



**Australian Government**  
**Australian Fisheries Management Authority**



# **Southern Bluefin Tuna Management Advisory Committee (SBTMAC)**

**FINAL MINUTES  
SBTMAC TELECONFERENCE  
26 SEPTEMBER 2017**



## **SOUTHERN BLUEFIN TUNA MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SBTMAC)**

### **Introduction**

1. A Southern Bluefin Tuna Management Advisory Committee (SBTMAC) teleconference was held on 26 September 2017.

The primary objectives of the meeting were to discuss:

- the research outcomes from the 2017 Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) Scientific Committee meeting;
- the Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery annual research statement for 2018/19; and
- progress towards accounting for all forms of mortality.

### **Agenda Item 1: Preliminaries/matters arising**

#### **1.1: Opening remarks/apologies/acceptance of agenda**

2. The Chair, Mr Max Kitchell, opened the meeting at 10:35am and welcomed members, invited participants and observers to the September 2017 SBTMAC teleconference.

3. Apologies were received from Mr Terry Romaro (Industry member). Members noted that Mr Marcus Stehr (Industry member) would be joining the teleconference for Agenda item 4.1 only.

4. Participants on the teleconference were:

#### Chair

Mr Max Kitchell

#### Members

Dr Simon Nicol (ABARES)  
Mr Trent Timmiss (AFMA)  
Mr Andrew Wilkinson (Industry)  
Mr Rick Kolega (Industry)  
Mr Marcus Stehr (Industry)  
Mr Brett Cleary (Recreational/Charter)  
Mr Glenn Sant (Environment/Conservation)

#### Invited Participants

Mr Brian Jeffriess (Industry)  
Mr Michael Thomas (Industry)  
Mr David Ellis (Industry)  
Mr Sean Sloan (State Government)

#### Executive Officer

Ms Sarah Kirkcaldie (AFMA)

#### Observers

Ms Ann Preece (CSIRO)  
Dr Campbell Davies (CSIRO)  
Mr Matt Daniel (AFMA)



### Adoption of agenda

5. SBTMAC adopted the agenda with no changes (**Attachment A**).

### 1.2: Pecuniary interest declarations

6. SBTMAC noted the requirement to declare an interest at the beginning of each agenda item.
7. Members acknowledged that AFMA has consultative groups such as Management Advisory Committees because of people's expertise in areas that are relevant to discussions.

**Table 1: SBTMAC members, invited participants and observers' declarations of interest**

<b>Members</b>	<b>Declared Interests</b>
Mr Max Kitchell	Employed as the SBTMAC Chair. No pecuniary interest in the Fishery.
Mr Trent Timmiss	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery
Dr Simon Nicol	Member of the Commonwealth Research Advisory Committee (COMRAC managed by the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation), ABARES research provider within government and no pecuniary interest.
Mr Andrew Wilkinson	SBT quota holder and General Manager of company that owns and operates a tuna farm/catching business. Mr Wilkinson further advised that he also provides occasional advice to owners of an East Coast Tuna longliner.
Mr Rick Kolega	SBT quota holder and Managing Director of a tuna farm.
Mr Marcus Stehr	Board member of Clean Seas, Board member of Australian Maritime and Fisheries Academy and Board member of Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Industry Association. Mr Stehr has also been appointed to the Seafood Industry Australia Board.
Mr Glenn Sant	Employee of the University of Wollongong as the Fisheries Trade Programme Leader of TRAFFIC and Senior Research Fellow of ANCORS at the University of Wollongong and no pecuniary interest.
Mr Brett Cleary	Chair of Tasmanian Association for Recreational Fishing [TARFish]*, Deputy Chair, Australian Recreational Fishing Foundation, Board member Sustainable Marine Research Collaboration (SMRCA) Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS)*, Trustee International Game Fishing Association and Life Member of Game Fishing Association of Australia [GFAA]*. Mr Cleary has no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery.  *Have or are funding research into SBT.
Ms Sarah Kirkcaldie	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery.
<b>Invited participant</b>	<b>Declared interests</b>
Mr Brian Jeffriess (Invited Participant)	CEO of Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Industry Association.

