



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority



# Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery - Great Australian Bight Resource Assessment Group (GABRAG)

 GABRAG 3 DECEMBER 2012  
ADELAIDE

## MINUTES

The second Great Australian Bight Resource Assessment Group (GABRAG) meeting for 2012 was held in Adelaide on 3 December 2012.

### Attendees

#### Members

Dr Rik Buckworth, Chair, CSIRO  
Mr Ross Bromley, AFMA Member  
Ms Marcia Valente, Industry Member  
Mr Jim Raptis, Industry Member  
Mr Jeff Moore, Industry Member, GABIA  
Dr Ian Knuckey, Scientific Member, Fishwell Consulting  
Dr Neil Klaer, Scientific Member, CSIRO  
Ms Karen Dalli, Executive Officer GABRAG, AFMA

#### Observers

Mr Brad Milic, AFMA  
Dr Gavin Begg, PIRSA-SARDI

### Apology

Mr Andy Moore, Scientific Member, ABARES

*The meeting opened at 9:30 am.*

## **Agenda Item 1 - Preliminaries**

### **1.1 Welcome and Apologies**

Rik Buckworth (the Chair) opened the meeting at 9:30 am (CST) and welcomed members and conveyed the apology of Andy Moore.

The Chair noted that in keeping with normal practice, the meeting would be recorded to assist with preparation of the minutes.

### **1.2 Declarations of Interest**

The Chair asked the RAG members to declare any interests and acquire the agreement of the meeting that no individual's personal interest is being served by participation.

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Interest Declared</b>
Dr Rik Buckworth, Chair	Employed by CSIRO, interest in sources of funding for research purposes and Director of a small company that sells hooks that sample tissue.
Mr Ross Bromley, AFMA Manager	No pecuniary interest
Ms Karen Dalli, AFMA, GABRAG EO	No pecuniary interest
Dr Ian Knuckey, Scientific Member	Director Fishwell Consulting, interest in sources of funding for research purposes, research work for GABIA and a purveyor of electronic logbook systems.
Dr Neil Klaer, Scientific Member	Employed by CSIRO – Interest in sources of funding for research purposes
Mr Jim Raptis, Industry Member	GAB boat and quota SFR holder
Ms Marcia Valente, Industry Member	GAB boat and quota SFR holder
Mr Jeff Moore, Industry Member	Great Australian Bight Industry Association (GABIA) EO, board member of Commonwealth Fisheries Association and industry member for Marine National Parks – No pecuniary interest.
Dr Andy Moore, Scientific Member	Employed by ABARES - Interest in sources of funding for research purposes, no personal pecuniary interest
Mr Brad Milic, AFMA	No pecuniary interest
Mr Gavin Beggs, PIRSA - SARDI	No pecuniary interest



### 1.3 Adoption of Agenda

Members adopted the draft agenda with the addition of the following agenda item:

Agenda Item 6.6 - CPUE as an Indicator of Abundance

### 1.5 Actions arising from GABRAG 1 - November 2012

The RAG discussed the actions arising from GABRAG 1 – November 2012.

1. EO to update GABRAG 1 – October 2011 minutes. **Status: Complete.**
2. EO to update GABRAG 2 – December 2011 minutes. **Status: Complete.**
3. EO to produce rolling calendar for RAG Chair and members. **Status: Incomplete – ongoing.**

Action Item 1 - EO to produce rolling calendar for RAG Chair and members.

4. Chair to write to Semi Skoljarev, Steve Auld and Mark Elford thanking them for their contribution to the RAG. **Status: Incomplete.**
5. AFMA Manager to investigate FIS and industry data collection and availability and whether the problem in data collection is going to be rectified and ensure there is quality control on entering the data collection. Provide a report on the outcomes at the GABRAG 2 – December 2012 meeting. **Status: Complete.**

The RAG members were informed that GABTF industry on-board data collection has not been entered into a database in the past and for this to happen in the future a database will need to be constructed. The RAG agreed:

- that the industry on-board data is desirable for stock assessments;
- that a database needs to be set up to manage on-board data;
- that there is going to be an initial cost involved to set up the database and then an ongoing maintenance fee;
- that AFMA stores and maintains the database with the port and FIS data; and
- there needs to be feedback forwarded to boats regarding the fields and what was useable, training on sampling and data collection, that includes otolith collection, for skippers and crew. The integrity of the data can't be compromised.

