



**Australian Government**

**Australian Fisheries Management Authority**



# **Tropical Tuna Management Advisory Committee (TTMAC)**

**MINUTES  
TTMAC 8  
5 JUNE 2013  
SYDNEY**



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

**5 JUNE 2013  
SYDNEY**

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

**1.1: Welcome and apologies**

1. TTMAC Chair, Ms Catherine Barnett, opened the meeting at 9.10 am and welcomed members and observers to the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of TTMAC. In particular, Ms Barnett welcomed the attendance of Mr Angelo Maiorana at his first TTMAC meeting.

*Apologies*

2. Apologies were received from the recreational and charter fishing member, Mr Bill Edwards, the Environment/conservation member, Mr Peter Trott and the industry invited participant, Mr Brian Jeffriess AO.

3. Participants at TTMAC 8 were:

Chair

Ms Catherine Barnett

Members

Mr Trent Timmiss (AFMA member)  
Dr Cathy Dichmont (research member)  
Mr Gary Heilmann (industry member)  
Mr Terry Romaro AO (industry member)  
Mr Paul Williams (industry member)  
Mr Joseph Basile (industry member)

Invited Participants

Mr Cathal Farrell (industry)  
Mr Angelo Maiorana (industry)  
Mr Grahame Williams  
(Recreational/Charter)

Ms Veronica Silberschneider  
(State government)

Executive Officer

Ms Sarah Kirkcaldie

Observers

*AFMA*  
Mr Steve Auld

Guests

*AMF*  
Dr Steve Kennelly<sup>1</sup>

1: attended for agenda item 4.2 only

**1.2: Adoption of agenda**

4. The agenda was adopted with no changes.

**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 and 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.

7. Members acknowledged that AFMA has members on the consultative groups such as Management Advisory Committees because of people's expertise in areas that are relevant to discussions.

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

<b>Member</b>	<b>Declared interests</b>
Catherine Barnett	Chair, South Australia Rock Lobster Advisory Council, Member Fisheries Council of SA, CEO Food SA, Member of Agribusiness Council (SA) and member Food Industry Innovation Precinct Board, no pecuniary interest in Tropical tuna fisheries
Trent Timmiss	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interest in Tropical Tuna Fisheries
Cathy Dichmont	CSIRO scientist, Stream leader managing 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, Chair TTRAG and Member of Harvest Strategy policy technical review

	group.
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. Works with company that has a consultancy with Aus Asia Group, Member of SPFRAG and invited participant SBTMAC.
Joseph Basile	Holder of ETBF boat SFR's , ETBF longline SFR's, minor line SFR
Paul Williams	ETBF boat SFR and ETBF longline SFR's, minor line SFR's and Commonwealth fish receiver permit, Member of TTRAG
Gary Heilmann	Director of companies that hold ETBF quota SFR's, ETBF boat SFR's, Fish receiver permit, Coral Sea Fishery permit and SESS boat SFR. Member of TTRAG.
Grahame Williams	Director Game Fishing Association of Australia Research and Development Ltd, Member of Botany Bay Game Fishing Corporation, NSW Game Fishing Association, Game Fishing Association of Australia and International Game Fishing Association. Member on advisory committee on the Commonwealth Policy on Fisheries Bycatch, Member on Advisory Committee ABARES project – recreational take of SBT and Member/Advisor NSW Game Fishing Association Executive Committee.
Sarah Kirkcaldie	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interest in Tropical Tuna fisheries
<b>Permanent observer/invited participant</b>	<b>Declared interests</b>
Cathal Farrell	Manager of fish receiving business.
Angelo Maiorana	SFR holder/owner/skipper. Operates two longline vessels in the East Coast Tuna Fishery and Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery. Holder of a fish receiver permit.
Veronica Silberschneider	Fisheries Manager, Fisheries NSW, no pecuniary interest in Tropical Tuna fisheries

Steve Auld	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interest in the Tropical Tuna fisheries

