



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority



Tropical Tuna Management Advisory Committee (TTMAC)

MINUTES
TTMAC 11
21 OCTOBER 2014
SYDNEY FISH MARKET



**ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE TROPICAL TUNA MANAGEMENT ADVISORY
COMMITTEE (TTMAC)
21 OCTOBER 2014
SYDNEY FISH MARKET**

Agenda Item 1: Preliminaries/matters arising

1.1: Welcome and apologies

1. The TTMAC Chair, Ms Catherine Barnett, opened the meeting at 9.00am and welcomed members, invited participants and observers to the 11th meeting of TTMAC.

Apologies

2. Apologies were received from; the Executive Officer Stephanie Johnson, the recreational/charter fishing member Mr Bill Edwards, the invited participant Mr Brian Jeffriess AO and the State Government invited participant, Dr Veronica Silberschneider.

3. Participants at TTMAC 11 were:

Chair

Ms Catherine Barnett

Members

Mr Trent Timmiss (AFMA)
Mr Gary Heilmann (industry)
Mr Terry Romaro OAM (industry)
Mr Paul Williams (industry)
Mr Joe Basile (industry)
Dr Cathy Dichmont (research)
Mr Peter Trott (environment/conservation)

Invited Participants

Mr Cathal Farrell (industry)
Mr Angelo Maiorana (industry)
Mr Grahame Williams OAM (recreational/charter fishing)

Executive Officer

Ms Sarah Kirkcaldie

Observers

Mr Steve Auld (AFMA)
Mr Andrew Fedoruk (Archipelago Asia Pacific)
Mr Brett Cleary (Game Fishing Association of Australia President)
Dr Sandy Diamond (Chair, SARAG)

Apologies

Mr Brian Jeffriess AO (industry invited participant)
Mr Bill Edwards (recreational/charter fishing)
Dr Veronica Silberschneider (NSW State Government)
Ms Stephanie Johnson (Executive Officer)

1.2: Adoption of agenda

4. The agenda was adopted by TTMAC (Attachment A).

1.3: Pecuniary interest declarations

5. The Chair stated that as outlined in the *Fisheries Administrations Act 1991* and Fisheries Management Paper No. 1, all members of TTMAC must declare any pecuniary interest in the Fishery at the commencement of the meeting (Table 1) and also at the commencement of each agenda item. The Committee noted that if a member discloses an interest in an item, the member must absent themselves from the meeting before the item is considered. The MAC must make a decision as to whether the member can participate in the discussion and in the making of a recommendation, or remain absent from the meeting for the item.

6. TTMAC noted the requirement to declare an interest at the beginning of each agenda item. It was agreed that members would declare interests at the beginning of each main agenda item, that is, at the beginning of discussion on agenda items numbered 1 through 5.

Table 1: TTMAC members/permanent observers' declarations of interest

Member	Declared interests
Catherine Barnett	Chair, South Australia Rock Lobster Advisory Council, Member Fisheries Council of SA, CEO Food SA and Member of Agribusiness Council (SA). No pecuniary interest in tropical tuna fisheries.
Trent Timmiss	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interest in tropical tuna fisheries.
Terry Romaro OAM	Director of a company that owns ETBF boat SFR's, minor line SFR's, ETBF longline SFR's, WTBF boat SFR's, WTBF longline SFR's, Coral Sea Trawl permit, Western Skipjack purse seine permit, SPF purse seine, mid-water trawl SFR's, and SPF quota SFR's. Member of SPFRAG and invited participant of SBTMAC.
Paul Williams	Director of a company that holds an ETBF boat SFR and ETBF longline SFR's, minor line SFR's and a Commonwealth fish receiver permit. Member of TTRAG.
Gary Heilmann	Director of companies that hold; ETBF quota SFR's, ETBF boat SFR's, a fish receiver permit and a Coral Sea Fishery permit. Member of TTRAG.
Joe Basile	Manager of two longline vessels in the ETBF and

