



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority



Sub-Antarctic Fisheries Management Advisory Committee (SouthMAC)

FINAL MINUTES
SOUTHMAC 35
18 MAY 2017

SUB-ANTARCTIC FISHERIES MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SouthMAC)

CHAIR: Mr Peter Neville

Date: 18 May 2017

Venue: CSIRO Marine Laboratories, Hobart

Attendance

Members

Mr Peter Neville, Chair
Mr Martin Exel, Industry Member
Mr Malcolm McNeill, Industry
Dr Malcolm Haddon, Science
Mr Jon Bryan, Conservation Member
Ms Jo Fisher, AFMA Member
Ms Sarah Kirkcaldie (Executive Officer)

Observers

Ms Amy Young, Australian Antarctic Division
Mr Rhys Arangio, Industry
Mr Trent Timmiss, AFMA*
Dr Mariana Sporcic, CSIRO^
Dr Cathy Bulman, CSIRO^

*for agenda items 1- 8 & 13

^ for agenda item 15 only

Introduction

The thirty fifth meeting of the Sub-Antarctic Fisheries Management Advisory Committee (SouthMAC 35) was held in Hobart on 18 May 2017.

The key items on the agenda were:

- assessment of the Management Plans;
- lost longline gear in the Heard Island and McDonald islands Fishery (HIMIF);
- longline season extension periods in the HIMI Fishery;
- 25.5% minimum quota holding for trawl access in HIMIF; and
- the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) New and Exploratory Fisheries 2016/17 expression of interests.

Agenda item 1 - Preliminaries

SouthMAC 35 was opened at 9.05 am on 18 May 2017 by the Chair, Mr Peter Neville.

Mr Neville welcomed the attendance of members, as well as the following observers; Mr Rhys Arangio (Austral Fisheries Pty Ltd), Ms Amy Young (Australian Antarctic Division), Mr Trent Timmiss (AFMA), Dr Mariana Sporcic (CSIRO) and Dr Cathy Bulman (CSIRO).

1.1 Declaration of interests

As outlined in the *Fisheries Administrations Act 1991* and AFMA Fisheries Management Paper No. 1, all members (but not permanent observers or invited participants) of SouthMAC must declare any pecuniary interest in the Fishery at the commencement of the meeting and also at the commencement of each agenda item. 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 making of a recommendation or remain absent from the meeting for the item.

Mr Neville declared that he was the Principal of a fisheries consulting business (P.J.Neville & Associates) and Chair of the Northern Territory Barramundi Fishery and Chair Fisheries Research and Development Corporation's (FRDC's) recreational fishing sub-program. Mr Neville advised that he has no pecuniary interest in the sub-Antarctic fisheries.

Mr Exel advised that he is the General Manager, Environment and Policy, Austral Fisheries Pty Ltd. Austral Fisheries P/L owns Statutory Fishing Rights (SFRs) in the Australian sub-Antarctic fisheries and waters under the jurisdiction of Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR). Mr Exel also declared that he is a Director of the Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS), member and public officer of the Commonwealth Fisheries Association (CFA), member of the South East Trawl Fishing Industry Association (SETFIA), Deputy Chair of the Great Australian Bight Industry Association, Member of Coral Sea Fishers Association and Board member of Coalition of Legal Toothfish Operators (COLTO). Mr Exel further advised that he is a member of the "National Benefit Assessment Panel" for the Marine National Facility (the RV Investigator). He was not aware of any investigation or prosecution action by AFMA against his Company or of any legal action taken by his Company against AFMA.

Mr McNeill advised he is the Managing Director of Australian Longline P/L which holds various fishing rights in, and operates vessels in the sub-Antarctic fisheries and New and Exploratory fisheries under the jurisdiction of CCAMLR. Mr McNeill further advised he is a member on Sub-Antarctic Resource Assessment Group (SARAG), board member of the COLTO and member of the Executive Committee of Tasmanian Polar Network. Mr McNeill was not aware of any investigation or prosecution action by AFMA against his Company or of any legal action taken by his Company against AFMA.