**1.4: Acceptance of minutes from TTMAC 7**

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

**1.5: Status of actions arising from TTMAC 7**

9. The Executive Officer outlined progress on the 15 action items identified at TTMAC 7 (Table 2).

**Table 2: Status of actions arising since TTMAC 7**

#	ACTION ARISING	STATUS
1	Write to Campbell Davies, Erica Starling and Geoff Binns thanking them for their longstanding contributions to MACs	Completed. Letter to the three previous members were sent out in December 2012
2	Complete report on conversion factors in the ETBF and provide the report to TTRAG for consideration	On-going. Members noted that different boats process fish differently and that there would need to be a conversion factor for trunked and for headed and gutted (H & G). It was agreed that this issue needs to be resolved before the next quota season. ( <b>Action Item 1</b> )
3	Provide TTMAC with the NPF harvest strategy	Completed. The NPF harvest strategy was emailed to Members on 23 November 2012.
4	Inform ETBF fishers of NSW review of baitfishing arrangements	On-going. A workshop has been held in early 2013 and AFMA is expecting NSW to release a statement soon.
5	Examine implications of setting TACCs over a longer time-frame	On-going. TTMAC noted that this links with the WCPFC process and moving towards a 3 year cycle. ( <b>Action Item 2</b> )
6	That an 8.5% level of observer coverage be achieved in the ETBF during the 2012/13 season	Completed. Members noted that currently 50 days short of 8.5% observer coverage (around 6-7 %). AFMA anticipate that the observer coverage will be achieved for the 2012/13 season. However, TTMAC noted that the observer coverage will be biased towards NSW because of the requirement to have observers in the SBT zone.
7	Conservation member to provide paper Going, going, gone to members	Completed. The paper was distributed on 22 January 2013.
8	AFMA CEO to write to DAFF to raise the issue of resource sharing with regards to Striped Marlin	Completed. AFMA sent a letter to DAFF in November 2012.

#	ACTION ARISING	STATUS
9	Mr Farrell to provide a report to TTMAC 8 on the use of J hooks in the ETBF	Completed. Mr Farrell informed the Committee that some members of the industry still want to use tuna hooks. To enable industry to still use tuna hooks and also to meet WCPFC requirements TTMAC agreed to put in a latitude line banning the use of tuna hooks North of 30°.
10	AFMA to make suggested changes to the 2013-14 Annual Research Statement and distribute to TTMAC for endorsement	Completed. The revised 2013-14 Annual Research Statement was sent out to members on 23 November 2012 for endorsement.
11	SBT zone working group to report to the next TTMAC meeting	Discussed under agenda item 4.1.
12	AFMA to make suggested changes to the Fish Aggregation Device (FAD) Management Plan and send out to TTMAC for endorsement	Completed. The revised FAD was sent out to members on 23 November 2012 for endorsement.
13	E-logs to be introduced in to the whole fishery from 1 July 2013	Discussed under agenda item 3.2.
14	AFMA to send an email highlighting some key points of the reviews on the Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy and Guidelines and Commonwealth Policy on Fisheries Bycatch	Completed. An email was sent to TTMAC on 23 November 2012.
15	Update of WTBF trip limits to be considered at the next TTMAC	Discussed under agenda item 2.1.

