



Small Pelagic Fishery Resource Assessment Group (SPFRAG) 18

Teleconference Minutes

Date: 20 and 23 June 2014
Venue: AFMA Canberra Office

Attendance

Name	Membership
Dr Sandy Morison	Interim Chair (appointment 20 June to 20 July 2014)
A/Prof Tim Ward	Scientific Member
Mr Andy Moore	Scientific Member
Mr Denis Brown	Industry Member
Mr Terry Romaro	Industry Member
Mr Gerry Geen	Industry Member
Mr Jon Bryan	Environment/Conservation Member
Mr Graham Pike	Recreational Member
Mr Steve Shanks	AFMA Member
Ms Kylie Tonon	Executive Officer

Minutes

Item No.	Discussion	Action Items / Rec's
1 Introduction and Apologies	The Interim Chair opened the meeting at 2:40pm. The RAG noted apologies from: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kirsty Davies (Chair)• Jeremy Lyle (Scientific Member)• John Stewart (NSW Invited Participant)• Grant Pullen (Tasmania Invited Participant)	
2 Adoption of Agenda	The SPFRAG adopted the draft annotated agenda (Attachment 1) with the addition of two extra items to be presented by A/Prof Tim Ward: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scientific Stakeholder Workshop• FRDC proposal.	
3 Declaration of interests	The RAG followed the conflict of interest declarations as outlined in the revised Fisheries Administration Paper 12 (FAP12). Both the interim RAG Chair and the AFMA member advised the RAG that the conflict of interest declarations made and the results of the procedures followed (RAG members determining if	Action Item 1: AFMA to clarify what happens if a member does not



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	<p>conflict of interest declarations made should exclude members from participation in agenda items) applied to all items on the agenda and that should RAG members subsequently consider they have a previously undeclared conflict of interest when items are being discussed they should declare these conflicts at this time.</p> <p>The RAG noted that the revised FAP 12 required all potential conflicts of interest to be declared, not just pecuniary interests. Mr Shanks explained the revised FAP 12 detailed that conflicts of interest extend to memberships of groups relevant to the fishery or projects or campaigns relevant to the fishery. The RAG expressed concerns that sufficient time had not been given to RAG members to familiarise themselves with the conflict of interest declaration requirements of the revised FAP 12. Given that the FAP 12 was revised after members had signed up to the RAG, it was suggested that members needed time to review the policy changes and consider if they were still comfortable being a RAG member under the new FAP 12 provisions.</p> <p>A list of declared conflicts of interest and the revised FAP 12 were circulated prior to the meeting. AFMA, Scientific members and the Chair advised the conference that their conflicts of interest were as listed in Attachment 2.</p> <p>Mr Bryan extended his declared conflicts of interest to include TARFish, other fisheries advisory bodies and the Stop the Supertrawler campaign. The RAG considered the declarations provided by Mr Bryan while he left the conference. Some industry members raised concerns about the ability of Mr Bryan to be involved in forming recommendations, due to the conflicts of interest he had declared. However, the RAG agreed that Mr Bryan should be involved in all the matters detailed on the agenda and were very grateful to Jon for declaring his broader interests.</p> <p>The RAG also considered Mr Pike's conflict of interest declarations while he removed himself from the teleconference. Although the RAG was comfortable with Mr Pike's participation in the teleconference, industry members advised they would like to see Mr Pike's recreational sector affiliations listed as conflicts of interest. The AFMA member advised, as explained at previous RAG meetings that it is the responsibility of each member to determine and disclose their conflicts of interest. The RAG sought clarification from AFMA on what happens if interests are not declared. The AFMA member agreed to take this question on notice and respond to the RAG out of session.</p> <p>Mr Brown also clarified his existing declaration in that he has holdings in the NSW state purse seine fishery and ocean haul fishery. While Mr Brown excused himself from the meeting the RAG agreed they were comfortable with Mr Brown's participation in all the items listed on the agenda.</p>	<p>declare an interest.</p>