Dr Haddon advised he is employed by CSIRO and is not undertaking specific research projects in relation to sub-Antarctic fisheries, although he does provide advice to other researchers in relation to stock assessments, particularly for the Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery (MITF). Dr Haddon is also a member on the Northern Prawn Fishery Resource Assessment Group, the Great Australian Bight Resource Assessment Group (GABRAG) and the scientific member on SARAG. Dr Haddon advised that he has no pecuniary interests in the sub-Antarctic fisheries.

Ms Amy Young advised that she is an employee of the AAD and her colleagues conduct the HIMI stock assessment. Ms Young attends international meetings related to Antarctic fisheries and has no pecuniary interest in Antarctic fisheries and her salary is not dependent on AAD, industry and other research collaborations.

Mr Jon Bryan advised he is a part-time employee of the Tasmanian Conservation Trust. Mr Bryan stated that he is a member on a number of Tasmanian fisheries advisory committees including recreational, scallop, abalone, crustacean and scalefish, board member for the

Tasmanian Association for Recreational Fishing (TARfish) and recreational diving clubs but has no pecuniary interest in Antarctic fisheries.

Ms Fisher advised she is employed by AFMA and is the Manager for Antarctic fisheries and has no pecuniary interest in the sub-Antarctic fisheries.

Ms Kirkcaldie advised she is employed by AFMA, is also the Executive Officer for SARAG and Southern Bluefin Tuna MAC and has no pecuniary interest in the sub-Antarctic fisheries.

Mr Trent Timmiss advised he is employed by AFMA and is the Senior Manager for Tuna and International fisheries and has no pecuniary interest in the sub-Antarctic fisheries.

Mr Arangio advised he is employed by Austral Fisheries P/L who hold SFRs in the Australian sub-Antarctic Fisheries. He is also the Secretary of COLTO. Mr Arangio is not aware of any investigation or prosecution action by AFMA against Austral Fisheries or of any legal action taken by Austral against AFMA.

Mr Exel, Mr McNeill and Mr Arangio declared their interest under all agenda items and left the room. The group then discussed whether the Industry members and Industry observer needed to leave the room for any agenda items; it was agreed that as their input was essential to the agenda items that they should remain in the meeting room for all discussions noting that if a situation arise where there may be a conflict they would be asked to leave the room.

1.2 Apologies

Apologies were received from Ms Eloise Carr.

1.3 Adoption of agenda

SouthMAC adopted the agenda with the addition of agenda item 19 b – draft Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy, Commonwealth Fisheries Bycatch Policy and National Plan of Action for seabirds harvest strategy (NPOA) (Attachment 1).

Agenda item 2 – Minutes from SouthMAC 34 and November teleconference

The draft minutes from SouthMAC 34 held on 10 February 2016 were circulated for comment on 3 March 2016. Comments were received from Mr Martin Exel, Mr Rhys Arangio and Ms Lihini Weragoda. These comments were incorporated and the minutes from SouthMAC 34 were finalised.

The draft minutes from the teleconference held on 8 November 2016 were circulated on 9 January 2017. Comments were received from Ms Carr, AAD. These comments were incorporated and the minutes from the November teleconference were finalised.

Members noted that the SouthMAC 35 minutes would be circulated as soon as possible and that members would be given two weeks to provide comments. The minutes will then be finalised and sent to the AFMA Commission.

Agenda item 3 – Action arising from SouthMAC 34

SouthMAC discussed the action arising from SouthMAC 34.

