



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery Management Advisory Committee (ScallopMAC) Meeting 34

Meeting minutes

Teleconference

16 June 2020

10:37-13:36

The Chair opened the meeting at 10:37

Agenda item 1 Preliminaries

1.1 Welcome and apologise

Mr John Pollock, the Chair, welcomed members and observers to the meeting and made an Acknowledgement of Country statement recognising the Traditional Owners of the many lands in which we met and payed respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

Attendees	Membership
John Pollock	Chair
Brendan Kelaher	Scientific Member
Sylvia Zukowski	Environment Member
Stuart Richey	Industry Member
Debbie Wisby	Industry Member
Andrew Watts	Industry Member
Peter Mellios	Industry Member
John Hammond	Industry Member
Dan Corrie	AFMA member
Heather Johnston	Executive Officer
Bob Lister	Invited participant, Industry
Andrew Sullivan	Invited participant, Industry
Ian Knuckey	Invited participant, Fishwell Consulting
Julian Morison	Invited participant, BDO Econsearch
James Parkinson	Observer, Tasmanian state fisheries
Fiona Hill	Observer, AFMA
Andrew Zapantis	Observer, Industry
Apologies	Membership
Toby Jeavons	Observer, State Fisheries
John Cull	Invited participant, Industry

1.2 Declarations of interest

The MAC followed the conflict of interest declarations as outlined in Fisheries Administration Paper 12. Members and participants reviewed and updated the Declarations of Interest included at **Attachment A**.

No members declared a potential conflict of interest with any Agenda Items, however noted that should any arise during the meeting they should be declared.

1.3 Adoption of agenda

The MAC adopted the agenda at **Attachment B** as final.

1.4 action items

The MAC noted the actions items from previous meetings and the updates provided by the Executive Officer at **Attachment C**.

Agenda item 2 Fishery updates

The chair introduced the item and asked the MAC to note the AFMA Management, industry, Victorian management, Tasmanian management and environment updates for the fishery.

2.1 AFMA management

The AFMA member provided an update on matters relevant to management of the Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery (BSCZSF):

2020 season

- The BSCZSF will be opened and fishing can commence on 12 July 2020 and closes on 31 December 2020, as determined by the [Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery \(Fishing Season\) Determination 2020](#). No scallop fishing is permitted outside these dates.
- The AFMA Commission has determined the [Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery \(Total Allowable Catch\) Determination 2020](#), which sets the total allowable catch at:
 - 3000 tonnes for Commercial scallops (*Pecten fumatus*)
 - 100 tonnes for Doughboy scallops (*Chlamys (Mimachlamys) asperimus*)
- In accordance with the BSCZSF Harvest Strategy and section 41A(2) of *the Fisheries Management Act 1991*, the six areas defined in the [Fisheries Management \(Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery\) \(Closure\) Direction 2020](#) will be closed to fishing during the 2020 fishing season.
- AFMA will be writing to concession holders in the coming weeks with a management update for the 2020 fishing season including concession conditions and the 2020 Management Arrangement Booklet.
- AFMA received an out of session request to change the opening date of the fishery from 12 July to 10 July however did not pursue this due to the work required to do so.

2020-21 Budgets

- The draft 2020-21 BSCZSF budget was distributed to industry associations and the MAC for feedback in early March 2020.
- The Federal Government budget process has been deferred from May to October 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which impacts AFMA's ability to finalise the fishery budgets and incorporate them into Levy Regulations. AFMA expect the revised draft budgets will be made available in the coming months, and should be finalised closer to October 2020.

2.2 Industry

The Scallop Fishermen's Association of Tasmania (SFAT) Executive Officer provided an update on seismic testing in Bass Strait:

- Beach energy commenced a sea bed assessment to the west of the Yolla platform on 11 June and is expected to run for 25 days.
- Beach energy will be undertaking a geotechnical survey in the same region that is expected to take place later in the year.

- SFAT intends to provide updates to all operational vessels of the activity on a daily basis once fishing has commenced.

2.3 Environment

The Environment member provided an update on matters relevant to the BSCZSF:

Seismic Survey

- The research conducted on scallops after the seismic survey in Flinders Island indicated that the longer term impact on scallops includes compromised immune systems and increase mortality.
- In other fisheries where there has been depleted stocks, studies have indicated that assisted recovery (e.g. relocation) can assist with rebuilding the abundance and density of a stock.
- Commercial Scallops appear to favour cross fertilisation over cell fertilisation which means that when stocks are depleted to a low density the chances of recovery are reduced.