### **1.6: Correspondence/intersessional work arising between TTMAC7 and TTMAC8**

10. TTMAC noted that the following issues were addressed out-of-session since the previous meeting in November 2012:

- i. April 2013, AFMA sent an email to TTMAC seeking comments on the draft 2013-14 cost recovered budgets for the Eastern Tuna & Billfish, Western Tuna & Billfish and Skipjack Tuna fisheries;
- ii. March 2013, AFMA sent a letter to all MAC members regarding the quota administration policy;
- iii. February 2013, AFMA's 6 month levy acquittal - 1 July 2012 to 31 December 2013 - sent to TTMAC for information;
- iv. January 2013, Michael Egan, Chairman AFMA Commission, sent a letter to Catherine Barnett regarding the 2013-14 fishing season TACC for the ETBF;
- v. December 2012, TTMAC Chair sent letters to Campbell Davies, Erica Starling and Geoff Binns thanking them for their services as TTMAC members;
- vi. November 2012, AFMA sent, for information, the AFMA members comments on the Harvest Strategy Policy and Bycatch Policy reviews, a link to Northern Prawn Fishery (NPF) input Harvest Strategy and a link to the draft NPF output Harvest Strategy;
- vii. November 2012, AFMA sent the updated draft FAD Management Plan, the updated 2013-14 Draft Annual Research Statement and draft 2013 ETBF TACCs recommendations to TTMAC for comment; and
- viii. November 2012, AFMA Commission's decision regarding Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery TACCs for 2013-14 sent to TTMAC for information.

### **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 were just providing information reports.

#### **2.1: AFMA Management report on the ETBF and WTBF fisheries**

11. TTMAC noted that fishing in the ETBF is currently relatively quiet compared to previous years although there have been reported good catches in the Coral Sea through out the summer months.

12. Industry members noted that there has been an increase in Pacific tuna from islands being exported into Japan and that Fiji is also pushing into the US markets which are causing lower prices. It is anticipated that prices will go up again when the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) implemented the ban on Fish Aggregating Devices on 1 July.

13. Industry members also raised concerns regarding New Zealand swordfish loins being imported into Australia. In particular, industry highlighted that in New Zealand they use

carbon dioxide to retain fish colour but that this practice is banned for fish caught in Australia but not for imports.

14. The AFMA member informed TTMAC that the Western Australian Fisheries Minister has recently resigned and AFMA is hoping to shortly resume negotiations with WA on trip limits.

15. TTMAC noted that AFMA had attended the IOTC meeting in Mauritius. The meeting was productive with the coastal states appearing more cohesive. At the meeting it was agreed that purse seine operators could no longer intentionally set purse seine nets around whale sharks or cetaceans and that there was a ban on the taking of Oceanic Whitetip sharks. Members noted that the status of the swordfish stock was deemed acceptable although research showed that the stock in the area of the south west Indian ocean was showing signs for concern.

## **2.2: Forthcoming Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) meeting**

16. The AFMA member provided TTMAC with an update on the preparation for the forthcoming Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.

17. The Committee noted that there has been an increase in the number of purse seine days over the last 3 years and in particular from Papua New Guinea. These countries which have opened canneries are attempting to maximise sustainable yield through purse seining but will make it uneconomical for longliners. The Australian delegation is stressing maximising economical yield.

18. TTMAC noted that there is to be a workshop held in Japan in August to discuss measures to reduce Bigeye tuna catches. Members further noted that the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) will attempt to get a measure on restricting Albacore catch on the high seas. This measure has previously been rejected.

19. TTMAC noted that the Chinese fleet is increasing rapidly in the South Pacific. The fleet are using -60 C freezer boats with product going to Japan. Members further noted that the Solomon Islands now have a direct flight going to Japan and are improving marketing employing 1600 people in a cannery.

20. Members noted that the WCPFC meeting is being held in Cairns in December and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) are encouraging industry members to attend as part of the Australian delegation.

## **Agenda Item 3: Consideration/Decision Items**

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

Paul Williams: agenda items 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 & 3.7

Terry Romaro: agenda item 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6 & 3.7

Gary Heilmann: agenda items 3.1, 3.3 & 3.7

Joe Basile: agenda items 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 & 3.7

Angelo Maiorana: agenda items 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 & 3.7

Cathy Dichmont: agenda item 3.1

Grahame Williams: agenda item 3.1

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

In line with the requirements as a MAC member who has declared an interest 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.