1	WG-FSA papers - AAD to provide SARAG with a list of all papers going to WG-FSA in 2016	Members noted that this paper was presented to SARAG 54 in September 2016.
2	National guidelines - Members to provide individual comments on the national guidelines to AFMA by 24 February 2016	SARAG members provided comments on the national guidelines by the due date.
3	Tag re-capture - CSIRO MITF stock assessment scientists to discuss the reduction of the number of days released to re-capture	The CSIRO members agreed to provide an update at the next meeting but members noted that the time between tag and recapture should be at least one season (Action arising 1).
4	MITF FAP - AFMA to circulate draft revised MITF FAP to members.	Members noted that the MITF FAP was circulated to members on 26 April 2016.
5	Tag rate - CSIRO to examine when it would be appropriate to reduce the current tag rate of two tags per tonne.	Members noted that this issue was discussed at SARAG 55 meeting on 16-17 May 2017. SARAG 55 agreed that, while reducing the tagging rate in the MITF to 1.5 tags per tonne would not significantly affect the stock assessment, it was beneficial to maintain the tagging rate at 2 tags per tonne. It was agreed at SARAG 55 that the tagging rate would not be reduced.
6	HIMI FAP - AFMA to circulate final HIMI FAP to members	Members noted that the HIMIF FAP was circulated to members on 26 April 2016.
7	Whale workshop - Industry to provide outcomes of whale depredation workshop to SARAG and SouthMAC	See below.
8	Undercatch/overcatch - Peter Neville to write to AFMA stating that SouthMAC recommended that the sub-	Members noted that SouthMAC comments had ⁴

	Antarctic undercatch and overcatch provisions stay the same	been provided to AFMA. In April 2016, AFMA released a final discussion paper for comment and individual members also provided comments on that paper. AFMA is currently finalising the outcomes of the review and it is scheduled to be discussed at the next Commission meeting.
--	---	---

Members noted that a 3 day COLTO workshop was held on whale depredation on 16-18 March 2016. Mr Arangio and Dr Welsford (AAD) attended with around 40-50 industry members from other countries as well as gear technologists and scientists. The workshop produced guidelines specifying the best practices regarding 'move on' provisions and a paper summarising the outcomes was submitted to CCAMLR in 2016. Industry noted that an Australian Research Council (ARC) grant was received for a four year project that will be studying sperm and killer whales. SouthMAC noted that the fisheries that will be studied are HIMI, Kerguelen, Crozet toothfish fisheries, and the Tasmanian Trevalla fishery, as well as four broader COLTO Member toothfish fisheries. The project will include the use of hydrophones, a semi-permanent acoustic mooring and accelerometers. Members noted that hydrophones will be used on each vessel in HIMIF to record acoustic signature. Industry is hoping it will explain why some fishing vessels attract whales while other vessels don't. SouthMAC noted that AAD has loaned a permanent acoustic mooring that will to be based for the next 6 months in HIMIF to listen to whales. In addition, accelerometers will be place on hooks and will be able to detect if a fish has bitten the hook and then determine if fish has been taken off the hook by a depredation event. Photo identification will also continue on vessels.

The following is an update on the action arising items from November 2016 teleconference.

Item	Action arising from November 2016 teleconference	Status
1	HIMI Patagonian Toothfish TAC- Industry requested that the AFMA process for setting the TAC be reviewed.	Members noted that AFMA is waiting for the completion of the independent assessment of the HIMIF toothfish stock assessment (discussed at Agenda Item 10) before making a decision. AFMA indicated that, depending on the outcomes of the review, the TAC could be set for two years but stated that bycatch limits would still be set annually in line with CCAMLR and therefore there would be no cost savings (Action arising 2).
2	HIMI FAP - AFMA to make suggested changes and distribute the revised HIMI FAP.	Members noted that the suggested changes were

		made and the revised FAP was distributed.
3	Dr Constable - Chair to write to Dr Constable and thank him for his commitment to management of sub-Antarctic fisheries at CCAMLR.	Members noted that a letter had been drafted and would be sent shortly.
4	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act approvals - industry members asked for clarification if the bycatch species such as grenadiers, rockcod and unicorn icefish were on the list of exempt native specimens.	Members noted that the list of exempt native species has been amended to allow export of all product, with the exception of protected species, from HIMI and MIT fisheries until 9 October 2026.