Plastics

- International research has found that single exposure to Nano plastics can cause stress conditions for individuals and further exposures can cause a shift in the immune parameters and may led to mortality.
- Wider research into micro plastics in Australia are currently indicating that the levels of plastic in Australian waters remain low.

2.3 State management

Victorian

The Victorian management invited participant, Toby Jeavons, was an apology to the meeting but provided the following written update on matters relevant to the management of the Victorian scallop fishery:

- The Victorian scallop fishery has maintained a 135 t TACC for the 2020 season;
- Less than 10 percent of quota was taken in the last fishing period;
- There are positive signs of recent recruitment and it is expected that catches will increase this year.

Tasmanian

The Tasmanian management invited participant, James Parkinson, provided an update on matters relevant to the management of the Tasmanian scallop fishery:

- The Tasmanian State wide exploratory survey commenced in early May 2020 with two vessel participating.
- There has been encouraging signs, and most of the state scallop areas were surveyed as a part of this survey.
- IMAS are analysing the data and the ScallopFAC will meet in early July 2020 to discuss the outcomes and implications for the fishery.
- IMAS also undertook a towed camera survey of the 'White rock' area to assist with establishing a biomass estimate for the area.

Ian Knuckey joined the meeting

Agenda item 3 Harvest Strategy Review

AFMA introduced the agenda item, asking the MAC to consider the Scallop Resource Assessment Groups (ScallopRAG) feedback and provide advice regarding the review of the current BSCZSF Harvest Strategy (the current Harvest Strategy) as detailed in the review paper provided with meeting papers.

The RAG met on 9 June 2020 and were asked to provide feedback on proposed amendments to the current BSCZSF Harvest Strategy. The RAG were provided with the same background information provided to the MAC under agenda item 3 to this meeting.

The MAC considered the background of the review of the current Harvest Strategy, noting:

- the [Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy 2018](#) (HSP) and [Guidelines for the Implementation of the Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy](#) (HSP Guidelines) were released in November 2018;
- all Commonwealth fisheries harvest strategies need to be revised within four years to ensure they meet the requirements of the HSP;
- the current Harvest Strategy last had a comprehensive review in 2014 in response to industry concerns about the cost effectiveness and flexibility of the 2012 Harvest Strategy;
- the management of the BSCZSF has changed significantly since the last review, with a better understanding of stock status from the annual biomass survey, and there is an increased need to include the economic performance of the fishery in the total allowable catch (TAC) setting process as well as sustainability;
- AFMA intend to implement a revised Harvest Strategy which better reflects the current state of the fishery which is also scalable and can respond to changes in biomass or economic factors which include the fishery;
- the changes proposed by AFMA are based on issues raised by industry and discussions at the RAG and MAC since the last review of the Harvest Strategy in 2014; and
- there will be broad consultation to the general public and concession holders during the development of the revised Harvest Strategy.

The MAC noted the key points by the RAG with regards to the overall review of the Harvest Strategy:

- A thorough review of the Harvest Strategy is needed, with a particular focus on being more adaptive to operational and environmental changes in the fishery, however the review process should not be rushed.
- The revised Harvest Strategy needs to consider the fishery as a whole and consider the different operations as there is only a limited number of vessels and processors remaining.
- There were a number of recommendation from the FRDC project 'Determining when and where to fish: Linking scallop spawning, settlement, size and condition to collaborative spatial harvest and industry in-season management strategies' which should be considered as part of the review.
- Separate harvest strategy approaches should be considered for eastern and western Bass Strait, noting the different biological characteristics of scallops at Flinders Island and King Island.

- A working group should be established to consider feedback from the RAG and MAC and to more clearly define some of the detail around harvest rates and decisions rules, for example:
 - defining what constitute 'recruitment' or 'biomass' for the purpose of setting TACs and closures;
 - agreeing to thresholds of Fishery Gross Margin; and
 - how to account for variability in efficiency or business models when running the economic model.