	holder of boat and quota SFRs.
Peter Trott	Employee of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), no pecuniary interest in tropical tuna fisheries.
Cathy Dichmont	CSIRO scientist, Stream leader managing a project portfolio, which includes many fisheries projects including; Tropical Tuna, PI of risk-cost-catch FRDC project, which is a cross-cutting project looking at cost-catch-risk trade-offs in Commonwealth fisheries, Independent Science member on South Australian Rock Lobster MAC, CSIRO member on Northern research hub, Steering committee member on International Fisheries WIKI and other international non-tuna projects and conferences, member of TTRAG and member of Harvest Strategy policy technical review group.
Sarah Kirkcaldie	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interest in Tropical Tuna fisheries.
Invited participant	Declared interests
Steve Auld	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interest in the tropical tuna fisheries.
Cathal Farrell	Manager of fish receiving business and holder of an ETBF boat SFR. Director of fishing company that holds boat and quota SFRs.
Angelo Maiorana	Manager of a company that owns SFRs in the ETBF.
Grahame Williams OAM	Immediate Past President of the Game Fishing Association of Australia, no pecuniary interest in tropical tuna fisheries.
Brett Cleary	President of Game Fishing Association of Australia, no pecuniary interest in the fisheries.

1.4: Acceptance of minutes from TTMAC 10

7. TTMAC adopted the minutes as a true and accurate account of the discussions from TTMAC 10.

1.5: Status of actions arising from TTMAC 10

8. The AFMA member outlined progress on the 4 action items identified at TTMAC 10 (Table 2).

Table 2: Status of actions arising since TTMAC 10

#	ISSUE	ACTION REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	STATUS
1	2014/15 budget	The budget sub-committee comments on the draft 2014/15 budget to be incorporated into a letter from the TTMAC Chair to the AFMA Finance section.	AFMA	Completed.
2	Conversion factors in the ETBF.	Complete report on conversion factors in the ETBF and provide the report to TTRAG for consideration.	AFMA	Ongoing. AFMA is still working with industry operators to collect the necessary information and agreed to contact Kevin Williams who may be able provide the data (Action arising 1). Industry members requested that the requirement to return completed catch disposal records (CDRs) be extended to 10 days (currently 3 days). AFMA agreed to review the current CDR conditions (Action arising 2)
3	Review of NSW baitfishing arrangements.	Inform ETBF fishers of NSW review of baitfishing arrangements	AFMA	Ongoing. No meetings of the Baitfish Working Group have been held recently, but a paper has been drafted. Members noted that changes to arrangements are expected with NSW giving in principle agreement to give Commonwealth operators access to bait using purse seine gear.
4	Multi-year TACCs	Examine implications of setting TACCs over a longer time-frame.	AFMA	Ongoing. Member noted that this issue was discussed at the TTRAG meeting in June 2014.

1.6: Correspondence/intersessional work arising between TTMAC 10 and TTMAC 11

9. TTMAC noted that the following issues were addressed out-of-session since the previous meeting in May 2014:

- a) August 2014, AFMA distributed information regarding the variation to the seabird Threat Abatement Plan 2014;
- b) July 2014, AFMA distributed an out-of-session paper on the ETBF and WTBF wildlife trade operation assessments and requested individual member comment. Members agreed with the recommendation for AFMA to pursue a 5-year List of Exemption Native Specimens (LENS) exemption for both fisheries;
- c) July 2014, individual member comment was sought on the 2015 FRDC Expressions of Interest for research;
- d) June 2014, AFMA emailed members informing them of the new AFMA Commission;
- e) June 2014, the minutes from TTMAC 10 were sent to all members and comments were received from Ms Catherine Barnett and Mr Grahame Williams;
- f) May 2014, an invitation to attend a MAC workshop at AFMA was extended to all members;
- g) May 2014, the Chair's summary for TTMAC 10 was distributed to the MAC; and
- h) May 2014, the draft Public Benefit Guidelines for Fishery Independent Surveys was emailed by AFMA to all members for individual comment.

Agenda Item 2: Background Information/Discussion Items

No conflicts of interest were declared under this agenda item. TTMAC noted that no recommendations were being made and that members/observers were just providing information reports.