Agenda item 4 – Correspondence

SouthMAC noted that the following correspondence had been received between meetings:

- An email dated 3 March 2016 from Sarah Kirkcaldie seeking comments on the draft minutes from SouthMAC 34;
- An email dated 17 March 2016 from Jo Fisher seeking comments on a draft Direction Not to Engage in Fishing in the Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery;
- An email dated 23 March 2016 from Sarah Kirkcaldie attaching a letter from the AFMA Chairman to Peter Neville regarding the outcomes of the Commission’s consideration of the Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery total allowable catch for the 2016/17 and 2017/18 fishing years;
- An email dated 7 April 2017 from Sarah Kirkcaldie seeking initial comments on a draft discussion paper about undercatch and overcatch;
- An email dated 17 May 2016 from Sarah Kirkcaldie seeking comments on the draft 2016-17 cost recovered budget;
- An email dated 6 September 2016 from Sarah Kirkcaldie seeking individual comments on the Ecological Risk Management (ERM) Guide;
- An email dated 14 September 2016 from Sarah Kirkcaldie regarding AFMA collecting more information about gear and quota Statutory Fishing Right prices;
- An email dated 13 October 2016 from Sarah Kirkcaldie confirming the dates for the November SouthMAC teleconference;
- An email dated 26 October 2016 from Sarah Kirkcaldie changing the date of the November teleconference;
- An email dated 9 January 2017 from Sarah Kirkcaldie seeking comments on the draft minutes from the SouthMAC teleconference held on 8 November 2016;
- An email dated 9 March 2017 from Sarah Kirkcaldie seeking comments on the draft AFMA bycatch Strategy;
- An email dated 31 March 2017 from Sarah Kirkcaldie seeking comments on the draft 2017/18 budget for the Heard Island and McDonald islands and Macquarie Island Toothfish fisheries;
- An email dated 6 April 2017 from Jo Fisher reminding members when comments were due on the draft budgets;

- An email dated 27 April 2017 from Sarah Kirkcaldie seeking comments on the draft agenda for SouthMAC 35.

Agenda Item 5– Report on fishing operations

Mr McNeill, Mr Arangio and Mr Exel provided SouthMAC with verbal updates on fishing operations in the HIMIF, MITF and CCAMLR New and Exploratory fisheries.

Mr McNeill noted that during the 2016-17 season, commencing on 1 December 2016, Australia participated in CCAMLR Exploratory Fisheries in subareas 88.1, 88.2 and 58.4.1. In subarea 88.1 the ice retreated early and opened up an underwater seamount which resulted in very high catches and the quota was quickly caught. All the vessels fishing subarea 88.1 then moved across to 88.2 and the TAC was caught quickly there and the subarea was also closed. For mechanical reasons the second Australian vessel was not able to participate in CCAMLR Exploratory Fisheries in the 2016-17 season. Instead FV *Antarctic Discovery* also participated in subarea 58.4.1. Industry explained that the catch rates were average in that subarea but the bycatch limits for macrouids were nearly reached and the vessel made a decision to return to port due to low fuel level.

Mr McNeill further noted that the current catch rates at HIMIF were well below target. He noted that the weather had been a big factor this season with consistently worse weather than previous seasons. Lice have also been prevalent. Mr McNeill noted that their vessel had caught a bird for the first time in a number of years. The white chinnetted petrel was foul hooked on its wing at twilight and the vessel immediately moved further south to avoid seabirds.

Mr McNeill stated that they had one vessel operating in the MITF and they had also recorded very poor catch rates. The weather and lice had also been a problem at MITF.

SouthMAC noted that the camera's are working well on the *Corinthian Bay* and *Isla Eden* but there was a few problems on the *Atlas Cove*. Industry noted that they were using two different CTD's (conductivity, temperature, depth recorders) and that one type automatically uploads data profiles when it reaches the surface, while the other stores those data and can then be downloaded by the observer during the trip, for uploading after the observer returns to port.. Members noted that there will be an assessment at the end of the season to see which one works best.