The MAC made the following key points:

- It is unlikely that the TAC for the 2021 fishing season will be set under a revised Harvest Strategy approach, but it may be possible to test the approach as a part this process.
- The MAC agreed that the review of Harvest Strategy should not be rushed.

In providing its advice, the MAC focused on proposed amendments to the key components of the Harvest Strategy outlined in the review paper and the Economic data collection paper, a summary of which is provided below.

Objectives

The MAC considered the review of objectives in the Harvest Strategy noting:

- the HSP provides a framework for applying evidence-based, precautionary and transparent approach to implementing harvest strategies in Commonwealth fisheries;
- the objective of the HSP is the ecologically sustainable and profitable use of Australia's Commonwealth commercial fisheries resources (where ecologically sustainability takes priority) – through implementation of harvest strategies;
- the HSP defines biological and economic objectives for Commonwealth fisheries and identifies reference points against which the success of achieving objectives can be measured; and
- the HSP Guidelines provide guidance on the development of fishery-specific harvest strategies in Commonwealth-managed fisheries that meet the intent of the HSP.

The MAC noted the key points by the RAG:

- Consistent with the HSP, an objective should be included in the Harvest Strategy related to rebuilding stocks in the event there is a severe decline in the stock biomass.
- Economic objectives should be carefully considered to ensure they are consistent with the requirements of the HSP and can be effectively implemented.

Testing the revised Harvest Strategy

The MAC considered testing the revised Harvest Strategy, noting:

- the HSP requires that Harvest Strategies be formally tested to demonstrate that they are highly likely to meet the objectives of the HSP;
- Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) testing provides an evaluation of a harvest strategy using simulations of stock and fishery dynamics; and
- Where MSE testing is not feasible because of data deficiency or cost/benefit considerations, the HSP allows for suitable alternative testing to be conducted using

risk-based methods, provided they have been calibrated against more quantitative methods.

The MAC made the following key points:

- MSE testing is a standard approach, with approximately a dozen examples of it being used across Australian fisheries however these tend to be data rich fisheries.
- An alternative approach to MSE could be developed for the fishery that considers the information available and is cost effective.

Harvest Strategy Approach

The MAC considered the proposed Harvest Strategy approach, noting:

- the current Harvest Strategy uses a step-up approach for exploitation, where a minimum specified amount of the known spawning biomass is preserved through a combination of bed closures and the TAC limits the catch. This approach introduces management complexity, and the TAC setting process lacks the objectivity of a scalable set of decision rules to adjust the TAC when the biomass is high. This often leads to debate over the commercial scallop TAC which best supports a profitable scallop industry;
- when considering the revised Harvest Strategy approach, it might be useful to consider the criteria against which third party certification schemes assess the effectiveness of a harvest strategy, such as the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC);
- given the dynamics of scallop beds and the spatial variation in recruitment across the BSCZSF, clear definitions of what constitutes a mature scallop bed (size/density/maturity) and when recruits are 'present' or 'absent' should be considered;
- the HSP Guidelines require that harvest strategies define reference points, which can be expressed as either a target reference point (TRP) – the desired state of the stock, or a limit reference point (LRP)– the point beyond which the risk to the stock is unacceptably high;
- the current Harvest Strategy does not include clear reference points to measure the performance of the fishery, or a defined set of Harvest Control Rules to adjust the level of fishing in response to changes in biomass;
- the 'virgin stock biomass' is not known for the BSCZSF, making it not possible to set LRP and TRP as a proportion of the virgin stock biomass;
- page 48 of the HSP Guidelines provide an example harvest strategy for a sedentary, single-species fishery which uses annual surveys to inform spatial management and TACs;
- this example applies a pre-defined set of scalable exploitation rates to the outputs of the survey to limit catch, through the TAC, to a proportion of the surveyed biomass;
- the [South Australian Pipi Fishery Harvest Strategy](#) (Pg 85-94) uses a similar approach, and incorporates a Fishery Gross Margin (FGM) model, which uses representative economic data and biomass estimates to determine a TAC that maximises net economic returns to the fishery;
- the review paper includes a proposed approach to setting TAC levels and closure requirements under various known scallop biomass scenarios, including decision rules which take into account any economic or secondary biological performance indicators which might be available;
- while the current Harvest Strategy allows for a Doughboy Scallop TAC to be determined at different levels each year, they are not targeted and the default TAC of 100 t is typically applied; and

- the revised Harvest Strategy should consider introduction of a trigger (80 t for example) which would prompt a review of the status of the species if targeted fishing were to commence, and allow for a TAC greater than 100 t to be set.