2.1: AFMA Management report on the ETBF and WTBF fisheries

10. The AFMA member informed TTMAC that the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) had recently received a five year export accreditation under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act). TTMAC noted that this was the highest accreditation and reflected the hard work that had been done on seabirds. Members noted that the Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery (WTBF) is currently up for re-assessment under the EPBC Act and the draft report recently went out for public comment with one submission received.

11. Members noted that an Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery operator was seeking the Marine Stewardship Council blue tick of sustainability for Mahi Mahi, Yellowfin Tuna, Albacore Tuna and Swordfish.

12. TTMAC noted that fishing in the ETBF for Southern Bluefin Tuna has been very successful this year with around 300 tonnes caught. An industry member noted that the Japanese government was strongly recommending to not accept Australian caught SBT as Australia went over its national allocation. Members noted that Industry have overcatch provisions where quota is required to be paid back the next year.

13. TTMAC further noted that there are currently two active boats in the Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery and a freezer boat may join the fishery.

14. The AFMA member informed TTMAC that there is currently no effort in the Skipjack Fishery but there is interest in bringing a large purse seiner into the Fishery. Members noted that revised management arrangements may be required if the purse seiner was to apply to fish in the Fishery.

2.2: WCPFC Scientific Committee update

2.3: WCPFC Technical Compliance Committee update

15. AFMA provided an update to TTMAC on the outcomes from the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) Scientific Committee meeting held in the Marshall Islands, in August 2014.

16. TTMAC noted that the current assessment for Bigeye Tuna showed it was overfished and subject to overfishing and currently assessed to be around 16-20% of unfished biomass which is of serious concern. The Skipjack assessment also showed a decrease in biomass and if fishing effort continues at current levels the stock will decrease to a point where fishing on free schools will no longer be viable.

17. It was also noted by TTMAC that the Yellowfin Tuna assessment was more positive, with the current stock level sitting around target levels but that there was still some overfishing on juveniles in western equatorial waters.

18. TTMAC noted that Australia has drafted a conservation and management measure to go to WCPFC that sets out a process to implement harvest strategies for the key fish stocks. The measure outlines a three year workplan to develop the harvest strategies. The AFMA member noted that there had been recent positive conversation with Taiwan and China regarding the proposed harvest strategy conservation measure.

19. The AFMA member noted that the Department of Agriculture holds a stakeholder forum in November every year before WCPFC and urged industry to attend the workshop.

20. TTMAC noted that the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna meeting was held last week in New Zealand. The Commission agreed to a total allowable catch of 5,665 tonnes for the next three years. Other major issues raised involving Australia included, accounting for recreational catch and monitoring methodology of fish as they are moved into farms. TTMAC also noted that the Commission did not agree to pay a portion of the 2015 aerial survey. Members noted that this may result in the management procedure not being run and the Fishery using exceptional circumstances.

21. Members noted that South Africa did not use their allocated 2013/14 total allowable catch and that 42 tonnes had been given to Australia for the 2013/14 season. The recreational observer noted that dialogue was needed between the commercial and recreational sector to allocate the 42 tonnes. The AFMA member noted that resource sharing between the Commonwealth and recreational sector is run by the Department of Agriculture.

22. The Department of Agriculture is currently running a project that is estimating Australia's recreational catch of SBT which is due for completion next year. TTMAC noted that the state government currently manages recreational fishing.

2.4: Forthcoming WCPFC Commission meeting

23. TTMAC noted that the main issues that will be discussed at the upcoming WCPFC Commission meeting include a conservation measure for Albacore catch limits and also discussions on management of sharks.

Agenda Item 3: Consideration/Decision Items

The following members declared their interest under Consideration/Decision items:

Mr Paul Williams: agenda items 3.1, 3.2, 3.3

Mr Terry Romaro OAM: agenda item 3.1, 3.2, 3.3

Mr Gary Heilmann: agenda items 3.1, 3.2, 3.3

Mr Joe Basile: agenda items 3.1, 3.2, 3.3

Mr Angelo Maiorana: agenda items 3.1, 3.2, 3.3

Mr Cathal Farrell: agenda items 3.1, 3.2, 3.3

In line with the requirements as a MAC industry member who has declared interests under an agenda item, Mr Williams left the room. The remaining members of TTMAC agreed that Mr Williams should be allowed to return for all discussions and recommendations made under Agenda item 3.