*At this point Ian Knuckey declared a conflict of interest as the supplier of logbook and sampling software, leaving the room at 10:08 am.*

The Chair informed the RAG that it will be useful and valuable to involve Ian Knuckey in the conversation, understanding the data could be entered into the Olfish logbook and that Ian Knuckey may gain financial interest. The RAG members in the room agreed.

*Ian Knuckey was welcomed back at 10:13 am with the observation from the RAG that it was impolite, inconvenient and not practical for Ian to exit the meeting when his input is valuable.*



The RAG noted that the current declarations of interest process needs to be amended as members leaving meetings is not workable and that this is an advisory group providing recommendations and not one established under legislation to make decisions.

Action Item 2 - Chair to lodge a letter to Nick Rayns, AFMA Executive Manager Fisheries from members on the impracticality on the declaration of interest.

Ian Knuckey informed the RAG that the GABTF could use electronic logbooks if that option was made available by AFMA and the crew could input the data themselves resulting in reduced costs.

It was decided that the best way to move forward with data collection and availability was to organise a teleconference with interested parties as this issue is across other fisheries.

Action Item 3 – AFMA Manager to organise a data teleconference with GABRAG members, SESSFRAG members, Simon Boag, Sandy Morison, AFMA data team, AFMA observer team including Mike Yates and Industry members. The best way to get data entered and provided to CSIRO will be discussed at the data meeting. To ensure quality control, this should include feedback to owners on what needs to be entered correctly, including mandatory fields.

6. Neil Klaer to report back on Tom Kompas probability values in final report for MEY project. **Status: Completed.**
7. AFMA Manager to forward on bycatch data and observer report from the observer coverage on the GABTF Danish Seine vessel. **Status: Incomplete.**

Action Item 4 – AFMA Manager to forward on bycatch data and observer report from the observer coverage on the GABTF Danish Seine vessel.

8. AFMA Manager to forward on information from Kevin Rowling on how to recognise the different gonad stages for Western Gemfish. **Status: Incomplete.**

Action Item 5 – Andy Moore to provide clarification on Gemfish biology and if there is a central spawning area or two different stocks.

9. Neil Klaer to provide fishery effort breakdown in the GABTF by fishery/operations/year. **Status: Incomplete (completed by data meeting next year).**

Action Item 6 – Neil Klaer to provide fishery effort breakdown in the GABTF by fishery/operations/year.

10. AFMA Manager to provide a summary of the Quota administration policy. **Status: Complete.** The AFMA commission is currently considering the Quota Administration Policy.
11. AFMA Manager to draft GABTF Bycatch and Discarding Workplan 2012 – 14. **Status: Complete.**



12. AFMA Manager to investigate whether the Threatened Species Scientific Committee (TSSC)' s feedback to AFMA on the Upper Slope Dogfish Management Strategy is only available to AFMA or is it available to a broader audience such as the RAG. **Status: Complete.** The TSSC has not advised AFMA of the process regarding feedback on their decision.
13. Neil Klaer to re-do the draft Deepwater Flathead stock assessment with the new data. **Status: Complete.**
14. Ian Knuckey to organise for Matt Koopman to extract the industry length data from Excel spreadsheets and into a database (with quality checks) that Neil Klaer can utilise. **Status: Complete.**
15. Chair to write to SESSF that GABRAG has identified a problem with the FIS and industry data availability which needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. **Status: Incomplete.**
16. AFMA Manager to ensure that ageing data is collected between January and June. **Status: Complete.**
17. AFMA Manager to investigate why the otoliths in the observer report dated 16 July 2012 sent to GABMAC stating 375 otoliths were collected for Deepwater Flathead weren't forwarded on to the ageing facility in Queenscliff in a timely manner. **Status: Complete.** The observer team did not realise that the GAB otoliths were needed at the end of the financial year and consequently sent the otoliths at the end of the calendar year with the other SESSF otoliths.
18. Ian Knuckey to forward on otolith data from ageing services to Neil Klaer by the 14 November. **Status: Complete.**
19. Chair to gather more information from Cathy Dichmont and Malcolm Haddon on the cost/risk/catch project analysis. **Status: Complete.**

Action Item 7 – Neil Klaer to provide a progress report on the cost/risk/catch project in February 2013, noting Jeff Moore's request to have industry and AFMA involvement in the project.