<b>Members</b>	<b>Declared Interests</b>
Mr Michael Thomas (Invited participant)	Board member of the Sarin Group that owns quota SFR's.
Mr David Ellis (Invited participant)	Chief Executive Officer of Tuna Australian (Industry Association)
Mr Sean Sloan (Invited participant)	Acting Executive Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Department of Primary Industries and Regions, South Australia
Mr Matt Daniel (Observer)	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery
Ms Ann Preece (Observer)	Employee of CSIRO, no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery. Noting that CSIRO conducts research on range of fisheries issues.
Dr Campbell Davies (Observer)	Employee of CSIRO, no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery. Noting that CSIRO conducts research on range of fisheries issues.

## **Agenda Item 2: Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT)**

No conflicts of interest were declared under this agenda item as this agenda item was for information and no recommendations were being made.

### **2.1: Research outcomes from the 2017 CCSBT Scientific Committee meeting**

8. The Research member provided a written and verbal summary of the outcomes from the 2017 CCSBT Scientific Committee meeting held on 28 August - 2 September 2017 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The Research member thanked CSIRO, AFMA and the Industry member for attending the Scientific Committee meeting and providing excellent support.

9. SBTMAC noted the written summary at **Attachment B**.

10. Other members who participated in the CCSBT Scientific Committee meeting were also invited to provide any observations on meeting outcomes.

11. The CSIRO observer noted that the processing of the close kin samples required a huge workload leading up to the meeting. SBTMAC acknowledged the workload and noted that there is now a time series of data from 2005 to 2014 going into the CCSBT assessment.

12. The AFMA observer noted that Australia's request for 1.2 tonnes of Research Mortality Allowance was discussed at the Scientific Committee with some members indicating concerns with the request. Other member countries requested that for next year, the scientific and ethical benefits of the project be identified.

13. SBTMAC discussed concerns regarding how to manage discarding of smaller fish in foreign longline fleets. It was suggested that an international observer program is required. It was agreed that the industry invited participant and the conservation members would discuss the discarding issue out-of-session (**Action arising 1**)

14. The conservation member requested information on discussions of a longer term rebuilding strategy to replace the interim rebuilding target. The CSIRO observer noted that one of the reasons to extend the proposed Management Procedure (MP) timeline was to allow consultation within and between members as to what a longer term rebuilding strategy and target should be.

15. Members also discussed whether recreational catch is accounted for in the current stock assessment. The AFMA member and scientific observers noted that recreational catch is not included in the base case assessment but that some sensitivity analyses that include additional catch with similar characteristics to the Australian recreational catch are run. An Industry invited participant noted that an outcome of the latest stock assessment was that the effect on stock rebuilding of the sensitivity tests which included the Australian recreational catch were very consistent with the base case. It was also noted that the development of the new MP should include an unaccounted mortality scenario of 1000t smaller fish, 1000t larger fish and 20% bias in surface fishery reported catches.

16. SBTMAC noted that this was the first year that Australia and Japan submitted a joint assessment paper and provided positive signs that the relationship may be more cooperative in the future.

17. SBTMAC thanked Dr Nicol and the other delegates for providing an excellent summary of the outcomes from the CCSBT Scientific Committee meeting.

### **Agenda Item 3: Research issues**

Dr Davies and Ms Preece declared their interests under agenda item 3 and left the teleconference. The group then discussed whether the scientific observers needed to remain out of the teleconference for the agenda item. It was agreed that as their input was essential to the agenda item that they should remain on the teleconference for all discussions.

#### **3.1: SBTF Annual Research Statement**

18. The AFMA and CSIRO observers gave a summary of the SBT Annual Research projects. Members discussed and ranked the priority of the projects and indicated whether they were feasible.