In line with the requirements as a MAC industry member who has declared interests under an agenda item, Mr Romaro left the room. The remaining members of TTMAC agreed that Mr Romaro should be allowed to return for all discussions and recommendations made under Agenda item 3.

In line with the requirements as a MAC industry member who has declared interests under an agenda item, Mr Heilmann left the room. The remaining members of TTMAC agreed that Mr Heilmann should be allowed to return for all discussions and recommendations made under Agenda item 3.

In line with the requirements as the MAC industry member who has declared an interest under an agenda item, Mr Basile left the room. The remaining members of TTMAC agreed that Mr Basile should be allowed to return for all discussions and recommendations made under Agenda item 3.

In line with the requirements as a MAC invited participant who has declared interests under an agenda item, Mr Maiorana left the room. The remaining members of TTMAC agreed that Mr Maiorana should be allowed to return for all discussions and recommendations made under Agenda item 3.

In line with the requirements as a MAC invited participant who has declared interests under an agenda item, Mr Farrell left the room. The remaining members of TTMAC agreed that Mr Farrell should be allowed to return for all discussions and recommendations made under Agenda item 3.

3.1: WTBF TACCs

24. TTMAC recommend that the TACC for each target species in the WTBF should remain the same but should be set for three years unless the government's position on Australia's share of Indian Ocean tuna resources changes.

25. The current WTBF TACCs are based on the 2006 Australian whole of government approach. In 2006, the Australian government position was that Australia should receive 5%

of the Indian Ocean tuna and billfish total catch allocation. In 2011 AFMA was notified by the Australian government that the previous government position of claiming 5% was no longer government policy.

26. In the absence of a current whole of government position, the recommended WTBF TACCs are based on the 2006 government approach. TTMAC recommended the following TACCs for the 2015/16 – 2017/18 seasons (Table 2):

Table 2: TTMAC recommendations for WTBF TACC levels for 2015/16 -2017/18

Species	TACC
Bigeye Tuna	2,000t
Broadbill Swordfish	3,000t
Striped Marlin	125t
Yellowfin Tuna	5,000t

27. TTMAC considered that the existing TACCs are unlikely to cause sustainability concerns in the short term and recommended that they remain the same until a new whole of government position is developed, or the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission adopts binding catch limits.

3.2 ETBF TACCs

28. TTMAC noted the TTRAG advice on the Recommended Biological Commercial Catches (RBCCs) and discussed the ETBF TACC levels for 2015/16. Based on this discussion, TTMAC recommended the following TACCs for the ETBF for 2015/16 (Table 1):

Table 1: TTMAC recommendations for ETBF TACC levels for 2015/16

Quota species	2014/15 TACCs	Recommended 2015/16 TACCs
Yellowfin Tuna	2,200t	2,200t
Bigeye Tuna	1,056t	1,056t
Albacore Tuna	2,500t	2,500t
Broadbill Swordfish	1,378t	1,381t
Striped Marlin	351t	351t

Albacore, Bigeye and Yellowfin Tuna

29. TTMAC considered all available information supplied by TTRAG and recommended that the TACCs remain the same for 2015/16. Members noted that TTRAG monitor indicators of stock and no major changes had been detected. This recommendation is consistent with the AFMA Commission's request to not apply the harvest strategy for Albacore, Bigeye and Yellowfin Tuna, as the proportion of the ETBF catch of these species in the south-west Pacific Ocean is not high enough to allow the harvest strategy to function effectively.

30. TTMAC requested that TTRAG consider the consequences of setting longer term TACCs and what breakout rules/indicators that would be required for Albacore, Bigeye and Yellowfin Tuna if multi-year TACCs were set.

Broadbill Swordfish

31. The MAC noted the TTRAG RBCC advice to increase the TACC from 1,378t to 1,381t for Broadbill Swordfish. TTMAC agreed to follow the process and recommend a 3t increase to the TACC, however, industry members indicated that stability of TACCs is also important. TTMAC noted that the Harvest Strategy for Broadbill Swordfish is close to the target reference point and hence the small changes in the RBCC. TTMAC noted that a project was currently being done looking at which growth model is most appropriate for Broadbill swordfish. The project is due to be completed at the end of 2015. The Scientific member noted that the stock assessment looked at two growth models in the stock assessment and used the most precautionary approach. Members noted that Broadbill Swordfish is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring.