20. Jeff Moore to provide a draft agenda for the research meeting in December. **Status: Complete.**
21. Jeff Moore to write a letter to a facilitator asking if they would like to Chair the workshop in December. **Status: Complete.**
22. AFMA Manager to provide a draft of the GABTF harvest strategy policy and decision rules section to be included in the SESSF HSP. **Status: Complete.**
23. Ian Knuckey to write to FRDC on behalf of the RAG for more information on the seismic survey project. **Status: Incomplete.**

Action Item 8 – Ian Knuckey to write to FRDC on behalf of the RAG for more information on the seismic survey project.



24. Jeff Moore to follow up directly with BP regarding the sound logger information that the company had previously agreed to provide. **Status: Complete.**

*RAG adjourned at 10:48 am and resumed at 11:12 am.*

#### **1.4 Adoption of minutes of GABRAG 1 – November 2012**

The draft minutes from GABRAG -1 Teleconference in November 2012 were discussed. The RAG concluded that minor amendments should be made to the document prior to finalisation.

Action Item 9 – EO to update and finalise GABRAG 1 – November 2012 minutes.

### **Agenda Item 2 - Stock Assessments**

#### **2.1 MEY**

AFMA manager informed members that SESSFRAG discussed Maximum Economic Yield (MEY) versus Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) targets for species that are not key economic drivers in the fishery and suggested some species that may be suitable to move from MEY to MSY targets. AFMA is currently writing papers in regards to these issues. However, they won't be finalised for the Commission to consider this year prior to the TAC setting process. Therefore  $B_{48}$  targets will continue to be used for this TAC setting process.

Ian Knuckey provided further information and explained that SESSFRAG looked at information from Neil Klaer's work on identifying which species were highly targeted and the value of species in terms of value to the fishery. The key economic drivers of the fishery are identified as species that are highly targeted and of high value and should probably stay at the default of  $B_{48}$ . Other species may be valuable quota species. However, as they are not specifically targeted and are not key economic drivers of the fishery; the target for these species may drop to the MSY value of  $B_{40}$ .

In the GABTF, there are two quota species that are heavily targeted and are key drivers for the fishery and targets have been set at MEY. Currently Western Gemfish is not targeted and is not an economic driver in the GABTF. If the status of the fishery changes and it becomes an economic driver, there may be further discussion on how it will affect the current strategy for the GABTF.

#### **2.2 Deepwater Flathead Stock Assessment**

Neil Klaer discussed the development of a base case assessment.

- The current assessment included catch rates, survey data, age data and length data, utilising the most useful extracts from the industry data collection and the additional age information for 2010/11.
- The additional data resulted in three recent recruitment estimates.
- The model did not change significantly and the majority of parameters in the stock assessment fitted.



- The maximum F currently is estimated as 0.7, which occurred in 2005; in previous assessments, it was constrained to 0.5.
- The estimated natural mortality last year was 0.22 and it is currently 0.23.
- The CPUE has declined since 2010/11 and 2011/12, agreeing with results from the FIS and this has a large influence on the stock assessment result.
- The current biomass estimate is about 5000 t at depletion levels of approximately 39 per cent.
- The recommended biological catch (RBC) under the 20:35:43 harvest control rule is 979 t.
- The long-term RBC under the 20:35:43 rule is 1,051 t.

There was discussion on the F penalty: Previously assessments constrained F below a chosen value. This assessment uses a standard setting with no restriction on F value and the model is saying F was considerably higher than 0.5 in 2005. This sensitivity only affects this assessment as it has one year, 2005, in which F is very high due to the high levels of fishing effort. However, there was concern that removing the restriction on F resulted in the long term RBC changing substantially from 1133 t to 1051 t.

There was further discussion on age and length compositions as Neil Klaer noted that age and length compositions are in conflict with each other. This might arise because the otoliths are not a good (representative) sample, or there might be an issue with heterogeneity (catching different size fish in different locations/ at different times), but there is a good fit to CPUE.

There was a suggestion that the different patterns might be indicative of rounding in the industry length samples. The RAG noted there needs to be discussion on this matter and quality control on the age and length data from on-board observers.

Industry members were concerned with the extra work load that may be imposed on the crew through recording data in new protocols. There is an option to trial inputting data into Olfish. This is already familiar as it is the logbooks system, and provides good summary functions. This would make it more of a possibility to reward and recognise crew for recording data correctly.

