



Australian Government
Australian Fisheries Management Authority



Southern Bluefin Tuna Management Advisory Committee (SBTMAC)

**MINUTES
SBTMAC TELECONFERENCE
9 NOVEMBER 2015**



SOUTHERN BLUEFIN TUNA MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SBTMAC)

Introduction

A Southern Bluefin Tuna Management Advisory Committee (SBTMAC) teleconference was held on 9 November 2015.

The primary objectives of the meeting were to discuss the research outcomes from the 2015 Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) Commission meeting and the Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery research priorities for the 2016/17 -2018/19.

Agenda Item 1: Preliminaries/matters arising

1.1: Opening remarks/apologies/acceptance of agenda

1. The Chair, Mr Max Kitchell, opened the meeting at 10:00am and welcomed members and observers to the 2015 SBTMAC teleconference.

2. Apologies were received from Mr Glenn Sant (Conservation member), Mr Andrew Wilkinson (industry member), Mr Michael Thomas (industry member), Mr Justin Nelligan (industry member) and Mr Rick Kolega (industry member).

3. Participants on the teleconference were:

Chair

Mr Max Kitchell

Members

Dr Ilona Stobutzki (ABARES)

Mr Trent Timmiss (AFMA)

Invited Participants

Mr Brett Cleary (Recreational/Charter)

Mr Terry Romaro OAM (non-farm industry sector)

Prof Gavin Begg (State government invited participant)

Executive Officer

Ms Sarah Kirkcaldie (AFMA)

Observers

Mr Brian Jeffriess AO (industry)

Dr Ann Preece (CSIRO)

Dr Campbell Davies (CSIRO)

Mr Matt Daniel (AFMA)

Adoption of agenda

SBTMAC adopted the agenda with no changes.

1.2: Pecuniary interest declarations

4. SBTMAC noted that the requirement to declare an interest at the beginning of each agenda item was only for members and not for permanent observers or invited participants. 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 2 through 4.

5. 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 permanent observers' declarations of interest

Member	Declared interests
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 Ilona Stobutzki	Employee of ABARES, no pecuniary interest in SBT fishery, noting that ABARES conducts research on a range of fisheries issues.
Ms Sarah Kirkcaldie	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery.
Permanent observer/invited participant	Declared interests
Mr Brett Cleary	President of the Game Fishing Association of Australia and Queensland Game Fishing Association and Director of Keep Australia Fishing. No pecuniary interests.
Mr Terry Romaro (Invited Participant)	Employee of a company that owns SBT SFR's and works with company that has a consultancy with Aus Asia fishing that may longline fish in SBT Fishery.
Prof Gavin Begg (Invited Participant)	Employee of PIRSA-SARDI, no pecuniary interest in SBT fishery, noting that SARDI conducts research on a range of fisheries issues.
Mr Brian Jeffriess (Industry observer)	CEO of Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Industry Association
Mr Matt Daniel (Observer)	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery
Dr Ann Preece (Observer)	Employee of CSIRO, no pecuniary interest in SBT Fishery. Noting that CSIRO conducts research on range of fisheries issues.

Agenda Item 2: CCSBT

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

2.1: Research outcomes from the 2015 CCSBT Commission meeting

6. The Research member provided a summary of the outcomes from the 2015 CCSBT Commission meeting held in South Korea. Members noted that the outcomes were that CCSBT agreed to fund (noting that CCSBT only considered the indicative budget for 2017 and that the 2017 budget is not formally adopted until the 2016 Commission meeting):

- an aerial survey during 2016 and 2017,
- a pilot gene-tagging program with the intention for on-going recruitment monitoring via gene tagging if pilot is successful, and
- collection and processing of the Close-Kin samples from 2016 onwards (to prevent an increase in backlog of samples).

7. Members noted that the CCSBT work plan will involve transitioning from the current aerial survey-CPUE based management procedure (MP) to a new MP using gene-tagging data and CPUE, by 2019.

8. SBTMAC discussed that in 2016 the MP is scheduled to be run to recommend the annual TAC for the years 2018-20 for consideration by the Extended Commission. Members noted that an allowance will also be set aside to take account of non-Member catch before allocating the remainder of the global TAC.

9. In 2017 a stock assessment (including reconditioning of the operating model with updated data) will be completed and this stock assessment will need to consider the impact of unaccounted mortalities (from member and non-member fleets).

10. SBTMAC noted that in 2019 a revised MP (with gene-tagging data) is scheduled to be run to recommend the annual TAC for the years 2021-23 for consideration by the CCSBT Extended Commission.

11. The State government invited participant asked for an update on the Stereo video project as it was due for completion in 2016. The AFMA observer noted that the Australian delegation will give CCSBT an update when the project is completed but noted that it was not an AFMA managed project with AFMA contributing \$30,000 to the project. Members noted that a whole-of-government decision would need to be made on the implementation of stereo video.

12. SBTMAC noted the report from the Research member on the outcomes from the 2015 CCSBT meeting.

Agenda Item 3: Research issues

No conflicts of interest were declared under this agenda item.

3.1: Research priorities for 2016/17 – 2018/19

30. SBTMAC noted that the SBTF Strategic Research Plan 2014-17 had been updated to reflect the outcomes of the CCSBT meeting and circulated to members. Industry indicated that they were happy with the Strategic Research Plan and the research needs identified. Dr Davies noted that a technical review of the MP will also be incorporated into the new MP. SBTMAC agreed to the updated Strategic Research Plan with minor amendments and thanked the Research member for providing the updated document.