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	<p>Mr Romaro declared he was no longer a consultant for AusAsia Pacific but the remainder of his conflict of interest declarations remained the same. In his absence the RAG agreed that Mr Romaro should participate in all the agenda items.</p> <p>Mr Geen had no additional conflict of interest declarations to add to the list provided in Attachment 2. While Mr Geen left the teleconference the RAG discussed his interests and agreed that he should participate in all the agenda items</p> <p>A list of the full conflicts of interest declarations made by SPFRAG for the teleconference is provided in Attachment 2.</p>	
<p>4 Additional Management Strategy Evaluation runs</p>	<p>A/Prof Ward explained that at the last SPFRAG informal teleconference with Dr Tony Smith it was agreed the RAG would meet formally to discuss additional management simulations or runs to be undertaken by Dr Smith to inform management decision making. A/Prof Ward, in consultation with Dr Smith and Dr Penney sought the RAG's advice on undertaking the following additional runs.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Identify average exploitation rates (ER) at Tier 1 for each species that will maintain biomass above the target (with 50% probability). 2) Identify how these ERs would differ if surveys are conducted frequently (every two years) or infrequently (every 5 years). 3) Test whether ERs of half the Tier 1 level are suitable for these species at Tier 2. If not, identify what ERs for Tier 2 should/could be 4) Provide advice about how long species should remain at Tier 2 before moving to Tier 3 (Runs for Tier 3 should be done using the recommended time period). <p>A/Prof Ward stated that in run no. 1, the measure of 50% probability of reaching the target was consistent with the Commonwealth Harvest Strategy Policy guidelines.</p> <p>The RAG agreed with all the proposed runs except for run no. 4. Industry members objected to run no. 4 on the basis that the MSE could not effectively assess the risk at Tier 2. Industry's view was that by trying to do so, the model will presume a very high risk, which would not account for management actions taken at Tier 2 if the data shows a declining abundance. Industry members stated that the MSE modelled run times over a 50 year period, therefore if the stock is not likely to drop below the target reference point over a 50 year period, then run 4 is irrelevant.</p> <p>A scientific member suggested this scenario is not true for a species such as redbait, but noting industry's objection, recommended a subsequent run no. 5 stating 'What ER could a species stay at indefinitely with a 50% probability of not falling below the target'. The RAG broadly agreed with this extra run.</p>	<p>Action Item 2: A/Prof Ward to forward proposed runs to Dr Tony Smith</p>



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<p>5 Options for addressing localised depletion</p>	<p>The AFMA member introduced the paper. Before discussing the options an industry member asked AFMA about the qualifying Statutory Fishing Rights (SFRs) for management action. The AFMA member explained that once the RAG had reached agreement on measures to address localised depletion that should be further investigated, then information on any potential effects on SFRs would be provided.</p> <p>A/Prof Ward presented the management measures to address the risk of localised depletion outlined in his paper to the RAG. A/Prof Ward went on to explain that he did not advocate any specific option, but was supplying preliminary information on a range of options for the RAG's consideration.</p> <p>1) Conservative ERs</p> <p>A/Prof Ward explained that conservative ERs are already applied in the Harvest Strategy for the fishery and the FRDC project currently being undertaken by Dr Tony Smith is providing advice on ERs for target species under the Harvest Strategy based on the life history characteristics of different species. RAG members noted general support for this position. However the Environment member commented that Daily Egg Production Method (DEPM) surveys should be undertaken more frequently if the results of these surveys are to be used as the basis for determining the exploitation rate under the Harvest Strategy.</p> <p><i>Note: At this point of the meeting Mr Andy Moore advised he needed to leave the meeting. The interim Chair advised that with Mr Moore's departure there was no longer a quorum. As a result any information discussed following Mr Moore's departure could no longer be considered advice or information provided in a RAG forum. RAG members agreed that the meeting of the RAG with a quorum be reconvened on 23 June 2014. The Chair subsequently adjourned the meeting at 4:13pm on 20 June 2014. The meeting was reconvened at 1:12pm on 23 June 2014.</i></p> <p>2) Increased zoning and management</p> <p>A/Prof Ward explained that zoning could be implemented to reduce the risk of localised depletion.</p> <p>A/Prof Ward explained that this management measure potentially addressed two purposes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) reducing the risk of localised depletion; and 2) providing the capacity to segregate the fishery (in particular the western area) into areas where DEPM surveys are actually undertaken. <p>The RAG identified that the zoning lines may differ depending on whether they are implemented to address the risk of localised depletion or for stock assessment purposes. A/Prof Ward pointed out that if the management measure was applied for stock assessment purposes any lines on the water would aim to reflect the most common delineation of the stocks.</p>	<p>Action Item 3: AFMA and SARDI to write a paper that details how move on rules could apply in the SPF to reduce the risk of localised depletion.</p>