### **3.1: Application of ETBF Harvest Strategy**

21. TTMAC noted that, following recommendations from the AFMA Commission, the Tropical Tuna RAG (TTRAG) held a workshop in March 2013 to investigate and review the basis for setting Total Allowable Commercial Catches (TACCs) in the ETBF. TTMAC had lengthy discussions on the outcomes from the workshop and agreed to the following recommendations:

#### **Broadbill Swordfish**

22. TTMAC recommended that TTRAG should apply the Harvest Strategy (HS) and continue using it for TACC setting. TTMAC noted that the application of the HS would be unable to achieve its objectives if reductions to the Australian catch were offset by increases in catch by other countries.

### **Striped Marlin**

23. TTMAC recommend that TTRAG should apply the Harvest Strategy and produce a Recommended Biological Commercial Catch (RBCC). TTMAC agreed that the application of the Harvest Strategy would be unable to achieve its objectives if reductions to the commercial catch were offset by increases in catches by other sectors or countries. TTMAC agreed with TTRAG that the use of the Harvest Strategy to set the RBCC should be reviewed if the ETBF proportion of the fishing mortality is significantly reduced.

24. TTMAC also recommended that resource sharing arrangements for Striped Marlin should be pursued.

### **Albacore**

25. TTMAC agreed with TTRAG that the Harvest Strategy should not be applied given the small proportion of catch and recommended that TTRAG not produce an RBCC for Albacore Tuna.

### **Yellowfin Tuna and Bigeye Tuna**

26. TTMAC agreed with TTRAG that the Harvest Strategy should not apply to either Yellowfin Tuna or Bigeye Tuna given the relatively small share of the catches of these species within Region 5. TTMAC supported TTRAG summarising information from Region 5 on the current stock status, approximate sustainable catch, and recent and historical Australian share of the regional catch.

27. Some industry members highlighted that as there are substantial fluctuations in availability of these species to the Australian industry, that it was logical that the Australian TAC be set at the highest level allowed in the WCP agreement (eg 2,000 tonnes for Bigeye).

### **3.2: Consideration of E-logs**

28. TTMAC noted that at TTMAC 7 members agreed to the compulsory use of E-logs as of 1 July 2013 for longline SFR concession holders in the ETBF and WTBF.

29. Members noted that the e-log software that meets the AFMA approved schema is available for purchase from two providers: Catchlog and Olrac. AFMA agreed to distribute a package of information regarding e-log providers in the next few weeks (**Action Item 3**).

30. Members further noted that AFMA is moving to a fee for service model for paper logbooks which will involve operators being charged directly for the cost of logbooks based on their level of usage. AFMA informed members that industry would get invoiced every quarter for paper logbook usage at a rate of \$8.40 per fishing day. The MAC noted that this would replace the need to make e-logs compulsory as it would allow operators to make individual savings by adopting new technology.

31. The AFMA member highlighted that AFMA was also investigating the possibility of moving to electronic catch disposal records (e-CDRs).

<b>Action Item 3:</b> AFMA to distribute a package of information on e-log providers.
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### **3.3: TAP review**

32. TTMAC noted that the seabird Threat Abatement Plan (TAP) was due for review by the Australian Antarctic Division (AAD) in 2011 but there have been delays. Members noted that

in late 2012 AFMA, DAFF, conservation groups and Mr Joe Basile met with AAD to discuss revisions to the TAP. Several suggestions and refinements to the existing TAP were suggested including simplifying observer coverage requirements and giving industry more flexibility to trial and implement bird mitigation devices. TTMAC noted that AAD then produced a draft revised TAP for Government agency comment in early 2013. AFMA submitted a response stating that the agreements reached at the meeting in 2012 were not reflected in the draft proposed to be released for public comment.

33. TTMAC noted that AFMA will be meeting again with AAD next week and it is expected that a revised TAP will then be released for a public consultation period of 3 months.

34. Members agreed to form a TAP sub-committee consisting of Mr Angelo Maiorana, Mr Joe Basile and Mr Trent Timmiss to consider the draft seabird TAP once released and provide a draft response for the MAC to consider out of session (Action Item 4).