The MAC noted the key points by the RAG:

- Noting the fishery is subject to rapid changes in biomass, consideration should be given to decision rules that promote stability in TACs.
- The proposed Harvest Strategy approach involves increasing the level of biomass to be closed in proportion to an increase in biomass. Density is important for synchronising recruitment, and so protecting more biomass prevents beds from being dredged and promotes recruitment.
- Recruitment should be more explicitly defined and accounted for in the revised Harvest Strategy, particularly how it relates to risk and TAC setting.
- While the RAG generally support the approach to setting TACs based on the surveyed biomass, the proposed ranges for biomass and corresponding TACs are quite narrow, and relatively small changes in biomass would result in a revised TAC. It might be more appropriate to have a broader range of biomass measures (low/medium/high) to promote stability in TACs. Noting that more categories is considered better when calculating FGM.
- To promote stability, the previous season TAC could be used as the 'starting point' each year, and only changed if there are defensible biological or economic benefits to doing so.
- The example decision rules use an FGM of 2.5 per cent as a threshold to change from one TAC level to the next. This may not be appropriate for the scallop fishery, and this should be given further consideration by the working group. This may depend on confidence in the economic data and any other uncertainties.
- Consideration will need to be given to how the Tasmanian and Victorian fisheries will impact management of the BSCZSF, including the levels of catch from these jurisdictions.

The MAC made the following key points:

- The biomass survey provides an estimated biomass of the surveyed beds rather than the whole fishery – the TAC is based on the proportion of the fishery that is surveyed and is inherently precautionary;
- A standardised approach to undertaking the survey should be considered to prevent the TAC being manipulated by surveying more or less beds.
- There is an implied LRP in the current Harvest Strategy of 1,500 tonnes – this is the biomass required to be protected before the fishery can open.
- While scallop beds are known to be subject to sudden changes in biomass, they have remained relatively stable over the last five biomass surveys.
- In order to promote stability in the fishery, the TAC from the previous season could be considered as a default TAC, and only changed if there were clear and demonstrable economic benefits to doing so.
- In recent years, the discussion regarding TAC recommendations have been driven by the economics of the fishery, specifically the markets available, rather than sustainability concerns.

- The revised Harvest Strategy should look to simplify the management, with a view to reducing management costs, especially given the reduction in vessels and processors in recent years.

Biomass Survey

The MAC considered the proposed biomass survey approach, noting:

- although not defined as objectives in the current Harvest Strategy, the current intention of the biomass surveys is to provide annual biomass estimates to inform the TAC for Commercial Scallops for a single year;
- under the revised Harvest Strategy, the objectives of the biomass survey should be broadened to include developing a time series of information to improve the understanding of scallop stocks and bed dynamics;
- the current Harvest Strategy requires that an annual biomass survey be conducted for the TAC to be set above the default opening of 150 t;
- industry have requested that consideration be given to undertaking biomass surveys on a biennial basis to reduce costs;
- given the dynamic nature of the commercial scallop stock and the history of sudden decreases in biomass, the application of a multi-year TAC (MYTAC) approach would need to be based on the risk-catch-cost framework, with a clear set of decision rules for when a survey needs to be completed;
- a MYTAC approach might be appropriate where the stock biomass is high and stable and there are positive signs of recruitment, however if the opposite is true, then annual biomass surveys would be required;
- the carriage of an observer for biomass surveys, as required under the current Harvest Strategy, can be reviewed in future iterations of the Harvest Strategy, however, until industry have demonstrated their ability to collect the data, AFMA management are proposing that on board observers will still be required;
- there may be opportunities under co-management agreements for industry to coordinate aspects of the biomass survey – this approach is used in other Commonwealth fisheries and often assist with reducing management costs;
- as the number of known commercially viable beds has increased in recent years, there is a need to prioritise which beds get surveyed due to time and resource constraints; and
- at its February 2020 meeting, the RAG provided advice on a series of principles to priorities survey beds – once finalised, these principles will be incorporated into the revised Harvest Strategy.

