



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority



Tropical Tuna Management Advisory Committee (TTMAC)

**MINUTES
TTMAC 13
4 NOVEMBER 2015
SYDNEY AIRPORT**



**THIRTEENTH MEETING OF THE TROPICAL TUNA MANAGEMENT ADVISORY
COMMITTEE (TTMAC)**

4 November 2015

SYDNEY AIRPORT

Agenda Item 1: Preliminaries/matters arising

1.1: Welcome and apologies

1. The TTMAC Chair, Ms Catherine Barnett, opened the meeting at 9.50am and welcomed members, invited participants and observers to the 13th meeting of TTMAC. Ms Barnett noted that this was the first meeting of the TTMAC since membership changed in July. The Chair acknowledged the 5 members who were no longer on TTMAC, Dr Cathy Dichmont, Mr Joe Basile, Mr Brian Jeffriess AM, Mr Bill Edwards and Mr Angelo Maiorana and noted that letters of appreciation will shortly be sent to them (**Action arising 1**).

Apologies

2. Apologies were received from; Mr Cathal Farrell, industry member and the research member Dr Robert Campbell.

3. Participants at TTMAC 13 were:

Chair

Ms Catherine Barnett

Members

Mr Trent Timmiss (AFMA)

Mr Terry Romaro OAM (industry)

Mr Paul Lavalle (industry)

Mr Pavo Walker (industry)

Mr Peter Trott (environment/conservation)

Mr Grahame Williams OAM (recreational/charter fishing)

Invited Participants

Mr Gary Heilmann (industry)

Mr Paul Williams (industry)

Mr Ian Bladin (recreational/charter fishing)

Executive Officer

Ms Sarah Kirkcaldie

Observers

Ms Stephanie Martin (AFMA)

Mr Phil Bolton (NSW Fisheries)

Dr Sandra Diamond (TTRAG Chair)

Ms Jenny Baldwin (Department of Agriculture and Water)

Ms Susie Howell (Department of Agriculture and Water)

Mr Jeff Moore (Industry)



1.2: Adoption of agenda

4. The agenda was adopted by TTMAC (Attachment A) noting that the 28 day reconciliation period and shark trip limits in the Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery (WTBF) will be discussed under agenda item 3.2 and agenda item 4.1 – WTBF Total Allowable Catch would be moved to agenda item 3.4 for consideration.

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/invited participants' declarations of interest

Member	Declared interests
Catherine Barnett	CEO Food SA, Chair, Gulf St Vincent management Plan steering committee. 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. Shareholder of a company that owns shares in a proposal to fish with foreign long liners in the WTBF. Invited participant on SBTMAC and industry representative at the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna.
Paul Lavalle	Director of a company that owns ETBF boat SFR's, minor line SFR's and ETBF quota SFR's for all five species. Director and member of fish receiving co-operative.
Pavo Walker	Owner of four ETBF boat SFR's and ETBF quota SFR's for all five species and Coral Sea permit.
Peter Trott	Principal of an environmental consulting business (Fishlistic), no pecuniary interest in tropical tuna fisheries. Member on the Great Australian Bight management Advisory Committee, Commonwealth Fisheries Research Advisory Board and

	MSC Board member.
Grahame Williams OAM	Past President of the Game Fishing Association of Australia, Treasurer & Records Officer, NSW Game Fishing Association. No pecuniary interest in tropical tuna fisheries.
Sarah Kirkcaldie	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interest in Tropical Tuna fisheries.
Invited participant	Declared interests
Stephanie Martin	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interest in the tropical tuna fisheries.
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.
Ian Bladin	Game Fishing Association of Australia executive, Queensland game fishing Association and charter boat owner, no pecuniary interest in tropical tuna fisheries.
Phil Bolton	Recreational Fisheries Manager at the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI), no pecuniary interest in tropical tuna fisheries.
Sandy Diamond	TTRAG Chair
Jenny Baldwin	Employee of the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, part of the Australian delegation to WCPFC
Susie Howell	Employee of the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, part of the Australian delegation to IOTC and CCSBT.
Jeff Moore	Executive Officer for Great Australian Bight Industry Association, CFA Board Director and Industry liaison for the Marine Protected Area project. Mr Moore noted that he had been invited to attend TTMAC as industry were proposing to establishing an industry association.