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	<p>The environment member suggested that it would be risky to set zones with limited data on stock movements. In addition, the environment member made the following comments regarding the localised depletion definition and performance measures, lack of research into the movement of target fish species within stocks, commitment to regular DEPM surveys and lack of information as to spatial and temporal closures. These points were circulated via email just before the meeting and can be found at Attachment 3.</p> <p>A/Prof Ward explained that research in other fisheries has illustrated zoning is actually an effective risk management strategy when there is limited data, and that the benefits can outweigh the risks.</p> <p>An industry member highlighted that CSIRO have already undertaken a lot of work in determining stock movement and their geographical location, and that the more immediate issue is around tractability and quality of assessments. Industry members also stated that zoning created clear inefficiencies and advised that zones should not be applied unless there are demonstrable benefits. .</p> <p>Another industry member suggested that, if zones are considered, the aggregating behavior of the stocks should also be taken into account. He provided an example of stocks north of Cape Howe exhibiting schooling behavior that is very different to the behavior of stocks south of Cape Howe.</p> <p>The AFMA member explained he supported zoning arrangements for stock assessment purposes, however he did not support zoning arrangements to address the risk of localised depletion and proposed that move on rules were a much more appropriate measure to address the risk of localised depletion.</p> <p>3) Spatial/temporal closures</p> <p>A/Prof Ward explained that spatial and temporal closures are most suited to protecting the effects of localised depletion on predatory species such as crested terns. He explained that these are different to highly migratory or central place foragers. He also explained that they could also be used to deal with bycatch/interaction rates at the same time.</p> <p>One industry member suggested that spatial or temporal closures (such as around breeding times) would be worth looking into.</p> <p>The environment member suggested that without details about locations and timeframes for possible spatial or temporal closures, the RAG could not make an informed assessment of</p>	

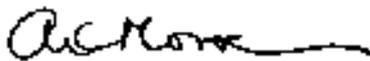


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	<p>the measure. He also suggested that there is not enough information on the effects of localised depletion on predator species such as Australian fur seals, dolphins and possibly little penguins.</p> <p>4) Move on rules</p> <p>A/Prof Ward explained that move on rules are used all around the world to stop intense fishing effort by limiting catch over area and time.</p> <p>The AFMA member summarised his views on all the measures outlined in A/Prof Ward's paper and presentation. The AFMA member's view was that due to the conservative ERs applied under the Harvest Strategy there was a low risk of localised depletion in the fishery. He explained that zoning should be applied only for scientific purposes to ensure the TACs set for species are relevant to the area of waters surveys are undertaken in, and that should people consider there is a risk of localised depletion then move on rules would be the most effective tool to manage this risk. Industry members and ABARES supported AFMA's view.</p> <p>The environment member made the point that the definition of localised depletion (Attachment 4) did not include performance indicators and therefore, made the effects impossible to measure. He suggested there needs to be more information about the movement of the stocks and how fast they recover from fishing activity, and that geographic features such as Bass Strait may be a barrier to fish movements to the point where recovery of local fish populations is hindered. He suggested that without information on movements and ongoing DEPM surveys, there is limited use in recommending management measures.</p> <p>In response, an industry member explained that industry's commitment still stands to fund ongoing DEPM surveys if the fishery was to operate.</p> <p>The environment and recreational member questioned whether it is possible to detect evidence of localised depletion with acoustic data. The scientific members and interim Chair explained that acoustic studies would be of limited use for monitoring localised depletion of SPF species as the time frames needed to get results are too long for such a mobile species.</p> <p>The AFMA member explained that given the views of the RAG it may be worth only investigating move on rules as a management measure to address the risk of localised depletion. The RAG noted that it may only be worth investigating the implementation of move on rules if effort was to increase. This position was noted, however, a number of members considered further information on how move on rules would be applied was</p>	