The MAC noted the key points made by the RAG:

- There is inherent precaution in the closure and TAC setting process because the biomass survey only surveys a known proportion of the fishery.
- Consideration should be given to broadening the scope of the survey, including the beds surveyed, to provide more information about the fishery – a random selection of some areas might be considered.
- The TAC is directly linked to the surveyed biomass, and there is a potential to influence the TAC by increasing or decreasing the size of the survey.
- While there are economic benefits to only running a biomass survey every second year, consideration should be given to the risk of losing data and weakening the time-series.

- Scallops are subject to sudden changes in biomass, which do not make them ideal candidates for MYTACs – if MYTACs are to be considered, there will need to be very good feedback mechanisms and breakout rules using robust data.

The MAC made the following key points:

- If the survey was undertaken biennially, research funds may be redirected into other research priorities for the fishery.
- Industry continue to develop their ability to undertake the biomass survey and it may be possible for there to be an industry led survey in those years there isn't a formal biomass survey to prevent the loss of a time series on the fishery.
- Having a mechanism to capture data in season by industry may be worth considering in the revised Harvest Strategy.
- There has been a lot of benefit in annual surveys, including a time series of changes to individual beds and finding new recruitment in the fishery. This allows industry to be proactive in how they fish and avoid disturbance to juvenile scallops.
- The current scale of the biomass survey allows for conservation requirements of the current Harvest Strategy to be met and provides valuable information on the beds that remain open for industry to commercially harvest.
- In order to be precautionary, there may be value in surveying beds which have supported a large amount of the commercial catch before fishing them again.

Default opening

The MAC considered the proposed approach for default opening, noting the following:

- Under the current Harvest Strategy, prior to the start of the fishing season each year, the Industry Co-Management Committee (the Committee) advise AFMA how to proceed with the opening of the season, to either:
 1. open the season with a default Total Allowable Catch (TAC) of 150 t and then decide if a biomass survey should be conducted (noting that the TAC cannot increase above 150 t unless a biomass survey is done); or
 2. keep the fishery closed (TAC set at zero tonnes) and undertake a biomass survey to determine biomass estimates using a 150 t research catch allowance.
- In recent years, with the estimated biomass being relatively high, industry have opted for a biomass survey as described under option (2) above. Under the revised Harvest Strategy, it might be more appropriate to define the approach under scenario (2) as the default, and to redefine option (1) as a 'searching TAC' only to be utilised in low biomass scenarios and allow for industry to search for scallop beds after periods of closure in the fishery.

The MAC noted that the RAG supported redefining the default opening as per option (2) above and supported this approach.

Industry co-management committee

The Industry Co-Management Committee (the Committee) membership and function are defined under the current Harvest Strategy. The function of the Committee, and whether it should be specified in the revised Harvest Strategy will be considered as part of the review of the Harvest Strategy.

The RAG supported reviewing the function of the Co-Management Committee, however suggested this is something the MAC should consider in more detail.

The MAC supported reviewing the function of the Committee and suggested that the working group consider how much detail needs to be held within the revised Harvest Strategy.

Economic data collection

The MAC considered the approach to collecting economic data, noting the following:

- To support the development of analysis to estimate the fisheries Maximum Sustainable Yield (MEY) or a proxy for MEY as FGM, AFMA commissioned BDO EconSearch to prepare an economic data collection template for the BSCZSF.
- FGM would be tested at various TAC levels, based on outcomes of the biomass survey and harvest rates under the revised Harvest Strategy, to determine the TAC which is likely to maximise economic returns to the fishery.
- The revised Harvest Strategy would provide a mechanism to estimate the net economic returns for the whole fishery.
- Some industry members have indicated that the data proposed to be collected is appropriate and it would not be onerous for industry to provide, while others have expressed their concern regarding the use of economic data in the TAC setting process, suggesting it will be used to lower the TAC and subsequently increase the lease price for quota – this will impact individual operators differently.
- The next step in incorporating economics into the TAC setting process will be to collect the economic data from industry, using the template, and then developing a model to calculate FGM.
- AFMA have commissioned Fishwell Consulting to develop the economic model based on data collected throughout the 2020-21 financial year.