#### SBT Inter-sessional science

19. SBTMAC noted that this work provides ongoing scientific advice to the MAC and AFMA to support the adequate monitoring, implementation and success of management arrangements in the SBTF. Ms Preece agreed to provide the approximate amount of funding required as soon as possible but noted that the project is similar to last year but the travel component may be more expensive. SBTMAC agreed that this project was **Essential** and feasible.

### Development of a new MP

20. Members noted that this work provides scientific advice to Australia on the development and implications of a new Management Procedure. Ms Preece advised this project included examining options that extended beyond the interim target. Members noted that this project was funded by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources last year. SBTMAC agreed that this project was **Essential** and feasible.

### Routine otolith archiving, ageing and developing age-length keys for the Australian SBT surface fishery 2017-18

21. Members noted that separate funding was required to age 100 SBT from the Australian surface fishery (2017/18 season) and was originally a stand-alone project but has now been incorporated into SBT inter-sessional science project. SBTMAC agreed that this project was **Essential** and feasible.

### Otolith collection, archiving and ageing and development of age-length keys for the Australian longline fishery 2018.

22. Members noted that this funding is for the collection and ageing of 200 SBT from the Australian Longline fishery and noted that it was an obligation on CCSBT members. SBTMAC agreed that this project was a **High** priority and feasible noting that AFMA and CSIRO would need to discuss options for the collection of otoliths in the longline sector.

### Developing an independent estimate of size- and age-at-maturity

23. Members noted that this project includes histology and travel for one officer to attend a 2019 CCSBT workshop. The project is seeking \$20,000 and members ranked it as a **High** priority and feasible.

### Close-kin identification (POPs and HSP) and exchange. Analysis stage of CCSBT funded close-kin sample collection

24. SBTMAC members noted that this information is essential for the Operating Model and agreed to rank the project as **Essential** and feasible. SBTMAC noted that a funding request has been submitted to the CCSBT24.

### Close-kin collection and processing of samples in Indonesia and Australia

25. SBTMAC noted that this project is for the collection of tissue samples and DNA extraction for the close-kin identification and exchange project and noted that a funding request has been submitted to the CCSBT24. SBTMAC agreed that this project was **Essential** and feasible.

### SBT gene-tagging in 2018

26. Members noted that this project is essential for juvenile abundance estimates for a new MP and that a funding request has also been submitted to CCSBT24. SBTMAC agreed that this project was **Essential** and feasible.

### SBT – Changing the Trajectory

27. SBTMAC noted that this project was already funded by the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation and a documentary will be made that aims to tell the story of how the stock was heavily fished throughout its range until the mid-1980s when it became apparent that the stock was at such a low level that global management and conservation was required to ensure its future. It will highlight the significant management measures that were implemented by Australia, Japan and New Zealand that formed the basis of the current CCSBT. Members noted that this project was ranked as a **High** priority.

28. Members noted that the updated SBTF Annual Research Statement will now be submitted to AFMA's Research Committee (**Attachment C**).

## **Agenda item 4: Domestic management issues**

Mr Wilkinson, Mr Kolega, Mr Thomas and Mr Stehr declared their interests under agenda item 4 and left the teleconference. The group then discussed whether the industry members and invited participant needed to remain out of the teleconference for the agenda item. It was agreed that they could return to the teleconference for all discussions but not for consideration of any SBTMAC recommendations. After the Industry members and invited participant returned to the teleconference, Mr Cleary declared that he had discussed the issue with the Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources but it was agreed that this did not represent a conflict of interest and, therefore, Mr Cleary did not need to leave the teleconference.

### **4.1: Progress towards accounting for all forms of mortality (including possible SBTMAC recommendations)**

29. The AFMA member explained that at its meeting in 2014, the CCSBT agreed that all members would account for all sources of mortality (including commercial and recreational catch). Australia reported at the 2015 CCSBT meeting that Australia would take account of all sources of mortality by 2018.