1.4: Acceptance of minutes from TTMAC 12

7. TTMAC adopted the minutes as a true and accurate account of the discussions from TTMAC 12.

1.5: Status of actions arising from TTMAC 12

8. The AFMA member outlined progress on the 8 action items identified at TTMAC 12 (Table 2).

Table 2: Status of actions arising since TTMAC 12

#	ISSUE	ACTION REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	STATUS
1	Review of NSW baitfishing arrangements.	Inform ETBF fishers of NSW review of baitfishing arrangements	AFMA	Ongoing. Members noted that NSW DPI recognized that this issue was a priority for the ETBF fishers and stated that they remain committed to the review. Members noted that significant progress has been made but it is still not finalized and agreed to circulate a revised timeline (Action arising 2). Industry acknowledged that they can't fish for bait within 3nm unless they hold a section 37 NSW permit.
2	Skipjack Fishery	Inform members of any new operations in the Skipjack Fishery	AFMA	AFMA informed members that an application had been received to deem a New Zealand boat as Australian. The boat is heading to Australia in the next few weeks and plans to fish for 4-6 weeks (purse seining in the Coral Sea).
3	TTMAC budget sub-committee	Include the outcomes of the budget sub-committee meeting on the agenda of the next meeting	Budget sub-committee	Completed. Members noted that the sub-committee provided comments but no major changes to the budget were recommended.
4	E-monitoring	AFMA to confirm in writing that the back-up copy of video footage is deleted after 6 months	AFMA	Completed. Members noted that this information is now included in e-monitoring program summary document available on the AFMA website.

#	ISSUE	ACTION REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	STATUS
5	Using e-monitoring if VMS not working	AFMA agreed to discuss with Compliance whether a vessel can go fishing if their VMS wasn't working but they had camera's installed	AFMA	Completed. Members noted that 3 vessels were allowed to continue fishing during the June zero tolerance for VMS period, without operational VMS because e-monitoring was installed. AFMA informed TTMAC that in the long term the plan is to remove the VMS requirements, however, acknowledged that currently e-monitoring can not do a number of things that the VMS systems can ie the e-monitoring system can't communicate the same way and also does not have the safety aspect of sending a message if the boat is sinking. Members noted that e-monitoring would need to be approved as a VMS system in the Western & Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC).
6	Risk analysis if significant change of conditions was to occur	AFMA agreed to provide additional information on the analysis of bird interactions on hauling to the Environment member and that in future TTMAC papers recommending changes to conditions would include a risk analysis	AFMA	Completed. Information was provided to the Environment member.

#	ISSUE	ACTION REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	STATUS
7	Licensing system	The AFMA member agreed to circulate a paper he had written about simplifying AFMA's licensing system based on the system currently in place in New Zealand	AFMA	Completed. Members noted the paper circulated on the New Zealand licensing system and agreed that AFMA's system was over-complicated in comparison. TTMAC recommended that the Commission request that the AFMA licensing system is reviewed in a way that they see appropriate (Action arising 3). Members agreed that the system should be cost-effective and secure.
8	Fishery catch data	AFMA agreed to distribute the current fishing season (2015/16) data	AFMA	Completed. Members noted that this information was provided under Agenda item 4.5.

1.6: Correspondence/intersessional work arising between TTMAC 12 and TTMAC 13

TTMAC noted that the following issues were addressed out-of-session since the previous meeting in May 2015:

- a) June 2015; the draft minutes from TTMAC 12 were emailed to members for comment;
- b) June 2015; the TTMAC EO distributed the draft 2015-16 Tropical Tuna Fisheries budget explanations for TTMAC member comments;
- c) June 2015; the TTMAC budget sub-committee held a teleconference to discuss the 2015-16 budget explanations for the ETBF, WTBF and Skipjack Tuna Fisheries;
- d) July 2015; the minutes from the TTMAC budget sub-committee meeting were distributed to TTMAC;
- e) July 2015; the TTMAC EO distributed to members the final budget comparisons for all fisheries and a letter from the Commonwealth Fisheries Association regarding the final cost-recovered budgets for the 2015-16 financial year;
- f) July 2015; the new TTMAC member appointments were finalised;
- g) October 2015; the finalised acquittal of cost-recovered expenditure against the budget for 2014/15 for the Commonwealth fisheries and a letter from James Findlay, AFMA CEO, to the Commonwealth Fisheries Association were emailed to TTMAC;

- h) October 2015; the various research Expressions Of Interest (EOIs) for Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) funding in 2016-17 were distributed to TTMAC members for comment;
- i) October 2015; the TTMAC EO emailed members the updated Fisheries Management Paper 1 – Management Advisory Committees.