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	<p>necessary in order to further consider the measure.</p> <p>AFMA agreed to work with SARDI to write a paper that details how move on rules could apply in the SPF to reduce the risk of localised depletion. AFMA noted that any zoning arrangements to deal with surveys would be provided separately and not be included in any measures to address localised depletion. A scientific member suggested that possible move on provisions had already been largely agreed by the RAG at an earlier meeting. Some members did not consider this to be the case and it was agreed that as much information as possible would be provided in the paper to inform the RAG's advice on the matter.</p> <p>At 2:16pm one of the scientific members left the meeting. This meant that the SPFRAG no longer had a quorum and the meeting was closed. It was agreed that Agenda Item 6 on predator distributions had already been covered in the previous agenda item and no further discussion was needed. The RAG members were of the view that the matters under agenda item 5 had reached a conclusion and the action required to address the matter had been agreed (as per the action item for this subject matter) prior to the scientific member leaving the meeting.</p> <p>Informal discussion followed in relation to the Scientific Stakeholder Workshop and the FRDC proposal, but this discussion did not form part of the RAG meeting.</p>	

Signed (Chairperson):



A.K. (Sandy) Morison

Date:

10 July 2014

List of Attachments

- 1) SPFRAG 18 Annotated Agenda
- 2) SPFRAG 18 Declared conflicts of Interest
- 3) Email from the Environment Member to SPFRAG
- 4) Definition of localised depletion





Draft Annotated Agenda Small Pelagic Resource Assessment Group (SPFRAG) teleconference

Friday 20 June 2014 at 2:30pm (Eastern Standard Time)

1. Apologies

2. Adoption of Agenda

3. Conflict of interest procedures

4. Additional Management Strategy Evaluation runs by Dr Tony Smith

During the teleconference discussion of 11 June 2014 held to enable Dr Tony Smith to provide advice on the initial findings of his project RAG members raised the issue that scenarios under different rates of exploitation could be examined to inform any advice provided by the RAG concerning changes to the Harvest Strategy. During the teleconference RAG members agreed that runs (scenarios examined at different rates of exploitation) should firstly be agreed by the RAG prior to being forwarding to Dr Smith to undertake and report the results back to the RAG. As discussed at the teleconference of 11 June Doctors Penny and Ward have prepared the attached draft email incorporating runs to be undertaken by Dr Tony Smith for the RAGs consideration.

To assist RAG members in determining the runs or analysis undertaken Dr Smith has prepared the attached Draft MSE report for the consideration of RAG members. Dr Smith has indicated that the full draft project report will be provided to the RAG for consideration in the next few weeks. Please note that the MSE report is a draft document and should be treated as confidential (i.e. not to be circulated further).

5. Options for addressing localised depletion

At the SPFRAG meeting of 11-12 March 2014 it was agreed that a paper on options for addressing localised depletion would be prepared by SARDI. On 4 June 2014 the paper prepared by SARDI was circulated to RAG members. As the next in person meeting of the SPFRAG is not scheduled until 27 August 2014 a number of RAG members were of the view that measures for addressing localised depletion should be discussed sooner rather than later to ensure the matter can be progressed as quickly as possible.

Attached is the localised depletion management options paper prepared by SARDI. In order to structure the discussion Dr Ward will describe each of the options in the



paper (Increased zoning for assessment and management, Spatial/temporal closures to fishing and Move on rules). For each of these options members should consider their relevance and the technical information they need in order to consider these options.

It has also been noted by Dr Ward that the management options paper prepared is an initial go at identifying and describing the options and further work may be required to refine them.