The MAC noted the following key points made by the RAG:

- Consideration would need to be given to what the starting point of the TAC should be – either the TAC from the previous season or a TAC based on the outcomes of the biomass survey.
- Businesses and operations differ greatly across the industry, and TACs may impact businesses differently. Consideration should be given to economic outliers and the impact that this may have on the fishery as a whole and how this may be addressed in the revised Harvest Strategy.

The MAC made the following key points:

- Currently, the information held by industry in regards to economics is not readily available for the purpose of implementing management arrangements. This information drives the fishery and would help to increase the understanding of the fishery.
- The FGM approach looks to estimate the total revenue of the fishery at various TACs, relative to the variable input costs required to harvest that TAC.
- The implications of setting a default TAC for a given year – based on either the previous years' TAC or the outcomes of the biomass survey – need to be tested.
- With regards to TAC reference points and decisions rules, it may be appropriate to have a broader range of references points when the biomass is high to allow for new beds to be surveyed without requiring several step-ups in the TAC.

- The output of the FGM analysis – based on known input/outputs costs – could be supplemented by more qualitative factors such as potential imports, the expected level of harvest in a joining state fishery, and other factors that may impact market prices.

Recommendations

The MAC supported the RAGs recommendation to establish a working group to consider initial feedback from the RAG and the MAC with a view to providing a revised set of papers to the next RAG and MAC meetings. Specifically, the working group should consider the following:

- Define what constitutes ‘recruitment’ or ‘biomass’ to inform decision rules and the TAC setting process.
- Consider a broader range of biomass reference points and associated TACs.
- Agreeing to thresholds of Fishery Gross Margin to choose between different TACs.
- How to account for variability in efficiency or business models when running the FGM model.
- Outcomes of the FRDC project ‘Determining when and where to fish: Linking scallop spawning, settlement, size and condition to collaborative spatial harvest and industry in-season management strategies’.
- Clear decision rules for deciding when a biomass survey should be run biennially.

AFMA will consider representative membership for the working group and distribute a terms of reference to the RAG and MAC.

Ian Knuckey and Julian Morison left the meeting

Agenda item 4 Research Priorities

AFMA introduced the agenda item and asked the MAC to consider the RAG advice and to provide advice on research priorities to be included in the 2021-22 BSCZSF Annual Research Statement.

The MAC noted the following background on research priorities:

- Each year, the RAG are asked to provide advice on upcoming research needs for the fishery.
- This is required in the context of the [BSCZSF Five Year Strategic Research Plan 2016-20](#).
- As a part of this process, the RAG are asked to prepare an Annual Research Statement and complete a research Gap ID form for each new priority.
- The Annual Research Statement includes consideration of the cost-effectiveness, priority and timeframes for achieving identified priorities.

The MAC noted the following update on research priorities in the BSCZSF:

2020 Annual biomass survey

The 2020 biomass survey was cancelled due to the logistical and work health and safety issues arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. A biomass survey is currently scheduled for 2021 and the current contract extends to July 2022.

MEY project to inform the harvest strategy/ TAC setting process

The AFMA Research Committee (ARC) approved an application from Fishwell Consulting to coordinate a project to collect economic information and analyse this to estimate the Maximum Economic Yield (MEY) for the fishery. This project will follow on from the work currently underway by Dr Julian Morison, with a view to implement a Fishery Gross Margin (FGM) model in the revised Harvest Strategy.

Development of ageing techniques for Bass Strait scallops.

This project was prioritised as medium in the 2020-21 BSCZSF Research Plan and was not supported by the ARC for funding in 2020-21.

Impact of seismic surveys on scallop larvae

This project is on the ComRACs list of research priorities however FRDC are waiting on the outcome of FRDC Project 'Oil and Gas: National coordination - seismic and other issues (2017-186)'. This project may result in further recommendations in relation to the impacts of oil and gas exploration on commercial fish stocks, including whether any further research required.

Optimising the end of season date

This project was not supported by the ARC for funding in 2020-21.

This research priority is separate to the proposal submitted to the Bass Strait Scallop Industry Association (BSSIA) that was submitted to FRDC for funding to develop an industry-led, adaptive and science- based approach to managing the season closure.