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

9. The AFMA member informed TTMAC that CSIRO has completed a ground breaking study on Yellowfin tuna using samples from Australia, Pacific Ocean and Mexico. The study showed that they were genetically distinct breeding populations and the results will be published in Nature an International weekly journal of Science in the next few weeks. There is currently a proposal seeking funding from FRDC to use the technology to look at populations closer to Australia and also apply the same technique to Bigeye and Albacore tunas. Members noted that the project has a planned start date of 1 July 2016.

10. Members noted that industry held a successful industry meeting in May and agreed to hold another industry meeting this year. Industry stressed the need for an agenda and strategic direction for the meeting. Industry members agreed to organise the meeting out-of-session for November or December 2015. The AFMA member informed industry that AFMA would be happy to assist in facilitating the formation of an industry association. Industry members noted that there would need to be an agreement that everyone paid for the association. It was agreed that this issue would be discussed at the upcoming industry meeting.

11. Mr Walker provided an update on the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) blue tick of sustainability for Yellowfin Tuna, Albacore Tuna and Swordfish. Mr Walker noted that the tick has helped his Company expand a little into international markets such as America and Europe but has not been of assistance in the domestic market where he believes MSC is undervalued. Members noted that in 2014 there were 3 MSC certified restaurants but that has now decreased to 2 restaurants. Mr Walker indicated that he had received a lot of enquiries from Switzerland as the European countries value MSC. The environmental member noted that Coles supermarket was moving towards providing MSC approved seafood particularly fresh fish.

12. Members noted that 2 new boats would be fishing in the WTBF this season. One vessel has already left Japan and will be arriving by the end of November. If the first vessel is successful a second vessel would begin fishing by the end of January.

13. The recreational member noted that it had been a good season for the recreational sector and that there had been no issues between the recreational and commercial fishers for 3 years. The recreational member thought the current system of AFMA circulating the major recreational tournaments to commercial fishers was working well.

2.2: WCPFC Commission update

14. TTMAC noted that the WCPFC will be held in Bali in December 2015 and prior to the Commission meeting there will be two workshops:

1. a two day workshop to progress harvest strategies; and
2. a Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) management workshop.

15. Members noted that the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) scientific committee meeting is also being held the week before the WCPFC meeting and the Yellowfin tuna assessment will be discussed. The next IOTC meeting will be held in Reunion in May 2016 with an allocation meeting in Iran in February 2016. The allocation meeting will be going back to general principles and the Department observer stated that they are happy to discuss any issues with industry. Members noted that the main priority for IOTC was the harvest strategy work and also the Management Strategy Evaluation work for skipjack and Albacore. Members also noted that budget and governance were an issue for IOTC as they only have a small budget. The AFMA member noted that the IOTC does not have any requirement for VMS, no consistent observer program and limited logbook reporting.

16. TTMAC noted that the IOTC scientific committee, occurring in December 2015, would consider an assessment that would likely categorise Yellowfin Tuna as overfished and subject to overfishing.

2.3: FFA annual meeting update

17. As this was the first meeting of the new TTMAC the AFMA member provided members with background on the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) (26 member countries), the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) (which consists of the Pacific islands and Australia and New Zealand) as well as the Parties to Nauru Agreement (PNA) (which has 7 Pacific island members whose exclusive economic zones contain 85% of the purse seine tuna fisheries). Members noted that the FFA has enough members to block any proposed WCPFC measure. The AFMA member stated that he had attended the FFA meeting in Honiara last week.

18. TTMAC noted that Australia had 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 was scaled back and it was agreed to develop a workplan this year. Australia has drafted a four year workplan to develop the harvest strategies with the aim to have harvest control rules by 2019. FFA endorsed the workplan last week and it will be presented as an FFA paper to WCPFC with the backing of 16 members.

The AFMA member informed TTMAC that FFA had agreed to pursue 9 measures:

1. Port state measure – members noted that the port state measure will provide tighter monitoring on the landing of product. Although it was acknowledged there are still loopholes Australia believe it is a good first step. The Pacific islands stated their lack of capacity/administrative ability to implement would need to be addressed.
2. Skipjack target reference points – members noted that the target is 50% of unfished biomass (MEY).
3. Management of high seas – members noted that 50% of longline catch and effort occurs on the high seas. FFA proposed a measure with 5 spatial management zones with no transshipping allowed between zones and vessels would need to report entering and exiting the zones.