35. Members noted that seabird catch rates had decreased significantly in recent years.

<b>Action Item 4:</b> TAP sub-committee to meet and consider the draft seabird TAP.
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### **3.4: Western Tuna & Western Skipjack closure direction**

36. Members noted that jurisdictional arrangements in place off the Northwest coast of Australia are complex. AFMA informed the Committee that there is a range of instruments that have been agreed to which establish the maritime boundaries between Australia and Indonesia, and although not all of these are in force, Australia acts consistently with them.

37. TTMAC noted that AFMA management will be implementing a closure Direction to fishing by Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery and Western Skipjack Fishery operators for two areas which are within the Australian proclaimed exclusive economic zone but beyond Australia's fisheries jurisdiction pursuant to arrangements with Indonesia.

38. Members noted that there had been no fishing activity in either area until recently.

### **3.5: Bluefin tuna in the Western Tuna Fishery**

39. TTMAC discussed the distribution of the three Bluefin Tuna and noted that:

- a. the distribution of the Atlantic Bluefin Tuna is the Atlantic Ocean. It is highly unlikely that any Atlantic Bluefin Tuna will be caught in the Indian Ocean as they would need to swim around the South of the African continent;
- b. the distribution of the Pacific Bluefin Tuna is the Pacific Ocean, predominantly the northern part, however, some individuals move down the east coast of Australia. It is highly unlikely that any Pacific Bluefin Tuna will be caught on the Indian Ocean, as they would need to swim around the South of Australia or through the Indonesian Archipelago;
- c. the distribution of Southern Bluefin Tuna is the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific: temperate and cold seas, mainly between 30°S and 50°S, to nearly 60°S. During spawning, large fish migrate to tropical seas, off the north-western coast of Australia, up to 10°S

40. Based on the known distribution and migration patterns, TTMAC noted that only Bluefin Tuna likely to be caught in the Indian Ocean is Southern Bluefin Tuna.

41. TTMAC agreed that the WTBF Statutory Fishing Rights conditions should be amended to the following:

- a. All Bluefin Tuna caught in the WTBF are deemed as Southern Bluefin Tuna unless the operator:
  - i. Obtains genetic testing showing that the fish in question is a Northern Bluefin Tuna (AFMA will then deem the fish as Pacific Bluefin Tuna); or
  - ii. Export the fish to the Tokyo Metropolitan Central Wholesale Market (Tsukiji market), documented as a Southern Bluefin Tuna (SBT) on the CDRs; and then provide the documentation from the Tsukiji market showing that the fish in question was sold as a Pacific Bluefin Tuna (AFMA will then deem the fish as Pacific Bluefin Tuna and reverse the CDR and SBT quota decrementation).

42. Members noted that these conditions are consistent with the conditions imposed on ETBF operators.

43. Mr Farrell stated that he can get information on how to tell the difference between Southern Bluefin Tuna and Northern Bluefin Tuna and he will distribute this to all members. **(Action Item 5)**

**Action Item 5:** Mr Farrell to distribute information on how to tell the difference between SBT and NBT.

### **3.6: Outcomes of the IOTC meeting**

44. AFMA provided an update to TTMAC on the outcomes from the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) meeting held in Mauritius in May 2013.

45. TTMAC recommended that the following IOTC resolutions be implemented by varying the WTBF Boat SFR conditions and Western Skipjack Tuna Fishery permits to:

- i) Prohibit vessels from intentionally setting a purse seine net around cetaceans or whale sharks. The resolutions further require that if cetaceans or whale sharks are inadvertently encircled in a purse seine net that the master of the vessel take all reasonable steps to ensure the safe release of the cetaceans or whale sharks;
- ii) Ban the take and retention of Oceanic Whitetip Sharks; and
- iii) Require that all purse seine vessels retain on board and then land all Bigeye Tuna, Skipjack Tuna and Yellowfin Tuna caught except fish considered unfit for human consumptions.

### **3.7: 2013/14 Budget**

46. TTMAC noted that overall the draft 2013/14 ETBF budget has reduced by approximately \$152,000 due to a decrease in effort and more efficient use of AFMA services. The draft WTBF budget has increased by approximately \$30,000, mainly due to extra

observer days budgeted to cover the increase in effort in the Fishery. The Skipjack budget has decreased by approximately \$2,000 with most budget items unchanged.