Mr Arangio advised that the *Atlas Cove* started icefish fishing at the beginning of the 2016/17 season on 1 December 2016 and was getting good catches (around 20 tonnes/day). The vessel returned to port to unload and headed back down in late December/January where the catches were not as good. The Company decided to return to port and stayed there until returning to do the Random Stratified Trawl Survey (RSTS). SouthMAC noted that the RSTS had positive results but it took longer than usual to complete because of bad weather and the vessel had to use many reserve plots due to unfishable ground on the primary stations. The vessel caught the remainder of the Mackerel Icefish total allowable catch.

Mr Arangio stated that the *Corinthian Bay* and *Isla Eden* started longline fishing at the start of April and the *Atlas Cove* started on 20 April after the RSTS was completed. SouthMAC noted that the catches were slow with about 150g/hook which is similar to the catches mid last year.

Members noted that the *Isla Eden* and *Atlas Cove* had seen a few whales this season and they were finding it hard to lose them. Mr Arangio noted the *Corinthian Bay* was fishing near the other two vessels but wasn't having any issues with whales. A seabird was hooked when setting at night during the longline season extension on 29 April 2017.

SouthMAC noted that the *Antarctic Chieftain* recently picked up a small amount of gillnet in HIMIF. The skipper advised that the net was very clean and didn't appear to have been pulled

off seafloor as it wasn't snagged on anything. AFMA advised that compliance have photos and the observer will provide the netting to AFMA when the boat returns to port. Members noted industry's suggestion that the photos be sent to Sea Shepherd as the retrieved net may have been similar to net recovered by Sea Shepherd in 2015/16. .

Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery

Agenda item 6 – Toothfish stock assessment 2017

SouthMAC noted the following timetable for the 2017 MITF Toothfish stock assessment:

Mid 2017 – CSIRO finalises the MITF stock assessment, using data up to the end of fishing in 2016, with TAC scenarios for the 2018/19 and 2019/20 fishing years;

August/September 2017 – SARAG considers the MITF stock assessment;

November 2017 – SouthMAC meets via tele-conference to consider the MITF TAC recommendations from SARAG's August/September 2017 meeting;

November 2017 – AFMA Commission sets TAC for the 2018/19 and 2019/20 fishing years;

1 March 2018 – CSIRO delivers data analysis (ie. the requisite analyses of the data to decide as to whether the current TAC is to be maintained or otherwise) and assessment futures (ie. options relating to potentially moving the assessment from the Stock Synthesis platform to a longer term, and more suitable, alternative);

March 2018 – CSIRO expected to submit an Expression of Interest to the AFMA Research Committee, in order to secure funding for a stock assessment that will deliver TAC scenarios for the 2020/21 and 2021/22 fishing years;

1 May 2018 – CSIRO presents draft final report "Stock assessment and Management Strategy Evaluation for Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery 2017-18";

1 June 2018 – Final report;

Mid 2018 – SARAG meets to discuss CSIRO's data analysis and assessment futures.

Members noted that a confirmed timetable was useful and it was agreed that it should be circulated so that there was agreement as to when data will be provided. Members noted that a timetable for the HIMIF and CCAMLR New and Exploratory fisheries would also be valuable (**Action arising 3**).

Agenda item 7 – Assessment of Management Plan

SouthMAC noted that Section 7 (2) of the Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery Management Plan requires that:

AFMA and the MAC must, at least every 5 years, assess the effectiveness of the Management Plan including the measures taken to achieve the objectives of the Plan by reference to the performance criteria mentioned in subsection (1).

Members noted that an assessment of the management plan was now required and that AFMA had prepared a summary of the Management Plan objectives, measures and performance criteria.

Industry indicated that their only concern was the one bird limit in the MITF and requested a review of the species included in the list (Wandering albatross, Black-browed albatross, Grey Headed albatross, Grey petrel and Soft-plumaged petrel). AFMA noted that this was a condition on the Statutory Fishing Rights not part of the Management Plan and should be handled through the Threat Abatement Plan (TAP) process. Industry asked if an update could be provided at the next meeting on the bird population status (**Action arising 4**). The CSIRO member noted that they were currently working on estimating populations of Giant petrels.