6. Predator distribution in the SPF

At the SPFRAG meeting in November 2013 an action item was for 'AFMA and ABARES to compile information about abundance of predator species to inform future RBC discussions'. At the March 2014 SPFRAG meeting this action item was refined and incorporated into the need to identify the location of predator species.

The understanding at the March 2014 meeting was that the intent of identifying the location of prey species, seasonally and/ or permanently, was to provide advice on where closure arrangements should be applied. With these closure arrangements applied to address concerns surrounding the localised depletion of small pelagic species, which then impact on the abundance of species that prey on small pelagic species.

Since the March 2014 meeting there has been some discussion around whether the application of spatial or permanent closure arrangements relates to localised depletion or is to prevent interactions with Threatened, Endangered and Protected species (TEPs). If the purpose of implementing closure arrangements is to prevent interactions with TEPs then this is not a localised depletion issue and should be considered separately.



SPFRAG 18 Declared Conflicts of Interest

Participant	Membership	Interest declared
Sandy Morrison	Interim Chair until 21 July 2014	<p>Director of private consultancy business Morison Aquatic Sciences.</p> <p>Engaged by AFMA to be Chair of ShelfRAG and SlopeRAG, and scientific member of SESSFRAG and SEMAC.</p> <p>Contracted by government departments, non-government agencies and companies for a range of fishery related matters including research, MSC certification and meeting facilitation.</p> <p>No pecuniary or other interest in the SPF Fishery.</p>
Tim Ward	Scientific Member	<p>Role of science leader for the fisheries science program in SARDI.</p> <p>Conducts research for State fisheries and leads the Pelagic fisheries research team.</p> <p>Member of South Australia Sardine Fishery Industry research / management committee.</p>
Andy Moore	Scientific Member	<p>Employed by ABARES which has done, and may do in future, research under contract on small pelagic fish species. No pecuniary interest</p>
Graham Pike	Recreational Member	<p>No direct or indirect financial interest in the SPF.</p> <p>Concerned with the conservation and health of the natural resources on which recreational fishers and their recreational and charter fishing industries depend, particularly in the context of the RAG's advice and considerations in relation to the management of the SPF and of related marine ecosystems.</p>
Jon Bryan	Environment Member	<p>No direct or indirect pecuniary interest.</p> <p>Member of TARFish which has an interest in the supertrawler debate. Involved in the 'Stop the Supertrawler' campaign and expects to be part of this until issues surrounding localised depletion, ongoing SPF stock assessments and other related issues are resolved. Member of the Tasmanian Recreational Fisheries Advisory Committee and all other fisheries advisory committees in Tasmania. Does part time work for the Tasmanian Conservation Trust.</p>
Denis Brown	Industry Member	<p>Holder of SPF SFRs for Redbait, Blue Mackerel and Jack Mackerel in the Eastern and Western Zones, and Australian Sardine in the Eastern Zone.</p> <p>Director of corporate entities with holdings of SPF SFRs for Redbait, Blue Mackerel and Jack Mackerel in the Eastern and Western Zones, and Australian Sardine in the Eastern Zone; and Pelagic Fish Processors plant at Eden.</p> <p>Holds concessions in the NSW state purse seine fishery and ocean haul fishery.</p> <p>Peripheral involvement with research on small pelagic fisheries. Member of NSW Research Advisory Working Group and the NSW Ocean Haul Management Advisory Committee. Peripheral interest of financial benefits of activities in the SPF through quota holdings.</p>

Participant	Membership	Interest declared
Gerry Geen	Industry/economist Member	Director of Seafish Tasmania Pty Ltd that holds SPF SFRs for Jack Mackerel, Redbait and Blue Mackerel in the Eastern and Western Zones. Holds four Tasmanian purse-seine Jack Mackerel Permits; and four zone A purse seine permits. Director of Seafish Tasmania Pelagic Pty Ltd.
Terry Romaro	Industry Member	Director of a corporate entity with holdings of SPF SFRs for Redbait, Blue Mackerel and Jack Mackerel in the Eastern and Western Zone. Permit holder in the Western Australian Purse Seine Pilchard Fishery and the Coral Sea Trawl Fishery. Member of TTMAC and participant in SBTMAC.
Steve Shanks	AFMA Member	Works for AFMA, no financial interest
Kylie Tonon	Executive Officer	Works for AFMA, no financial interest