47. Members noted the verbal report from the TTMAC budget sub-committee which met via teleconference on the 28th May 2013.

48. Members re-iterated the concerns expressed by the sub-committee regarding the cost of observers. The AFMA member noted that AFMA was discussing with the Commonwealth Fisheries Association the possibility of market testing observer services.

49. TTMAC noted that when the fisheries move to e-monitoring, AFMA will be examining all associated costs including vessel monitoring system costs. Members further noted that AFMA's cost reduction working group is looking at how to reduce overheads.

#### **Agenda Item 4: Other Information/Discussion Items**

Dr Cathy Dichmont, Mr Terry Romaro, Mr Joe Basile and Mr Angelo Maiorana declared their interest under agenda item 4.

In line with the requirements as a MAC member who has declared an interest under an agenda item, Dr Dichmont left the room. The remaining members of TTMAC agreed that Dr Dichmont should be allowed to return for all discussions and recommendations made under Agenda item 4.

In line with the requirements as a MAC member who has declared an interest 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 4.

In line with the requirements as a MAC 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 4.

In line with the requirements as a MAC member who has declared an interest 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 4.

#### **4.1: SBT zones in the ETBF**

50. Members noted that at TTMAC 7 members agreed to establish a working group to formally review arrangements for managing interactions with SBT. The purpose of the proposed review was to assess the efficiency and cost effectiveness of existing SBT zone management arrangements and identify recommendations for implementation in SBT season which commences off southern NSW in May to June 2013.

51. The working group met in January 2013 in Sydney and included members from industry and AFMA. A brief paper detailing the options discussed at the meeting was drafted and sent to participants. TTMAC noted that after receiving feedback and re-drafting the options paper a more detailed paper was circulated for comment. Members further noted that AFMA consulted with SEWPac and DAFF on the proposed changes in the management arrangements as they relate to the Wildlife Trade Operation approval of the SBT Fishery.

52. The AFMA member stated that after consideration of all comments and advice AFMA management finalised the management arrangements and communicated them to all ETBF concession holders.

53. TTMAC noted that the changes to this season's management arrangement included:

- b. Only 1 SBT quota SFR is required to access to the SBT zones, however, 100% observer coverage is required in both the core and buffer zones for vessels with between 1 SFR and 499kg.
- c. The '>5,000kg SBT quota holding' and '>10,000kg SBT quota holding' categories of the sliding scale of observer coverage required have been combined.
- d. AFMA may accept sharing of SBT quota for vessels fishing to the one company for the purposes of determining the amount of observer coverage required by those company vessels. Operators wishing to partake in quota sharing arrangements must apply to AFMA in writing prior to the implementation of the Zones.

54. Industry expressed disappointment at the new arrangements as they didn't believe they meet the objective of the review to simplify conditions and reduce costs. The AFMA member stated that the new arrangements were significantly simpler than compared to 5 years ago and that they balanced the trade-off between risk to the SBT stock and cost efficiency.

#### **4.2: Electronic monitoring presentation**

55. Members noted that AFMA had conducted an e-monitoring trial in the ETBF and the results indicated that e-monitoring had the potential to provide better quality data on the fishery at a lower cost than the current human observer program. Based on the results of the trial, the AFMA Commission agreed that e-monitoring would be used in the ETBF, shark gillnet and auto longline fisheries and selected Archipelago Marine Research (AMR) as the preferred provider.

56. TTMAC noted the presentation from Dr Steve Kennelly, AMR, on the proposed work plan for e-monitoring.

57. Members raised queries and wanted to ensure the cost savings were able to be achieved and in particular wanted to clarify the life span of the units. The AFMA member re-iterated that e-monitoring would not be forced on to the Fishery by the Commission unless it offers a cost saving benefit to the Fishery.