4. 4 year tropical tuna measure – this measure includes limits on Yellowfin tuna, Bigeye tuna and Skipjack and limits on the number of days purse seiners could use fish aggregating devices. The measure is currently in its 2nd year and will be reviewed
5. Albacore revised measure – members noted that this is already a measure that restricts boats actively fishing for albacore but ‘actively’ is not defined and this proposal will attempt to tighten the existing measure.
6. Albacore target reference point (TRP) – members noted the proposal to have TRP of 45% of unfished biomass and this would require a decrease in the current catch and effort. The AFMA member recommended that industry engage with the Department on this issue.
7. Compliance monitoring scheme – members noted that the FFA wants a permanent measure and more streamlining. Members noted that Australia is usually fully compliant.
8. Harvest Strategy workplan – members noted that this was the number 1 priority for Australia.
9. Seabirds (New Zealand proposal) – Members noted that this was a proposal that seabird measures apply south of 25°S.

19. The AFMA member noted that the FFA has about 200 staff and supplies observers and compliance to Pacific Island governments. Members noted that all vessels fishing on the high seas must have a functioning VMS and report to the WCPFC. The WCPFC VMS is provided to member countries for vessels fishing within 100nm of an EEZ. Members noted that FFA has access to data from all member zones except the Australian and New Zealand domestic boats. FFA also monitors transshipment and colour codes the vessel according to compliance risk (green, yellow and red). The current biggest compliance risk is the misreporting of catch and transshipment. TTMAC noted that AFMA has done some stand-alone patrols in recent months. Members noted that compliance was generally good although a couple of vessel were not reporting to WCPFC VMS. Members noted that there were 10-18 Chinese boats fishing close to the Australian Fishing Zone off Sydney and were fishing for Albacore Tuna.

20. TTMAC noted that Australia had recently agreed to but not ratified an FFA treaty to better share data and to do joint patrols.

Agenda Item 3: Consideration/Decision Items

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

Mr Terry Romaro OAM: agenda item 3.1 – 3.4

Mr Pavo Walker: agenda items 3.1 – 3.4

Mr Paul Lavalley: agenda items 3.1 – 3.4

Mr Paul Williams: agenda items 3.1 – 3.4

Mr Gary Heilmann: agenda items 3.1 – 3.4

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 the MAC industry member who has declared an interest under an agenda item, Mr Walker left the room. The remaining members of TTMAC agreed that Mr Walker 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 Lavalley left the room. The remaining members of TTMAC agreed that Mr Lavalley 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 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 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.

3.1: ETBF Total Allowable Catch

21. TTMAC noted that TTRAG provided Recommended Biological Commercial Catch limits (RBCCs) for Broadbill Swordfish and Striped Marlin and stock status advice for the tuna species at their meeting in October 2015. The outcomes of the harvest strategy resulted in the following RBCCs:

Swordfish: 1373t

Striped Marlin: 323t

For the tuna species, the ETBF proportion of the overall catch within the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) is still regarded as being too small for the harvest strategy to be effective, so only stock status advice was provided by TTRAG. The current status of the tuna species within the WCPO is as follows:

Yellowfin Tuna: Not overfished and not subject to overfishing

Bigeye Tuna: Overfished and subject to overfishing

Albacore Tuna: Not overfished and not subject to overfishing

In light of this status advice, TTMAC agreed that the TACCs for Bigeye Tuna and Albacore Tuna should remain the same for the 2016/17 season at 1,056t and 2,500t respectively.

22. TTMAC noted that the main change from the 2015/16 TACCs was a reduction of 8 tonnes for Broadbill Swordfish. Members noted that TTRAG had a high level of confidence with the current harvest strategy for the provision of effective management advice on Broadbill Swordfish for the ETBF.

23. TTMAC last year did not recommend a reduction in the Striped Marlin TACC as it was agreed that the commercial industry would not accept any further TACC reductions until resource-sharing with the recreational sector is finalised. To date no further progress has been made on resource-sharing for Striped Marlin. Therefore, AFMA management recommended maintaining the Striped Marlin TACC of 351 tonnes for the 2016/17 fishing season. The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources representative noted that they were trying to develop a position on Striped Marlin resource sharing. AFMA agreed to contact the Department and encourage the development of a resource sharing policy (**Action arising 4**).