The MAC noted and supported the RAG advice on research priorities for the 2021-22 financial year:

- The 'Optimising the end of season date' project should be put on hold until there is further interest from industry to pursue this.
- A scoping study should be put forward for ARC consideration to 'better understand if recruitment is under estimated in the biomass survey – establishing a method for estimating recruitment'

The MAC provided the following advice on research priorities for the 2021-22 financial year:

- The research statement should include a priority to allow for additional analysis of economic data, following that undertaken by Fishwell Consulting in 2020-21, as part of ongoing work under the Harvest Strategy review.

The RAG and MAC will be asked provide recommendations on research priorities out of session.

Agenda item 5 Other Business

The MAC noted the current draft consultation schedule to open the BSCZSF fishery for the 2021 fishing season at [Attachment D](#)

Mr Zapantis raised concerns regarding the requirement to complete an individual CDR for each consignment.

The MAC noted the following:

- No other industry members had the same concerns regarding the completion of CDRs.
- The MAC was involved in the development of the current CDR and supported the changes implemented by AFMA.
- AFMA will consider this issue and respond to Mr Zapantis and the MAC once a decision has been made.

The Chair, John Pollock, informed the MAC that he would be resigning from the MAC at the end of the current membership period.

The MAC and AFMA thanked John for his wonderful contribution over the years and wished him all the best in his retirement. John has been a valuable chair who has led the MAC through difficult situations over the last decade and the MAC have enjoyed having him as Chair.

On behalf of the MAC, AFMA sent John a present and a letter from the AFMA Commission to say thank you for his time as Chair.

Close of meeting

The Chair thanked the MAC for their contribution to the meeting

The meeting was closed at 13:36

Attachment A- register of interest

Name	Membership	Declared interests
John Pollock	Chair	No interest in the fishery pecuniary or otherwise.
Brendan Kelaher	Research Member	ScallopRAG Chair. No interest in the fishery pecuniary or otherwise.
Stuart Richey	Industry Member	Holds Commonwealth and State concessions.
Andrew Watts	Industry Member	Holds Commonwealth and State concessions.
Debbie Wisby	Industry Member	Holds State concessions and leases commonwealth quota. Local council member
John Hammond	Industry Member	Holds Commonwealth and State concessions.
Peter Mellios	Industry Member	Holds Commonwealth concession and a processor
Sylvia Zukowski	Environment Member	No interest, pecuniary or otherwise, in the fishery.
Dan Corrie	AFMA member	AFMA employee. No interest in the fishery pecuniary or otherwise.
Heather Johnston	Executive Officer	AFMA employee. No interest in the fishery pecuniary or otherwise.
Julian Morison	Invited participant	Director, Kuti Co Pty Ltd – SA Pipi quota holder, Director, BDO Advisory (SA) Pty Ltd - current contracts with SA & Qld state governments collecting fisheries economic data, providing economic advice; Member, SA Snapper Management Advisory Committee (PIRSA), Economics member, Shark Resource Assessment Group (AFMA), Member, Economics Working Group (AFMA), Member, Human Dimensions Research subprogram Steering Committee (FRDC), Principal & coinvestigator on several FRDC research projects
Bob Lister	Invited participant	Executive Officer, Scallop Fishermen's Association of Tasmania
Andrew Sullivan	Invited participant	Executive Officer, Bass Strait Scallop Industry Association
Ian Knuckey	Invited participant, Fishwell Consulting	Positions: Director – Fishwell Consulting Pty Ltd, Director – Olrac Australia (Electronic logbooks), Deputy Chair – Victorian Marine and Coastal Council, Chair / Director – Australian Seafood Co-products (seafood waste), Chair – Northern Prawn Fishery RAG, Chair – Tropical Rock Lobster RAG, Chair – Victorian Rock Lobster and Giant Crab Assessment Group, Chair – Victorian Central Zone Abalone