#### **4.3: Environment update**

58. TTMAC noted that update provided by the AFMA environment section which included a strategic assessment update, protected species update and Marine Bioregional planning update.

59. Members noted that the ETBF Wildlife Trade Operation (WTO) which allows export of the product from the fishery is due to expire on 26 February 2014 and AFMA will commence drafting the new WTO in the next month. The WTBF is not due to expire until 1 December 2014 and AFMA will commence drafting WTO later in the year.

60. TTMAC further noted that the 16th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) agreed to the listing of the following shark species – porbeagle shark, scalloped hammerhead shark, oceanic white tip shark, great hammerhead, smooth hammerhead and manta ray species.

61. The environment/conservation member raised concerns through the executive officer regarding an apparent increase in recent catches short fin mako sharks. The AFMA member noted that the increase in catches were due to improved reporting in logbooks. TTMAC noted that current management measures for sharks in this fishery are adequate.

#### **4.4: Fishery Catch Data – 2013/13 Season to date**

62. TTMAC noted the updated catch estimates by species for the ETBF and WTBF sourced from both logbook and catch disposal record (CDRs) data contained in the agenda paper.

63. The AFMA member explained that there was a lag in data in 2013 due to priority being placed on data entry in other fisheries at AFMA for the period leading up to the meeting.

64. Members further noted the blue and black marlin catches in the ETBF as recorded in daily fishing logbooks.

#### **Agenda Item 5: Other Items**

Dr Cathy Dichmont and Mr Grahame Williams declared their interest under agenda item 5.1.

In line with the requirements as a MAC member who has declared an interest under an agenda item, Dr Dichmont left the room. The remaining members of TTMAC agreed that Dr Dichmont should be allowed to return for all discussions and recommendations made under Agenda item 5.1.

In line with the requirements as a MAC member who has declared an interest 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 5.1.

#### **5.1: Review of the Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy and Guidelines and Commonwealth Policy on Fisheries Bycatch**

65. TTMAC noted the update provided by the AFMA member on the review of the Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy and guidelines and the Commonwealth Policy on Fisheries Bycatch being conducted by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

66. The AFMA member noted that the three main issues for the Tropical Tuna fisheries are discarding of commercial species, shared stocks (Striped marlin) and managing byproduct (and data poor stocks).

67. Members noted that the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry now has to decide whether to amend the Harvest Strategy policy and Bycatch policy. If the Minister makes a new policy statement it is expected to be subject to further public consultation.

#### **5.2: Other business**

No other business items were raised.

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

68. TTMAC agreed, subject to member availability, to next meet on 10-11th October 2013 at the Sydney Fish Markets.

**Catherine Barnett**

TTMAC Chair

July 2013



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

# Tropical Tuna Fisheries Management Advisory Committee (TTMAC) 8

Sydney Fish Markets, Pyrmont  
5 June 2013 (commencing at 9:00am)

## FINAL 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 7
- 1.5. Actions Arising from TTMAC 7
- 1.6. Correspondence between TTMAC 7 and TTMAC 8

### 2. Background Information/Discussion Items

- 2.1. AFMA Management report on the ETBF and WTBF fisheries
- 2.2. Forthcoming WCPFC Commission Meeting

### 3. Consideration/Decision Items

- 3.1 Application of ETBF Harvest Strategy
- 3.2 Consideration of E-logs
- 3.3 TAP review
- 3.4 Western Tuna & Western Skipjack closure direction
- 3.5 Bluefin tuna in the Western Tuna Fishery
- 3.6 Outcomes of the IOTC meeting
- 3.7 2013/14 Budget

### 4. Other Information/Discussion Items

- 4.1. SBT zones in the ETBF
- 4.2. Electronic monitoring presentation
- 4.3. Environment update
- 4.4. Fishery Catch Data – 2012/13 Season to date

### 5. Other Items

- 5.1. Review of the Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy policy and guidelines and the Commonwealth policy on Fisheries Bycatch

### 6. Date and venue for next meeting