Action Item 10 - AFMA Manager and Jeff Moore to provide protocols for the GABTF ISMP data collection.

The current base case assessment is indicative of a poor recruitment driven by heavy fishing impact on the stock. In 2005 when high levels of fishing took place the effort was too high and the spawning stock reduced below the MSY level. However, now we are moving towards target. The RAG noted that it was a MAC and Commission decision to deliberately fish the Deepwater Flathead stocks hard by introducing 10 boats into the fishery. This decision has been informative and the stocks have rebuilt rapidly, which is positive in providing good information for management.

Industry suggested that some of the rebuild may be behavioural. The GABTF is not able to fish near the shore and there are large areas in the GABTF that are not available to fishing due to closures and fish move away from areas with a concentration of vessels due to noise.



Jim Raptis mentioned that there was recently a 12 month period, prior to October, when catches were poor (about 5-6 t per trip) for Deepwater Flathead. Since October catches have been higher (around 10-13 t per trip) and suggested this may be due to temperature. Deepwater Flathead prefer a temperature range of 13-15 degrees. If the preferred water temperature is restricted in area ("compressed") then the density of fish in that area would increase. In addition, the FIS has some benefits over the CPUE that is collected commercially but it is also susceptible to the temperature range compression.

Ian Knuckey informed the RAG that data loggers are used in the surveys and if temperature is important then net monitors can be utilised to automatically upload temperature information on the electronic logbooks for every shot.

*Meeting adjourned at 1:05 pm and resumed at 2:10 pm*

The RAG noted that there is a time lag in assessments and better catch rates presently could affect the RBC in the future. There is a better estimate of stock status now than two years ago when the current TAC was set, and the long term RBC is the most confident figure. The reason we have seen the rebuild is that we have been fishing below the long term TAC and RBC for a number of years.

The RAG discussed the possibility of undertaking a FIS in February 2013 and whether this would make a difference to the assessment taking into account:

- it would require a whole new Deepwater Flathead assessment;
- it would be part of the whole weight of evidence the assessment takes into account;
- a substantially higher FIS would not necessarily change the assessment; and
- it may or may not change the RBC.

It was noted that the frequency at which assessments and surveys are undertaken may amplify the results, in that the longer the gap between assessments, the bigger the change in results and the management response that is likely. In considering the frequency of assessments it was noted that in two years a large amount of data has been collected which improves the assessment; the assessment modelling package is being continuously being improved and CSIRO have increasing experienced with the implementation and development of the package.

Jim Raptis was concerned about how industry might deal with the RBC changing from 1733 t to 979 t: it has large financial implications. Jim Raptis accepted that this is the best science and the management agency is world class; however this is about managing a stock which over a large area, only some of which is available for fishing.

The RAG recognised the consequences that a reduced RBC has on industry and made the best interpretation of the assessment with the available information. However the RAG was committed to interpreting this assessment clearly and without bias. The RAG noted industry's information on the current excellent catch rates. It was emphasised that this is not necessarily an indicator of increased biomass. There are mechanisms available where the MAC and the Commission can make adjustments to the RBC from a management view.





There are rules to set the RBC based on the harvest control rules and given an MEY rule of  $B_{43}$  target this is the RBC. The fishery is below the MEY target and can adopt the rebuilding strategy and go for the  $B_{40}$  next year as an alternative recommendation. The fishery is effectively at the long-term target and has rebuilt stocks over the past four years. The GABTF has been fishing under the long-term RBC for the last five years and even though there was a period of high effort, the fishery has been rebuilding. The past two assessments have included a large amount of data including the FIS data and the fishery is on an uptrend moving towards and might possibly, should catches remain below the long term RBC, exceed the target biomass.

The RAG was confident with the assessment's ability to estimate the current state of the fishery in relation to the target and **accepted** the assessment noting the discussion on the sensitivities. The assessment reflects the catch rates and it is on an upward trend. The RAG has **accepted** to go with the RBC from the assessment with the TAC change rule based on the indicator.

**RBC Recommendation – 979 t**

**Discount Factor –** Not applicable for a Tier 1 species.

**Undercatch/Overcatch - 10 %**

**Research Catch Allowance - 20 t**

*The RAG adjourned at 3:30 pm and resumed at 3:45 pm*

## **2.3 Bight Redfish**

Bight Redfish is currently on the second year of a three year multi-year TAC. Current data indicated that catches and discards are low; there is a trend with some deeper catches out to 200 m and slightly shallow catches.