The conservation member highlighted that expert advice was needed before any decision was made to reduce mitigation measures. AFMA stated that there was no plan to remove any mitigation measures but simply revisit the conservation status of the birds mentioned above. SouthMAC agreed that AFMA and AAD, who is responsible for the TAP, would discuss (**Action arising 5**).

SouthMAC supported the document as prepared by AFMA.

Agenda item 8 – Breakout rules

Members noted that last year AFMA management expressed concern that the MITF was moving rapidly from a yearly assessment that uses data from the previous fishing season, to a situation where the most recent data used in the assessment is two and then three years away from the fishing year. To alleviate concerns regarding the change in the stock assessment process, SARAG agreed to develop breakout rules.

SouthMAC noted that at their meeting the previous day SARAG agreed that, instead of prescribed breakout rules, an annual data summary would be more appropriate in a non-assessment year and should include the following information:

- tag recapture
- length frequency
- catch by area.

SouthMAC agreed that an annual data summary should be produced and noted that CSIRO will present the first data summary to SARAG in early 2018.

Heard Island and McDonald Islands Fishery

Agenda item 9 – Breakout rules

SouthMAC noted that after the low catch rates in the 2015/16 season, AAD agreed to compile a document that briefly summarised possible causes for the low catch rates, research that had been undertaken, outcomes and what was still to be looked at. This document was discussed at SARAG 55 and it was agreed that AAD would prepare a similar analysis at the completion of the 2016/17 season. SouthMAC noted that SARAG will then recommend any future research required.

Agenda item 10 – Toothfish stock assessment timeline for 2017

SouthMAC noted that following the October 2016 meeting of the AFMA Commission, where discussions included the HIMI Fishery and the importance of independent scientific advice, AFMA engaged consultant Dr Tony Smith to review the HIMI toothfish assessment. Terms of Reference were developed by AFMA, with input from AAD, and were provided to members.

SouthMAC noted that Dr Smith attended SARAG 55 and that Dr Smith's final report is expected to be completed by 31 May 2017. It was agreed at SARAG 55 to hold a teleconference on Wednesday 14 June 2017 to discuss the final report and provide advice on how best to address any recommendations from the report.

Agenda item 11 – Assessment of Management Plan

Members noted that similar to the Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery, SouthMAC and AFMA must also assess the effectiveness of the *Heard Island and McDonald Islands Fishery Management Plan 2002*.

Members provided comments on the AFMA prepared 'Assessment of the HIMI Management Plan'. Members noted that a performance criteria was needed under (n) managing fishing operations in the fishery in a way that implements relevant CCAMLR Conservation Measures and complies with relevant international agreements.

SouthMAC supported the document with minor amendments as prepared by AFMA.

Agenda item 12 - Season extension periods

SouthMAC noted that the five vessels listed below have all been granted access to the HIMI Fishery longline season extension periods 1 – 30 April 2017 and 15 September – 30 November 2017. Access to the season extension periods is conditional on that vessel demonstrating full compliance with Conservation Measure 25-02 in the 2015/16 fishing season.

Atlas Cove
Corinthian Bay
Isla Eden
Antarctic Chieftain
Antarctic Discovery

The AFMA member gave a summary of the current HIMI longline season extension period trial conditions and results. Members noted that in the post-extension period (1-14 November) and the trial post-season extension (15-30 November) over 500,000 hooks have been set (during day and/or night). However, in the trial pre-season extension period (1-14 April) less than 500,000 hooks have been set in daylight (with only 17,100 hooks set in that period in 2016 and only one boat daylight setting in 2017) so the trial hasn't been completed.

The AAD observer explained that the reason the trial pre-season extension period required 500,000 daylight hooks to be set was to test if the mitigation measures are effective when the birds are most likely to be caught. Industry noted that Austral Fisheries Pty Ltd only set gear at night but Australian Longline Pty Ltd set gear both day and night. Industry further noted that the current management strategies are effective and that when three birds were caught by two vessels last season, the vessels ceased longline immediately - as the three seabird limit applies cumulatively across all the season extension periods within each season.