Striped Marlin

32. TTMAC noted that the striped marlin harvest strategy recommended a 10% reduction in the RBCC but that TTRAG had low confidence in the use of the harvest strategy for the provision of management advice on Striped Marlin.

33. TTMAC highlighted that last year they agreed to a reduced Striped Marlin TACC but that it should be the last year that the commercial industry should have a reduction until resource-sharing objectives with the recreational sector are achieved.

34. TTMAC noted that no further progress had been made on resource sharing for Striped Marlin and, therefore, recommended maintaining the Striped Marlin TACC of 351t for the 2015/16 season. All members indicated a willingness to participate in resource-sharing discussions.

35. TTMAC noted the Striped Marlin stock assessment results indicate that the stock is fully exploited and is not experiencing overfishing but may be overfished.

3.3: Hammerhead and Porbeagle Sharks

36. TTMAC noted that all hammerhead sharks and porbeagle sharks have been listed under Appendix II of the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). These listing came into effect during September 2014 and require members of CITES not to intentionally trade the species without a non-detriment finding document issued from the Department of Environment.

37. Members noted that the ETBF has received a Wildlife Trade Operation under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 to land and domestically trade these species.

38. The AFMA member stated that any of these species landed that have been caught on the high seas will require a permit from the Department of Environment.

Agenda Item 4: Other Information/Discussion Items

Mr Peter Trott declared his interest under agenda item 4.3.

In line with the requirements as a MAC member who has declared interests under an agenda item, Mr Trott left the room. The remaining members of TTMAC agreed that Mr Trott should be allowed to return for all discussions and recommendations made under Agenda item 4.3.

4.1: E-business update

39. TTMAC noted that update on the availability of a range of electronic services including online licensing services, electronic logbooks and electronic catch disposal records (CDRs).

40. TTMAC noted that currently 86% of all licensing transactions processed by AFMA can be completed on line with an expected increase to over 90% with the introduction of additional services later this year.

41. However, members noted that currently only four boats use electronic logbooks. The AFMA member explained that the initial set up costs of e-logs is about \$300-400 but there is nothing for AFMA to process and the logs are then submitted free of charge. If Industry still uses paper logs they are invoiced quarterly for each page of the logbook processed and this can be expensive.

42. Members noted that AFMA was committed to introducing electronic catch disposal records and industry indicated that electronic CDRs would be beneficial and time saving.

4.2: Environment update

43. TTMAC noted that the environment update provided by AFMA.

44. Members noted that in the ETBF the majority of interactions in the first half of 2014 have been with Mako sharks. However, there were 5 interactions with turtles that were all released alive. The AFMA member noted that this number is expected to increase with the introduction of electronic monitoring given all current interactions are on vessels carrying observers.

45. In the WTBF, interactions were reported with shortfin and longfin Mako sharks.

46. TTMAC acknowledged one bird had been caught in the hook pod trial being conducted by Ben Sullivan from Birdlife International in the ETBF but as it was a trial the tori line was not deployed. Members noted that when Industry uses mitigation measures currently they can avoid seabirds.

4.3: E-monitoring presentation

47. TTMAC acknowledged the current progress of the e-monitoring implementation in the ETBF, and noted the presentation from Andrew Fedoruk, Archipelago Asia Pacific.

48. The AFMA member informed TTMAC that if a boat has fished a set minimum number of days in the preceding 12 months then AFMA will pay for the equipment and install and noted that if a boat has e-monitoring no human observers will be needed unless they are required for specific research.

49. The AFMA member noted that the small number of boats that do not qualify for AFMA paying for the equipment will have to use human observers and the cost of these would most likely come out of the levy base but this is yet to be determined.

50. Members raised some queries regarding system break down and what would happen. Archipelago Asia Pacific noted that a diagnostic test would be conducted before all vessels left port to ensure the system was working correctly but if the system broke down at sea then industry would need to demonstrate a genuine attempt to make it work before any exemptions were given.