		<p>Fisheries RAG, Chair – Gulf of St Vincent’s Prawn Fishery MAC Research Scientific Committee, Scientific Member – Northern Prawn MAC, Scientific Member – SESSF Shark RAG, Scientific Member – SESSF Great Australian Bight RAG, Scientific Member – Gulf of St Vincent’s Prawn Fishery MAC, Scientific Member – Tropical Tuna RAG, Scientific Member – SESSF RAG</p> <p>Current projects: AFMA 2020/0807 Bass Strait Scallop Fishery Survey – 2020-22, FRDC 2017/069 Indigenous Capacity Building, FRDC 2016/116 5-year RD&E Plan for NT fisheries and aquaculture, Traffic Project Shark Product Traceability, FRDC 2018/021 Development and evaluation of SESSF multi-species harvest strategies, FRDC 2017/014 Informing structural reform of South Australia's Marine Scalefish Fishery, NT Fisheries Design and implementation of a tropical snapper trawl survey, Sea Cucumber Ass. Design and implementation of a sea cucumber dive survey Information to support non-detrimental finding of fisheries for Black Teatfish and White Teatfish, FRDC 2019-072 A survey to detect change in Danish Seine catch rates of Flathead and School Whiting resulting from CGG seismic exploration, FRDC 2019-129 Potential transition of shark gillnet boats to longline fishing in Bass Strait - ecological, cross-sectoral, and economic implications, Australia Bay Information to support Wildlife Trade Operation for the Queensland Gulf of Carpentaria Developmental Fin Fish Trawl Fishery</p>
Fiona Hill	Observer, AFMA	AFMA employee. No interest in the fishery pecuniary or otherwise
Andrew Zapantis	Observer, Industry	Commonwealth and State Concession holder and processor
James Parkinson	Observer, State Fisheries	Manager Tasmanian scallop Fishery. No interest in the fishery pecuniary or otherwise

Attachment B



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

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

Meeting 34 – 16 June 2020

Agenda

Time (EDT): 10.30-13.30

Approximate time	Item
10.30	Agenda item 1. Preliminaries 1.1 Welcome and apologies 1.2 Declaration of interests 1.3 Adoption of agenda 1.4 Actions arising from previous meetings
10.45	Agenda item 2. Fishery update 2.1 AFMA management 2.2 Industry update 2.3 Environmental update 2.4 State updates
11.30	Agenda item 3. Harvest Strategy Review <i>ScallopMAC to consider ScallopRAG feedback and provide advice regarding the review of the BSCZSF harvest strategy</i>
13.00	Agenda item 4. Research Priorities <i>ScallopMAC consider ScallopRAG advice and identify research priorities for the fishery for funding in 2021-22.</i>
13.25	Agenda item 5. Other business <i>Schedule for 2021 season - for noting</i>
13.30	Close

Attachment C- Status of action items

MAC meeting #	Agenda Item	Action item #	Action Item	Agency/ person	Timeframe	Progress
31	3.1	1	AFMA to bring any comments or questions that arise out of session regarding the budget to subsequent ScallopMAC meeting.	AFMA	Next meeting	To be presented at ScallopMAC 34
31	12	2	AFMA to prepare a discussion paper that includes the matters outlines in the minutes, to inform the review of the BSCZSF Harvest Strategy	AFMA	Next meeting	To be presented at ScallopMAC 34
32	3	1	AFMA and the ScallopMAC Chair to write to the AFMA Commission regarding industry concerns over planned seismic activity in Bass Strait and urge the Commission to relay ScallopMAC's concerns onto the relevant Government Agencies.	Chair/AFMA	As soon as practical	Letter to be drafted upon finalisation of ScallopMAC 32 minutes

Attachment D Draft consultation schedule to open the BSCZSF for the 2021 fishing season

Proposed Date	Meeting/event/process	Purpose
November 2020	Co-management committee	Co-management Committee to advise AFMA how to proceed with the 2021 season: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. open with 150 tonnes on 1 April 2021, or 2. proceed directly to biomass survey
If proceed directly to biomass survey, the following schedule would apply		
February 2021	Co-management committee (teleconference)	Provide input into the survey areas for 2021 to be considered by ScallopRAG.
February 2021	ScallopRAG (teleconference)	Recommend survey areas and Research Catch Allowance (RCA) for 2021 survey.
March 2021	Survey EOI (letter)	Call to all concession holders and active fishers for Expressions of Interest to participate in 2021 survey.
March 2021	Vessel/s selection (teleconference)	Survey vessel selected by an independent panel.
1 May 2021	Survey start	Survey start
June 2021	ScallopRAG (in person)	RAG meeting to provide TAC and closure advice, set research priorities for 2022-23
June 2021	ScallopMAC (in person)	MAC meeting to provide TAC and closure advice to the AFMA commission, set research priorities for 2022-23.
TBC	Commission decision (out of session)	Consider RAG and MAC advice and set TAC
TBC	Fishery opened or closed.	