From: Bryan, Jon
Sent: Monday, 23 June 2014 12:13 PM
To: SHANKS, Steve; 'kirstyd@tpg.com.au'; 'trogan1@bigpond.net.au'; 'terry@shipagenciesaustralia.com.au'; 'ggeen@bigpond.net.au'; 'gofishoz@iprimus.com.au'; 'grant.pullen@dpipwe.tas.gov.au'; 'Anthony.Moore@daff.gov.au'; 'michael.thomas@mrms.com.au'; 'Jeremy.Lyle@utas.edu.au'; 'tim.ward@sa.gov.au'; 'john.stewart@dpi.nsw.gov.au'
Cc: TONON, Kylie; Sandy Morison (morison.aqsci@gmail.com)
Subject: Re: Reconvening of teleconference at 1pm on 23 June 2014 [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Steve and Kylie

I should be able to make the teleconference at 1 PM.

To save some time and avoid confusion I thought I would circulate some points I would like to make regarding the discussion topics on the agenda. These are listed below.

Regards
Jon Bryan
Tasmanian Conservation Trust

Comments for Consideration during SPFRAG teleconference 23 June 2014:

1. The definition of localised depletion lacks anything that can be quantified therefore there can be no performance measures - ie there is no way to measure success or failure of measures that might be taken to avoid the problem of localised depletion. If something can't be measured, it impossible to manage it.
2. There is no new research or other information on the movement of target fish species within stocks. There is therefore no way to predict how long it will take for local fish populations to recover from fishing. There is also no way to assess if Bass Straight or other geographic/oceanographic features are a barrier to fish movements to the point where recovery of local fish populations is hindered.
3. There is still no long term commitment – as part of the formal SPF Harvest Strategy - to continuing, regular fixed term DEPM surveys that would underpin conservative exploitation rates. Even if the two small pelagic fishery failures that have occurred in Tasmania during the past 25 years (that is surface schools of jack mackerel and more recently, redbait in the small pelagic fishery, and does not include the barracouta fishery) were not related to fishing, these failures indicate that variability of stocks and, presumably, environmental factors, make it difficult to predict stock status into the future. It would also seem to be anti-scientific and foolhardy to rely on old stock assessments.
4. Spatial and temporal closures are proposed, but without actual details about locations and timeframes for these it is impossible to make any proper assessment. It should also be noted that #2 above means that it may be impossible to justify these on the basis of scientific evidence.



Small Pelagic Fishery Localised Depletion Working Definition

For the purpose of managing the Small Pelagic Fishery, localised depletion is defined as: a persistent reduction in fish abundance in a limited area, caused by fishing activity, over spatial and temporal scales that causes a negative impact on predatory species and/or other fisheries.

Explanatory notes:

- *The risk of localised depletion is highest for target species with low mobility (e.g. abalone) and lowest for highly mobile species (e.g. pelagic fish). Predatory species with limited foraging areas, especially central place foragers, are most likely to be impacted by localised depletion. Localised depletion is less relevant to highly migratory species or species with large foraging areas.*
- *Geographical barriers (headlands, straits) can increase the likelihood of localised depletion by limiting movement rates.*
- *Localised depletion is not a reduction in the overall range of a target species due to fishing down or over-fishing the stock. Localised depletion is not a reduction in stock abundance due to the natural movement or population size of target species.*
- *User conflict issues that do not arise from localised depletion should be considered and resolved separately from any user conflict issues arising as a result of the identification of localised depletion occurring.*
- *The definition of localised depletion has been developed in the context of the management of the Small Pelagic Fishery and the potential impacts localised depletion has on predators and catches in other fisheries (NB: Broader ecological implications of the Small Pelagic Fishery can be managed by applying low exploitation rates).*