51. Mr Fedoruk noted that Archipelago Asia Pacific will be setting up an engagement committee which would include AFMA and Industry members and sought keen volunteers from TTMAC.

52. TTMAC noted that Archipelago Asia Pacific would be looking to install cameras in the first quarter of 2015 and that it takes about two days to install all the gear on each of the boats.

53. The AFMA member noted that logbooks would need to be returned quickly and that the data entry team at AFMA will be punching the data faster so that a comparison can be made as soon as possible.

4.4: Fishery Catch Data – 2014 Season

54. TTMAC noted the current ETBF and WTBF catch data information. Members requested that the catch disposal record data be presented geographically rather than in alphabetical order.

4.5: Hook pods trial

55. TTMAC noted that there is currently a hook pod trial being conducted by Ben Sullivan from Birdlife International in the ETBF under a scientific permit. Members noted that the pod contains an LED which switches on at 10m depth when the pressure release mechanism opens the pod to release the baited hook. The trial has shown that the pod is operationally simple, cheap and safe to operate for fisherman. However, currently the pod is not very robust with about 10% destroyed each shot by the force of the fish dragging through the water and also bycatch hitting them. Members noted that more work will be done later in 2014 to attempt to improve the robustness. TTMAC thanked industry member Joe Basile for his significant contribution and effort in the hook pod trial in the ETBF.

4.6: Final TAP

56. TTMAC noted the update on the Seabird Threat Abatement Plan review. The key changes for the ETBF and WTBF are:

- Inclusion of e-monitoring as a method to observe the fishery;
- Provision for individual accountability and the removal of mandated, fleet wide responses (for example daylight setting ban for a particular vessel). Members noted that this would be a stepped approach;
- Change in the definition of interaction with a seabird to include injured seabirds that are not brought on board the boat.

57. Members noted that it will be deemed a serious offence if e-monitoring picks up a seabird being caught but it is not reported by the fisher.

58. TTMAC noted that the revised Seabird Threat Abatement Plan is available on the Department of Environment's website and that AFMA will distribute hard copies as soon as they are available.

Agenda Item 5: Other business

59. TTMAC congratulated Mr Grahame Williams OAM on receiving a Medal of the Order of Australia.

60. Industry members noted a desire to form an industry association and AFMA suggested industry could organise a meeting at the same time as an AFMA organised e-monitoring meeting where the formation of an industry association could be discussed.

Agenda Item 6: Date and venue for next meeting

61. TTMAC agreed, subject to member's availability, to next meet in March or April 2015, subject to confirming member's availability.

Catherine Barnett

TTMAC Chair, December 2014



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

ATTACHMENT A

Tropical Tuna Fisheries Management Advisory Committee (TTMAC) 11

**Board Room, Sydney Fish Market
Blackwattle Bay, Pyrmont, Sydney
21 October 2014 (commencing at 9:00am)**

DRAFT AGENDA

- 1. Preliminaries/Matters Arising**
 - 1.1. Welcome and apologies
 - 1.2. Adoption of agenda
 - 1.3. Declaration of interest
 - 1.4. Acceptance of Minutes from TTMAC 10
 - 1.5. Actions Arising from TTMAC 10
 - 1.6. Intersessional correspondence between TTMAC 10 and TTMAC 11
- 2. Background Information/Discussion Items**
 - 2.1. AFMA Management report on the ETBF and WTBF fisheries
 - 2.2. WCPFC Scientific Committee update
 - 2.3. WCPFC Technical Compliance Committee update
 - 2.4. Forthcoming WCPFC Commission Meeting
- 3. Consideration/Decision Items**
 - 3.1 WTBF TACCs
 - 3.2 ETBF TACCs
 - 3.3 Hammerhead and Porbeagle Sharks
- 4. Other Information/Discussion Items**
 - 4.1. E-Business Update
 - 4.2. Environment update
 - 4.3. E-Monitoring Presentation
 - 4.4. Fishery Catch Data – 2014/15 Season to date
 - 4.5. Hook Pod Trial for ETBF.
 - 4.6. Final TAP
- 5. Other Business**
- 6. Date and venue for next meeting**