Action Item 11 – AFMA Manager to investigate whether there are more than 148 Bight Redfish age samples for 2010/11. This was the number in the most recent Bight Redfish stock assessment and it was expected that there would be a higher level of sampling.

Jeff Moore informed the RAG that the RBC for 2012/13 from the assessment was 5823 t. However the long-term RBC of 2358 t was recommended and the large change limiting rule meant that for 2012/13 the RBC was finally set at only 2334 t.

The RAG reviewed data and **agreed** that Bight Redfish had not breached any breakout rules and **recommended** a continued application of last year's assessment.

**RBC Recommendation - long term RBC of 2358 t**

**Discount Factor –** Not Applicable

**Undercatch/Overcatch - 10 %**

**Research Catch Allowance - 22 t in addition to the TAC**



## 2.4 Western Gemfish Discussion

The Chair informed the RAG that last year a Tier 1 assessment for Western Gemfish was presented and recommended a long-term RBC of 613 t for Commonwealth Trawl Sector (CTS) and the GABTF; however it is not a RAG decision to decide on the allocation of the RBC.

It was noted that it is difficult for GABRAG to assess Western Gemfish when representatives from the CTS are not present.

The RAG was concerned that the standardised catch rates for the Tier 4 assessment do not contain discards which were significantly high in some areas and decided that an updated Tier 4 assessment is required.

Action Item 12 – AFMA Manager to investigate high discard rates of Western Gemfish.

The Chair noted that the RAG is unable to proceed without including information from the CTS. Although the RAG accepted last year's assessment, the RAG can't accept a 50 per cent increase in the TAC for zones 40 and 50 particularly if they are separate stocks as it would be detrimental to the fishery. The RAG suggested that a Tier 4 assessment for those zones would be appropriate.

The Chair wrote an email to Malcolm Haddon (CSIRO), requesting a Tier 4 analysis of Western gemfish in the CTS, for Zones 40 and 50 that accounted for the high and changing discard rates of the last few years. He read the draft to the RAG prior to sending and the RAG approved the email. Malcolm Haddon replied to the email with a Tier 4 assessment attached and an analysis where discards were included in the catch rate analysis (see attached email and reply).

Ian Knuckey informed the RAG that GABTF logbook data contains discards and has been consistent at 30 per cent for the past three years, it is suggested that recording of data may be decreasing in 2012. In 2010, when Olfish electronic logbooks were introduced, crew were entering data correctly in the specific categories but currently most discards are recorded in the mixed fish category. However, this can be resolved with further training and/or feedback.

Action Item 13 – Ian Knuckey to add skates and rays as a discard species group to the Olfish program.

Action Item 14 – Ian Knuckey and Neil Klaer to provide RAG with summary on discards and retained catch for GABTF quota and non-quota species.

*The RAG was temporarily suspended at 5:07 pm whilst GABIA provided, for information, a presentation on BP seismic surveys; it also included an overview of what drilling has been undertaken and BP's future directions in the Great Australian Bight. The presenters from BP were Matt Pinnegar, External Affairs Manager and Rochelle Smith, Environmental Manager.*

*The RAG resumed at 5:50 pm.*



## **Agenda Item 4 – Research**

### **4.1 Orange Roughy**

Consistent with the Orange Roughy Conservation Program, GABRAG **recommended** that the 2013/2014 RBC for the Orange Roughy – Albany/Esperance quota SFR zone be the same as last year, equating to 50 t, and that 200 t be set aside as research quota for the GABTF Orange Roughy research plan. Access to this research quota will remain conditional on applying for a scientific permit to fish the research zones under the GABTF OR Research Plan. GABRAG will continue to have input to the review of the Orange Roughy Conservation Program, if required.

*Meeting adjourned 6:00 pm on Monday 3 December.*

*Tuesday 4 December, GABRAG resumed at 9:04 am.*

*Andy Moore and Brad Milic joined the meeting, each advising that they had no pecuniary interest.*

## **Agenda Item 3 – Harvest Strategy**

### **3.1 Commonwealth HSP Review**

The RAG was informed that both the Review of the Harvest Strategy Policy (HSP) Guidelines discussion paper and the Review of the Commonwealth Policy on Fisheries Bycatch Issues paper are currently open for public submission and close on the 21 December 2012. These policies are very effective tools that are still evolving and all RAG members were encouraged to read these documents and provide input.