31. SBTMAC members discussed the annual Research Statement and agreed to rank the priority of the projects (Attachment B).

Routine otoliths

32. Dr Preece recommended that this section of the research plan be incorporated into the inter-sessional science as this would mean that only one contract would need to be drawn up. Dr Preece clarified the questions raised by Mr Jefferies via email, noting that the otoliths are collected in a non-random way to enable the age-length key to be created, that is then used to generate the age-frequency of the purse seine catch. SBTMAC agreed to incorporate this research under inter-sessional science and rank it as **Essential**.

Inter-sessional Science

33. Members noted that there were 5 main objectives of the 2016/17 intersessional work which was seeking funding of \$570,000:

1. *Planning, consultation, meeting attendance, advice exceptional circumstances, 2017 data exchange.*
2. *Run MP and provide advice 2018-2020 TAC.*
3. *Advice on approaches for including unaccounted mortality for the 2021 TAC block and beyond.* Members noted that this was a request from CCSBT and that there was some frustration expressed at the CCSBT Scientific Committee meeting as this work required information/progress from the Compliance Committee.
4. *Transitioning to a new MP.* Members noted that this is also CCSBT requirement and provides the equivalent of a domestic harvest strategy to inform AFMA decision making, and involves reviewing initial conditioning, propose data generation for projection models and form of potential MPs.
5. *Prepare for 2017 stock assessment and preliminary reconditioning OM after data exchange in 2017.*

34. SBTMAC members discussed the increase in cost from the previous inter-sessional science budget and that it was similar to the previous time a stock assessment had been undertaken. Members noted that all the work was important but that more information was

required on each main objective. In particular, members sought more information on the various elements of each project noting that this information is important when determining priority ranking. The AFMA member noted that the more information provided allows the government to discuss where funding could be sought from (ie obligations to the international Commission).

35. CSIRO agreed to provide more detailed costings for SBTMAC to consider (**Action arising 1**).

36. SBTMAC agreed that objectives 1, 2, 4 and 5 at this stage should be ranked as **Essential** and objective 3 as **High** with a more detailed discussion required regarding the implications if this work is not completed.

Close-kin

37. The CSIRO observers provided some background to members on this project noting that the next generation close-kin work is new research using different genetic markers to identify kin, both the parent-offspring pairs and new half-sibling pairs, and would involve processing the backlog of SBT close kin samples to reduce uncertainties in key parameters for the stock assessment models and provide a time-series of abundance estimates in 2017.

38. Members noted that CCSBT had agreed to pay for the collection and processing (using the new generation approach) of new samples but not the processing of the backlog of samples collected since the completion of the original close kin study, nor reprocess a subset of samples from the original samples with the new genotyping method.

39. The industry observer suggested that this product should seek FRDC funding as it is an innovative project and expressed support and willingness to co-invest with CSIRO/FRDC. It was discussed that this may be appropriate for consideration under the FRDC industry partnership agreement.

40. Dr Campbell agreed to put together an application to FRDC as soon as possible seeking funding (**Action arising 2**). Members noted that delivery by 2017 would provide greater certainty in stock status and other elements of the 2017 assessment and update of operating models

Estimating size/age at maturity

41. Members noted that in 2013, the CCSBT Extended Scientific Committee acknowledged that there is no independent estimate of a maturity schedule for SBT and that obtaining an updated and unbiased estimate was important to inform the stock assessment operating models and close-kin abundance estimate.

42. Members further noted that in 2014, a proposal for developing a maturity schedule was supported by the extended scientific committee as part of its Scientific Research Program. The proposal was based on analysing ovaries collected in the southern oceans during the non-spawning months, and a collaborative sample collection program was listed as a high priority in the ESC work plan. SBTMAC noted that other countries had started the collecting as recommended in the project but not many samples had been collected in Australia. Members noted that this research was essential for the stock assessment and also useful for the close-kin project.

43. SBTMAC agreed that this research was a **High** priority and that AFMA would discuss the collection with the AFMA observer section (**Action arising 3**).

Other business

44. Dr Campbell sought clarification on the next steps for SBT research projects. It was agreed that AFMA, CSIRO and ABARES would discuss the intersessional science and organise a meeting in February when there will be more information on funding available.

Agenda Item 6: Next meeting

No conflicts of interest were declared under Agenda Item 6.

45. The MAC noted and agreed to schedule the next face-to-face MAC meeting for September 2016, with the exact date to be confirmed closer to the time.

Meeting closed at 11:10am

Max Kitchell
SBTMAC Chair

Meeting of the Southern Bluefin Tuna Management Advisory Committee (SBTMAC Teleconference 2015)

Draft Agenda

Monday 9th November 2015

10:00 – 11:00 am 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 2015 CCSBT Commission meeting
(Report available on CCSBT website)
 - 2.1.1 Management Procedure requirements and decision on 2015 Extended Scientific Committee advice in response to 2015 Strategy and Fisheries Management Working Group requests
 - 2.1.2 Close-kin genetics
 - 2.1.3 Estimation of non-member fleet catch

- 3. Research issues**
 - 3.1 Research priorities for 2016/17 – 2018/19
 - 3.1.1 Potential changes to SBTF five year strategic research plan
 - 3.1.2 SBTF Annual Research Statement
 - 3.1.2.1 Intersessional science components
 - 3.1.2.2 Estimating size/age at maturity
 - 3.1.2.3 Close-kin genetics

- 4. Other Business**

- 5. Next meeting**

