 135 tonne TAC has remained since and will continue for the 2017 season. In the 2016 season 306 kg was caught. To increase the TAC more data needs to be collected but there is little interest.

3.4 Environment update

There was no environment update.

3.5 AFMA operational bycatch strategy

ScallopMAC noted the development of the draft AFMA operational bycatch strategy. The strategy outlines principles and processes for managing bycatch issues across all Commonwealth fisheries. It sits under the Commonwealth Policy on Fisheries Bycatch which is currently under review. ScallopMAC have two weeks to provide comments or questions to AFMA.

An industry member raised concerns with the broad scope of the definition of bycatch in the strategy and its consequences:

In Commonwealth managed fisheries bycatch is generally defined as “species that physically interact with fishing vessels and/or fishing gear which are not usually kept by commercial fishers...”

Scallop dredges are designed to let small scallops and other species escape the dredge and they survive. Under this definition everything that escapes is technically considered ‘bycatch’ which raises questions about what and how bycatch will be managed.

ScallopMAC noted that in addition to the Bycatch Strategy, AFMA uses ecological risk assessments (ERAs) to identify and prioritise risks (to species/habitats) from a particular fishery that need to be managed. The ERA methodology is being updated and once finalised, ERAs for each major fishery will be updated, including for the BSCZSF.

4. Arrangements for 2017 season opening

4.1 Arrangements for opening the 2017 BSCZSF season

The AFMA member summarised the options for the 2017 season opening that ScallopMAC advice was being sought on:

Option 1 - keep the fishery closed (TAC set at zero tonnes) until a biomass survey is undertaken and results discussed at the next RAG and MAC meetings

Option 2 - open the season 1 April 2017 with a default TAC of 150 tonnes and then decide if a biomass survey should be conducted.

To be able to increase the TAC above 150 tonnes, a biomass survey is required that identifies at least 1500 tonnes of scallops.

ScallopMAC recommended: that the fishery remain closed until a biomass survey is undertaken and that as for last year, the RAG and the Co-management Committee be consulted on the development of the survey plan.

The MAC noted that once the survey was completed, the results would be discussed by ScallopRAG and ScallopMAC.

Process for the season opening

To streamline the process at the start of the season, there was discussion about whether the Harvest Strategy could be changed to have the biomass survey as the default opening rather than the 150 tonne TAC option. Alternatively, whether the process could be improved without having to change the Harvest Strategy by seeking advice from the MAC before the previous season ended.

ScallopMAC recommended: That the Co-management Committee would advise AFMA in November / December how the following season should progress, i.e. whether to start with the 150 tonne TAC or go straight to a biomass survey.

4.2 Research Catch Allowance

The AFMA member introduced and summarised the paper with a recommendation that ScallopMAC support a research catch allowance of 100 tonnes for the 2017 BSCZSF biomass survey. The recommended tonnage is larger than used in the previous two years surveys but not all of it needs to be used and having a larger amount allows for more flexibility if additional survey beds are found, without having to seek further RAG and MAC advice. The MAC noted the ScallopMAC Environment Member's written comments that they supported the 100 tonnes.

ScallopMAC noted that advice would also be sought from ScallopRAG regarding research catch allowance.

ScallopMAC recommended that the research catch allowance be set at 100 tonnes for the 2017 BSCZSF biomass survey.

5. Other Business

5.1 2017 membership of the Co-management Committee

Under the BSCZSF Harvest Strategy the Co-Management Committee membership is set by ScallopMAC.

ScallopMAC recommended that the Chair, Bob Lister, should provide a review of the performance of the Co-management Committee for consideration by ScallopMAC when it next considered the membership.

ScallopMAC agreed to maintain the current membership of the Co-management Committee for 2017 as follows and that the membership needs to be reviewed annually:

Industry co-ordinator (Chair)	Bob Lister
Victorian representative	Andrew Watts
Victorian representative	John Cull
Tasmanian representative	Allan Barnett
Tasmanian representative	John Hammond
AFMA representative	Sally Weekes

There was no other business. The Chair thanked all members for their contribution and closed the meeting at 11:08am.

Signed (Chairperson):

Date:

List of Attachments

Attachment A – ScallopMAC 28 Agenda

Attachment B – Action items discussed at ScallopMAC 28

Attachment A

Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery Management Advisory Committee (ScallopMAC)

Meeting 28 - Teleconference
Draft Agenda

Tuesday 21 February 2017
Time (AEDT): 10:00

Approximate time	Agenda item
10:00am	1. Preliminaries <ul style="list-style-type: none">1.1. Welcome and apologies1.2. Declaration of interests1.3. Adoption of agenda
10:15am	2. Meeting Administration <ul style="list-style-type: none">2.1. Minutes of previous meeting2.2. Actions arising from previous meetings2.3. Correspondence
10.30am	3. Fishery update <ul style="list-style-type: none">3.1. AFMA management3.2. Tasmanian management3.3. Victorian management3.4. Environment update3.5. AFMA operational bycatch strategy
11.00am	4. Arrangements for 2017 season opening (AFMA) <ul style="list-style-type: none">4.1. <i>Discussion paper with options for the opening of the scallop season</i>4.2. <i>Research catch allowance</i>
11:45am	5. Other business
12:00pm	<i>Close</i>

Attachment B

ScallopMAC action items

MAC meeting no.	Agenda Item no.	MAC Action Item	Details
26	2.2	AFMA to provide an update on a standard set of annual economic data at the next ScallopMAC meeting. Consultation will be undertaken with ABARES and Stuart Richey.	On track The survey is being finalised and will be sent to all concession holders in March 2017. ABARES provided comment on the survey and indicators, and populated some of the items as requested.
27	2.2	AFMA to provide the MAC with an analysis outlining the costs to industry of remaining on paper logs or transitioning to electronic logbooks.	In progress AFMA will provide an update out of session, after a number of factors have been considered.
27	3.4	ScallopMAC EO to add environment update as a standing item on the agenda.	Complete (agenda item 3.4)
27	4	Fishwell to provide AFMA with scallop density maps from King Island and Flinders Island to provide to all concession holders prior to season start.	Complete The maps were mailed to concession holders with the season start information, and were also available on the AFMA website at http://www.afma.gov.au/fisheries/bass-strait-central-zone-scallop-fishery/2016-scallop-season/ .
27	4	AFMA to investigate timing and costs of holding an industry workshop to discuss the design of future surveys in November 2016.	On track Workshop rescheduled to March 2017.
27	7	AFMA to send proposed timeline of key events for the 2017 BSCZSF to MAC members.	Complete A draft schedule was attached to the final minutes of ScallopMAC 27. An updated version was sent with meeting papers for ScallopMAC 28.
27	9	AFMA to draft letter to John Richey to thank him and his crew for completing the survey to a high standard in very difficult weather on behalf of the RAG and MAC.	Complete