Action Item 15 – The Chair and Jeff Moore to contact out of session and discuss whether there should be a separate GABRAG submission.

Jeff Moore provided feedback on both reviews. In regards to the HSP review, the policy is on target and allows for flexibility around multi species fisheries, the guidelines need improving, the implementation of the policy and interpretation around the guidelines is where the issues are and where the majority of the effort will be focused. In regards to the Bycatch review, there is a question whether there should be limits for bycatch species and whether there should be a HSP for bycatch. If this goes through there needs to be data available for these species and there will be a large cost associated in doing assessments for these species.

Brad Milic informed the RAG that AFMA currently has an environmental risk assessment process in place which takes into account high risk species and looks at retained and discarded species and will be promoting this through the review.

### **3.2 GAB HSP into SESSF (but standalone section)**

This agenda item was provided to the RAG for information.

AFMA would like to develop a framework which will be put forward to GABMAC for approval which contains both the SESSF and the GABTF decision rules in the one



document. Currently the SESSF Harvest Strategy Framework is a South East Trawl and Gillnet, Hook and Trap document and although the GABTF decision rules are identified as dissimilar they would be included in this document as a standalone section.

AFMA's proposal still needs to be signed off from GABMAC; however suggestions and feedback from the RAG are encouraged out of session.

Action Item 16 – GABIA to provide comment on the GAB Harvest Strategy Decision Rules standalone section.

### **3.3 TAC's, Harvest Strategy and Decision Rules**

The RAG acknowledged that this is a standing agenda item and the necessary discussion on the long-term TACs is going to be delayed until the workshop.

## **Agenda Item 5 – Data/Monitoring**

### **5.1 ISMP/DF and BR data collection (including GABIA)**

The industry data collection was discussed earlier and there will be a teleconference to address the issues in collection and storage of the industry data in the future.

Ian Knuckey suggested that if the crew is collecting thousands of length samples of Bight Redfish and Deepwater Flathead, it is not practical having ISMP observers collecting another 400. It was recommended that the RAG look at allocating the jobs between the crew and ISMP observers and potentially expand the data collection to include other species. In addition, it would be fruitful to reassess the workload of the ISMP observers to see if there is other information they can collect while they are on-board. The RAG was informed that the Northern Prawn Fishery trains the crew and skippers prior to the season to ensure quality data collection.

*Ian Knuckey declared his existing interest in training and designing the course for the NPF, and potential provision of training in the GABTS.*

The RAG discussed whether it was possible and useful to train the crews in the GAB on data collection. It was agreed that training would be beneficial and a few options were presented including a skipper accreditation course, video clip/movies and AFMA observers training crew on data collection.

The RAG discussed the potential to collect length frequency data on additional species such as Leatherjackets, Latchets and Angel Sharks.

### **5.2 GABIA Slope Species Data Collection**

*Ian Knuckey declared a conflict of interest in data collection. The RAG agreed that his input at the subsequent discussion would nevertheless be useful to the common benefit.*

Jeff Moore presented a paper on the summary of biological data collected from GABTF slope species from 2006-12 to the RAG for information.



The program has been opportunistic and driven by industry. When industry had a certain catch onboard, the boats would put aside the fish and call Jeff Moore, Russel Hudson or Ian Knuckey to organise sampling. The totals on length frequency and otoliths collected by year were outlined in the paper and recommendations were identified.

Jeff Moore explained that prioritisation of species sampled would be helpful information from the RAG and to aid in the implementation of this project, GABIA is to work with AFMA and other providers.

Ian Knuckey informed the RAG that it is becoming a lot harder to sample fish from the Melbourne Fish Market as you are not permitted to sample fish there anymore. Sampling has to be done at another site and so it is dependent on people three times removed from the catcher.

Jim Raptis suggested that sampling needs to happen as close to point of landing as possible. The Raptis Company is not getting compensated for the samples they are providing and recommend training be given to the Raptis crew and get compensated for this from AFMA or get the AFMA observers to collect the samples and then we get compensated via the marketing of the fish. Industry would like to improve the system but needs cooperation.