30. Members noted that the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources develops an Engagement Strategy each year for the annual CCSBT Extended Commission meeting, anticipating likely priority issues for Australia at the meeting. The Engagement Strategy is Australia's whole of government position for the meeting. To assist in the development of that strategy, the assistant Minister, Anne Ruston, and government representatives visited Port Lincoln on 21 September 2017, to consult with stakeholders.

31. SBTMAC noted that the 24th Annual Meeting of the CCSBT will be held in Yogyakarta, on 09 - 12 October 2017. This meeting will decide the Global Total Allowable Catch for the three year quota block starting, in Australia's case, in the 2017/18 quota year.

National catch allocations for all CCSBT Members will also be decided. The AFMA Commission will consider setting the total allowable catch for the Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery at its meeting on 17 October 2017. The AFMA Commission will take into account the outcomes of the CCSBT meeting when making its decision.

32. The AFMA member advised that AFMA sets the catch limits under clause 17.2 of the SBT Management Plan and highlighted that the number of statutory fishing rights will not change.

33. Mr Wilkinson spoke to the paper (**Attachment D**) that outlined industry's preferred approach to this matter. Discussion ensued on the introductory points in the paper with both the AFMA and recreational member indicating that they took issue with some of these points. The AFMA member identified the first point as an example – 'The Australian charter and recreational catch is already taken into account by CCSBT in their SBT stock assessment.'

34. Mr Sloan advised that the Department Primary Industries and Regions SA had written to AFMA regarding the South Australian government's concerns with the current proposal to set aside some of Australia's increase in catch limit to take account of the national recreational catch. Two key concerns were highlighted:

1. How setting aside some of the increase could undermine the existing SFR system and SBTF industry business model and in particular future investment and stakeholder confidence in the SFR system; and
2. How setting aside some of the increase in catch limit could impact future potential regional economic development of Port Lincoln and the Eyre Peninsula.

35. Members discussed the plan to begin a national recreational survey from December 2018 and members asked if the survey could be started before December 2018. Dr Nicol advised that time was needed to develop an appropriate sampling frame to ensure that the survey is efficient and effective.

36. SBTMAC noted the proposal outlined in Attachment D as the SBT industry's preferred approach. The remainder of the Committee, however, concluded it was not in a position to fully endorse or reject the proposal as some matters were factually questioned and a number of members indicated they did not have sufficient information to reach a considered view. The Industry invited participant asked whether the minutes of the meeting would record the recommendations of the SBT Industry members and invited participants. The Chair indicated that the paper at Attachment D would be appended to the minutes in full.

37. The Chair noted that as the recommendations in Attachment D were not explicitly addressed by the meeting the industry members who had indicated a conflict of interest were not asked to leave the teleconference.

## **Agenda item 5: Other business**

38. No other business items were raised during the teleconference.

## **Agenda Item 6: Next meeting**

No conflicts of interest were declared under Agenda Item 6.

39. The MAC noted and agreed to schedule the next face-to-face MAC meeting out-of-session.

Meeting closed at 12:30pm

**Max Kitchell**  
SBTMAC Chair



# Meeting of the Southern Bluefin Tuna Management Advisory Committee (SBTMAC Teleconference 2017)

## Final Agenda

**Tuesday 26 September 2017**

**10:30 am – 12:00 pm AEDT**

Toll free number: 1800 153 721

Participant PIN code: 184210

- 1. Preliminaries/matters arising**
  - 1.1 Opening remarks/apologies/acceptance of agenda
  - 1.2 Pecuniary interest declaration
  
- 2. CCSBT**
  - 2.1 Research outcomes from the 2017 CCSBT Scientific Committee meeting
  
- 3. Research issues**
  - 3.1 SBTF Annual Research Statement
    - 3.1.1.1 Intersessional science components
    - 3.1.1.2 Development of new Management Procedure
    - 3.1.1.3 Close Kin
    - 3.1.1.4 Gene Tagging
  
- 4. Domestic management issues**
  - 4.1 Progress towards accounting for all forms of mortality (including possible SBTMAC recommendations)
  
- 5. Other Business**
  
- 6. Next meeting**