24. TTMAC noted that the AFMA Commission will not make a TACC decision until after the WCPFC meeting to be held 3-8 December 2015 and that should the WCPFC make a decision that would impact on the TACCs recommended by TTMAC, AFMA management will seek further TTMAC advice prior to seeking a Commission decision.

25. Industry members agreed to the TACC recommended for Bigeye Tuna, Broadbill Swordfish, Striped Marlin and Albacore Tuna but requested that the Yellowfin Tuna TACC be increased by 200 tonnes to 2,400 tonnes for the 2016/17 season. Members noted that the assessment in region 5 is well above the target. Industry further noted that current catch rates were stable and increasing, as was the size of the average fish caught. Industry argued that if the harvest strategy was run then the TACC would increase and this increase would maximise economic efficiency of the Fishery and the requested TACC was also within the WCPFC limit (2,656 tonnes). Members noted that Yellowfin Tuna is not overfished or subject to overfishing. The recreational member indicated economic concerns if the Yellowfin Tuna TACC was to increase particularly if there was an increase in commercial catch in the waters off NSW. TTMAC noted that this issue highlighted that the resource sharing matter needs to be resolved as soon as possible.

26. The AFMA member noted that recent scientific research indicated that there was a genetic difference between the Australian stock and other Pacific islands.

27. TTMAC agreed to recommend the TACCs for Bigeye Tuna, Broadbill Swordfish, Striped Marlin and Albacore Tuna and requested that AFMA draft a revised out-of-session TACC paper for Yellowfin Tuna (**Action arising 5**).

The recommended TACCs for the 2016/17 fishing season are as follows:

Species	TACC 2016/17
Bigeye Tuna	1056 t
Broadbill Swordfish	1373 t
Striped Marlin	351 t
Yellowfin Tuna	TBC
Albacore Tuna	2500 t

3.2 Fishery rule simplification options with e-monitoring

28. TTMAC discussed a number of rules that could be simplified now that e-monitoring has been implemented in the ETBF and WTBF. It was agreed that AFMA, with the help of

industry, would compile a list of suggested changes and present a paper at the next TTMAC meeting (**Action arising 6**). Issues discussed at TTMAC 13 included:

Loining Marlin at sea

29. Members noted that this rule was in place due to concerns about species identification but with identification now available through e-monitoring this prohibition can be removed. AFMA indicated that the change needed to be drafted by the Office of Parliamentary Counsel and then signed off by the Governor General.

28 day reconciliation

30. Industry requested flexibility with the 28 day reconciliation period. AFMA noted that this is a condition that applies to all Commonwealth fisheries and means you can't fish if you are over quota after 28 days from completion of a fishing trip. Industry noted that they agreed to the change from quarterly reconciliation to 28 day but had assumed that they would be given a 10% overcatch allowance rather than the overcatch allowance just applying at the end of the season. The AFMA Manager noted that 28 day quota reconciliation applies to all AFMA quota fisheries and there are cost efficiencies in having a single system. AFMA agreed to discuss this issue with Compliance (**Action arising 7**) and suggested industry discuss with the Great Australian Bight and South East Trawl industry associations.

Shark limits in the WTBF

31. An Industry member requested that shark limits be changed to a per day limit rather than a trip limit as with the new boats coming in to the Fishery there will be longer trips. Industry highlighted that they were not requesting higher limits than had been previously agreed. AFMA indicated that previously Compliance had refused per day limits as they could not tell how long the vessel had been at sea but VMS allows officers to have access to this information. AFMA agreed to discuss this with the Western Australian government as shark trip limits are included in the memorandum of understanding with state governments.

Transshipping/winching gear/dual jurisdiction trips/zonal TACs

32. Industry requested that AFMA re-visit transshipping rules on the condition that the fish are unloaded separately and also asked if a boat could winch another vessel's gear. Another suggestion was dual jurisdiction trips as vessels could now go in to Area E and prove that they only use 500 hooks. The industry invited participants also asked if it was possible to have zonal TACCs ie an inshore and offshore swordfish TACC. Some industry members disagreed with this request noting that it is the same stock. AFMA stated that this issue would need to be discussed in TTRAG as there are regulatory and compliance issues.

3.3: Carriage of fishing extract on board boats

33. TTMAC noted that AFMA is proposing to remove the mandatory requirement to carry fishing concessions on board the boat across all Commonwealth fisheries. With the advent of remote access to the internet and other technologies now available to Compliance Officers the production of a hard copy of the extract by an operator is no longer required.