The RAG was informed that AFMA has permanent observers in Adelaide and Raptis is landing fish directly in to trucks and shipping to a factory in Adelaide so there is an option that sampling could occur by ISMP observers at the factory.

Action Item 17 - AFMA Manager and GABIA to update GABTF Operation Manual, Slope Species Sampling and amend 5b sampling size from 100 samples from a 50 kg catch to 100 sample from a roughly 300 kg catch (its ok for Gemfish and Blue Grenadier but it's not ok for the other species).

Jeff Moore as a RAG member acknowledged Raptis for all the samples that have been collected in the past, they are the company which has been fishing those depths and taking all the samples for those species and sending it through. They have provided information that the GABTF wouldn't otherwise have for a range of developmental species in the GABTF.

### **5.3 Bycatch/discarding workplan**

The RAG discussed three of the five action items in the GABTF bycatch and discard work plan final report. The RAG was informed that it is a draft document and comments provided will be taken into consideration and information from the workshop will be incorporated into the documents.

*Action 1: Analysis of ISMP data on discard rates and Sharks, Stingarees, Skates and Rays.* Jeff Moore noted that this needs to have an analysis of ISMP and compare that to industry data.

*Action 2: Trial of 'flying boards'.* The industry members didn't find any increase in catches, slight fuel saving, slight reduction in bycatch, they were cumbersome and it was more convenient to use the traditional boards.



*Action 3: Net configuration trials.* There needs to be more explanation in the report on the changes in the net configuration trials. This trial was to distinguish if industry's recording of discards was showing any downward trend in discard rates. The RAG was uncertain about how to respond to this action item and decided that the AFMA Manager should update the information out of session to provide clarification.

Jim Raptis informed the RAG that Raptis has been towing the T-90 extension and codend for two to three years and this standardisation should be included in the assessment. It was also noted that since using these nets the quality of fish has improved and there is an increased number of fish being hauled into the boat alive.

Ian Knuckey provided the RAG with information on discard rates using T-90 codends. There is information available from the initial T-90 trials of different sizes. There is very consistent logbook information that shows the discard rate is now 30 per cent of the catch total in the GABTF, in the past it was 40-45 per cent. It is possible to demonstrate with analysis of data that there has been a reduction in discards as a result of the implementation of T-90. Analysis of the overall discard rates of the ISMP should indicate a reduction.

Action Item 18 – Brad Milic to update documents and provide further context on T-90 in the workplan documents and that T-90 is mandatory.

Action Item 19 – Jeff Moore to forward to RAG gear type and configuration time line.

*Gavin Begg entered the meeting as an observer at 9:35 am. No pecuniary interest.*

## **5.4 ERA Update**

Ross Bromley informed the RAG that in 2012 there was a review on the three Ecological Risk Assessments (ERA) that AFMA uses, the aim being to assess whether the framework was successful in reducing the risk of the fishery to some species and also whether their application helped to prevent unwarranted closures. It looked at non-teleost and non-chondrichthyan species that had been caught or interacted with since the last ERA had been completed.

Action Item 20 – AFMA Manager to provide clarification to the Cuttlefish justification explanation in the ERA and it needs to be more reflective of the GAB limits.

## **5.5 Improved Environmental Reporting**

Jeff Moore informed the RAG that a conservation member from GABMAC suggested that it may be beneficial to produce a one page environmental report card that provides an overview of the state of the fishery, as at the moment AFMA's environmental report card is a lengthy document. This one page report card would make it easier for interested persons outside the fishing industry to understand and interpret.



## **Agenda Item 6 – Other Information/Discussion Items**

### **6.1 GABRAG to consider fisheries closures in context of future Commonwealth Marine Parks**

Jeff Moore informed the RAG that the deepwater closures that were implemented in the GABTF were based on advice from the RAG following GABIA's request for advice. These closures coupled with the research zones for Orange Roughy were implemented to protect deepwater habitats and species in the fishery. These closures and zones have now been largely replicated and increased in the Commonwealth Marine Park Reserve Network for the southwest which will come into effect in July 2014. Therefore the fishery closures and zones can be removed in July 2014 as they will be superseded.

Action Item 21 – Brad Milic to organise a meeting to discuss Jeff Moore's information on the purpose served by the fisheries closures being superseded by the Commonwealth Marine Parks, as it should be considered as part of the habitat and communities project.