34. Members noted that at its October 2015 meeting the AFMA Commission agreed to undertake consultation through the MAC on removing the requirement to carry a copy of the SFR extract on board a boat. As this is not a complicated change a full public comment phase is not required.

35. TTMAC approved the proposed change to the *Eastern Tuna and Billfish Management Plan 2010* and the *Western Tuna and Billfish Management Plan 2005* (the Plans) to remove the mandatory requirement to carry an extract of the Statutory Fishing Rights (SFRs) Register on board the boat.

3.4/4.1: WTBF Total Allowable Catch

36. TTMAC noted that the TACCs for the WTBF species were set for 3 years on 12 November 2014. The following TACCs will remain the same for 3 years until 31 January 2018:

	TACC (tonnes) in 2015 fishing season	TACC (tonnes) in 2016 fishing season	TACC (tonnes) in 2017 fishing season
Bigeye Tuna	2,000	2,000	2,000
Broadbill Swordfish	3,000	3,000	3,000
Striped Marlin	125	125	125
Yellowfin Tuna	5,000	5,000	5,000

TTMAC noted that recently the IOTC working group has completed a Yellowfin Tuna stock assessment and the outlook is very pessimistic with the current catch exceeding maximum sustainable yield. The stock assessment will be presented to the IOTC Scientific Committee in December 2015. Members noted that currently Australia sets the Yellowfin Tuna TACC at 2.3% of MSY of old stock assessment and that the Australian EEZ is about 5% of IOTC water and would therefore still be considered precautionary. Industry noted that there are currently 2 boats in the Fishery, catches are stable and that good data will be available in the next few years.

Agenda Item 4: Other Information/Discussion Items

No interests were declared under agenda item 4.

4.2: Shark management in the ETBF and WTBF

37. TTMAC noted that Silky Sharks have now been listed as a Migratory species under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and will now be considered a protected species. Members noted that:

- Skippers are required to report all interactions with Silky Sharks;
- Silky Sharks are now a no take species in all Commonwealth fisheries and skippers must take all reasonable actions to prevent injury, harm or death to Silky Sharks;
- AFMA is now required to include Silky Sharks in its published protected species reporting; and
- There are no provisions within the EPBC Act to allow for the retention of Silky Sharks, even if brought to the boat dead they must be returned to the sea.

38. TTMAC acknowledged that shark management is the number 1 issue with environmental groups in relation to pelagic longline fisheries. Members noted that there is a difference between coastal sharks, which are showing signs of increasing, and oceanic sharks which research shows are declining.

4.3: E-Business update

39. TTMAC noted that over the last 5 years AFMA has introduced a range of electronic service options including online licensing services, electronic logbooks for reporting important fishery data, and electronic monitoring to offset observer requirements to minimise management costs, increase cost-effectiveness and provide greater control and flexibility for industry in the services they use. Members noted that currently 90% of all licensing transactions processed by AFMA can be completed through GoFish. Members noted that only 5 boats are currently using electronic logbooks. AFMA reiterated that any processing costs associated with paper logbooks have been removed from the levybase and are now invoiced quarterly to those who require these services at a cost of \$8.40/page. TTMAC noted that the South East Trawl Fishery Industry Association organised a group discount with one of the e-log providers.

40. An industry member asked AFMA if it was possible for industry to develop their own Excel spreadsheet that could be used as an alternative option to paper CDRs. This spreadsheet could be linked/exported to AFMA, making data entry much simpler for industry. AFMA agreed to discuss the proposal with the licensing section (**Action arising 8**).

4.4: Environment update

41. TTMAC noted the environment update provided by AFMA.

42. Members noted that the ETBF and WTBF both have a list of exempt native specimens (LENS) to allow export of product from the fishery for a period of five years. Members noted that the Department of Environment is looking at extending the fisheries with a current 5 year LENS to a 10 year exemption.

43. TTMAC noted that all interactions were observed on boats with e-monitoring. Members acknowledged that quarters 3 and 4 would most likely have more interactions.

44. Members noted that in the ETBF there have been five interactions with turtles, four were released alive and one was dead. Members further noted that there has been four interactions with birds all had a dead status.

45. In the WTBF, interactions were reported with three Leatherback turtles which were all released alive.

46. Industry questioned why Mako shark's need to be reported as a report written by Barry Bruce showed no evidence of any decline. TTMAC requested AFMA ask the Department of Environment about the progress of the Mako shark review (**Action arising 9**).