### **6.2 GAB Research Priorities Table**

This agenda item was deferred to the workshop.

### **6.3 Commonwealth Bycatch Policy Review**

This agenda item was covered in agenda item 3.1.

### **6.4 GABRAG Workshop, 4 December 2012**

This workshop is following on from this meeting.

### **6.5 CPUE as an abundance indicator**

Jim Raptis noted that the impact of the seismic survey and the standardisation of the T-90 extension and codend may have a detrimental impact on the CPUE and that an out of session discussion needs to take place to investigate how much this information may have an impact on the stock assessment. The seismic surveys were one of the biggest undertaken in Australia covering 12 000 km<sup>2</sup> of the GABTF boundaries.

## **Agenda Item 7 – Next Meeting**

The RAG **agreed** to have two face to face meetings next year.

*The meeting closed at 10:00 am on Wednesday 4 December 2012.*



## Actions arising from GABRAG 2 – 3 December 2012

Action Item	Action Person	Timeframe
1. EO to produce rolling calendar for RAG Chair and members.	EO	Out of Session
2. Chair to lodge a letter to Nick Rayns, AFMA Executive Manager Fisheries from members on the impracticality on the declaration of interest.	Chair	Out of Session
3. AFMA Manager to organise a teleconference with GABRAG members, SESSFRAG members, Simon Boag, Sandy Morison, AFMA data team, AFMA observer team including Mike Yates and Industry members.	AFMA Manager	Out of Session
4. AFMA Manager to forward on bycatch data and observer report from the observer coverage on the GABTF Danish Seine vessel.	AFMA Manager	Out of Session
5. Andy Moore to provide clarification on Gemfish biology and if there is a central spawning area or two different stocks.	Andy Moore	Out of Session
6. Neil Klaer to provide fishery effort breakdown in the GABTF by fishery/operations/year.	Neil Klaer	October 2013
7. Neil Klaer to provide a progress report on the cost/risk/catch project in February 2013, noting Jeff Moore's request to have industry and AFMA involvement in the project.	Neil Klaer	Out of Session
8. Ian Knuckey to write to FRDC on behalf of the RAG for more information on the seismic survey project.	Ian Knuckey	Out of Session
9. EO to update and finalise GABRAG 1 – November 2012 minutes.	EO	Out of Session
10. AFMA Manager and Jeff Moore to provide protocols for the GABTF ISMP data collection.	AFMA Manager and Jeff Moore	Out of Session
11. AFMA Manager to investigate whether there are more than 148 Bight Redfish age samples for 2010/11 in the most recent Bight Redfish stock assessment.	AFMA Manager	Out of Session
12. AFMA Manager to investigate high discard rates of Western Gemfish.	AFMA Manager	Out of Session
13. Ian Knuckey to add skates and rays as a discard species group to the Olfish program.	Ian Knuckey	Out of Session
14. Ian Knuckey and Neil Klaer to provide RAG with summary on discards and retained catch for GABTF quota and non-quota species.	Ian Knuckey and Neil Klaer	Out of Session
15. The Chair and Jeff Moore to contact out of session	Chair and Jeff	Out of





<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Action Person</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
and discuss whether there should be a separate GABRAG submission.	Moore	Session
16. GABIA to provide comment on the GAB Harvest Strategy Decision Rules standalone section.	GABIA	Out of Session
17. AFMA Manager and GABIA to update GABTF Operation Manual, Slope Species Sampling and amend 5b sampling size from 100 samples from a 50 kg catch to 100 sample from a roughly 300 kg catch (its ok for Gemfish and Blue Grenadier but it's not ok for the other species).	AFMA Manager and GABIA	Out of Session
18. Brad Milic to update documents and provide further context on T-90 in the workplan documents and that T-90 is mandatory.	Brad Milic	Out of Session
19. Jeff Moore to forward to RAG gear type and configuration time line to Neil Klaer.	Jeff Moore	Out of Session
20. AFMA Manager to provide clarification to the Cuttlefish justification explanation in the ERA and it needs to be more reflective of the GAB limits.	AFMA Manager	Out of Session
21. Brad Milic to organise a meeting to discuss Jeff Moore's information on the purpose served by the fisheries closures being superseded by the Commonwealth Marine Parks, as it should be considered as part of the habitat and communities project.	Brad Milic	Out of Session