47. Mr Moore provided an update on the Marine Bioregional Planning (MBP) noting that the Commonwealth Marine Reserves Review is being conducted following the setting aside of the former Government's management plans that were scheduled to come into effect in July 2004. The review started in September 2014 and now is close to completion. The Chairs have finalised the reports and they will be released for public comment by the end of November with two rounds of public consultation planned. Mr Moore noted that the review clearly states that it will be about biodiversity conservation and not fisheries management.

4.5: Fishery Catch data – 2015/16 season to date

48. TTMAC noted the 2015/16 season catch of the quota species and Blue and Black Marlin in the ETBF and WTBF to date, as recorded in daily fishing logbooks and Catch Disposal Records. Members noted that it had been a good year for Albacore and that Blue and Black marlin catches were high in the ETBF. Members noted that logbook data presented was updated on 16 October 2015 however, there can be a delay of up to two weeks for CDRs and several months before logbook data entry is completed.

4.6: E-monitoring in the ETBF and WTBF

49. TTMAC noted since 1 July 2015 it has been compulsory for all full time vessels in the ETBF and WTBF to be fitted with e-monitoring. TTMAC noted that the program was running well but that there had been some issues with installs and maintenance. There has also been some issues with drives getting damaged in the post. To prevent drives getting damaged AFMA has now distributed boxes to use for posting (the boxes can fit more than one drive). AFMA noted that any issues that had arisen had been quickly followed up with phone calls and although some cameras still need to be fixed the reporting in logbooks was good. Members noted that full comparisons of data are not yet available but a preliminary analysis between logbook data from July 2014 and 2015 indicate industry are reporting more species on their logbooks and reporting of bycatch has more than doubled. Members noted that the boats will shortly start to get regular feedback on how each vessel is going.

50. TTMAC noted that TTRAG will be examining 6 months of data at their meeting in March 2015.

51. The environment member questioned whether Skipjack boats will have e-monitoring. AFMA responded that e-monitoring is currently not being used on purse seine vessels but that they will have human observers. Members noted that the 2 new boats entering the WTBF will have e-monitoring installed.

Agenda Item 5: Other business

5.1 Other Business

52. The AFMA member informed TTMAC that the Cost Recovery Impact Statement (CRIS) was currently being reviewed and that AFMA plans to release a paper and a comparison between the old and proposed new CRIS to the Commonwealth Fisheries Association by next week. AFMA agreed to send an email to TTMAC as soon as the new proposed CRIS is released for comment (**Action arising 10**). AFMA also agreed to send Mr Moore a copy of the current ETBF and WTBF budget (**Action arising 11**).

53. Members noted that it had been proposed to hold an industry meeting in the next few weeks at the Sydney airport. TTMAC noted that Jim Uttley more chaired a similar meeting earlier this year. Members further noted that Anthony Ciconte, Chair of the Commonwealth Fisheries Association, had expressed an interest in chairing the meeting this year. AFMA agreed to work with industry and Mr Moore to set a date before the end of 2015 (**Action arising 12**).

Agenda Item 6: Date and venue for next meeting

54. TTMAC agreed that the next meeting should be held on 27-28 April 2016 at the Sydney fish markets.

Meeting closed at 3.10pm

Catherine Barnett

TTMAC Chair, November 2015



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

ATTACHMENT A

Tropical Tuna Fisheries Management Advisory Committee (TTMAC) 13

QANTAS meeting rooms

Sydney Airport

4 November 2015 (commencing at 10:00am)

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 12
 - 1.5. Actions Arising from TTMAC 12
 - 1.6. Intersessional correspondence between TTMAC 12 and TTMAC 13
- 2. Background Information/Discussion Items**
 - 2.1. AFMA Management report on the ETBF and WTBF fisheries
 - 2.2. WCPFC update
 - 2.3. FFA annual meeting update
- 3. Consideration/Decision Items**
 - 3.1. ETBF Total Allowable Catch
 - 3.2. Fishery rule simplification options with e-monitoring
 - 3.3. Shark management in the WTBF
- 4. Other Information/Discussion Items**
 - 4.1. WTBF Total Allowable Catch
 - 4.2. E-Business Update
 - 4.3. Environment update
 - 4.4. Fishery Catch Data – 2015/16 Season to date
 - 4.5. E-monitoring in the ETBF and WTBF
- 5. Other Business**
- 6. Date and venue for next meeting**