SouthMAC supported the continuation of the trial and management strategies used, until all hook setting requirements are reached.

Agenda item 13 – 25.5% minimum quota holding for trawl access

SouthMAC noted that prior to 2012, the *Heard Island and McDonald Islands Fishery Management Plan* restricted the Fishery to three boats through a minimum quota holding of 25.5%. With more of the catch being taken with automatic longline the three boat limit became restrictive. The Plan was changed to remove the limit on the number of longline boats, but retain a limit on the number of trawlers through a Determination. This Determination was for three years and meant to be an interim measure until the Ecological Risk Assessment (ERA) was updated. To allow more time to discuss and consider all the implications of removing the 25.5% minimum quota holding AFMA annually implemented the Determination for a further two years.

The AFMA observer noted that it is current government policy to remove unnecessary regulatory burden on industry. AFMA looks at all regulations to see which ones could be removed to increase efficiency and the 25.5% minimum quota holding for trawl access was identified as one that could be removed. SouthMAC acknowledged that the issue of demersal trawling was contentious within CCAMLR and noted advice that some form of regulation on trawling, either restricting the amount of trawling that could occur or the area it could occur in, would be necessary. Given this advice, SouthMAC agreed that the current regulation restricting trawling to no more than three vessels was the most efficient form of regulation that meets the requirements of CCAMLR and continues to allow trawling. Industry members supported the continuation of the current regulation.

Mr Exel, Mr McNeill and Mr Arangio left the room and SouthMAC agreed to support maintaining the determination as it is currently the most efficient and effective regulation of controlling trawling. SouthMAC supported setting the determination for five years.

Agenda item 14 – Update on longline gear loss and mitigation

SouthMAC members noted the summary of gear loss in the sub-Antarctic fisheries over the last five years.

Members requested that in future, hooks set, gear loss and recovery be presented in a table with an overall net result reported (**Action arising 6**). For accuracy it was also agreed that the tables should state that Industry did not go fishing in CCAMLR Statistical sub-areas 88.1 or 88.2 during the 2015/16 season. Industry noted that some recovered gear can be re-used.

Industry members explained a number of reasons why gear loss had increased in recent years including fishing new areas, vessel issues and a skipper component. Industry noted that skippers were now more aware of the importance of not losing gear and also trying to recover gear if it is lost.

SouthMAC noted that AAD had written a paper on the amount of fish that may be caught on lost gear and acknowledged that this needs to be taken into consideration when doing a stock assessment.

Agenda item 15 – ERA/ERM

Members welcomed Cathy Bulman and Mariana Sporic from CSIRO to the meeting.

SouthMAC noted that Drs Bulman and Sporic have been working on finalising HIMIF ERA reports for the following three fishing methods:

- demersal longline
- demersal trawl
- midwater trawl

Members noted that SARAG had discussed the draft reports at its meeting on 16-17 May yesterday and SouthMAC noted that there needs to be consistency between the three reports.

Industry raised concerns regarding using the term ‘not assessed’ in the reports. Members noted that this meant that CSIRO had not assessed it, although other agencies have assessed it but it could be read by external readers that it has not been assessed at all.

AFMA agreed to provide CSIRO with gear loss and recovery figures for the assessed years for both trawl and longline (**Action arising 7**).

Members noted that for demersal trawl the ‘bycatch/byproduct’ ecological component had moved to a Level 2 analysis because Grey rockcod had scored a ‘moderate’ rating in the SCIA analysis. However, SARAG agreed, based on research, Grey rockcod should be scored as a ‘minor’ consequence, meaning that a Level 2 analysis would not be triggered for demersal trawl byproduct and bycatch species.

Members requested that a paragraph explaining what ‘communities’ are would be useful as some similar work refers to assemblies or foodwebs. Members noted that there was food web work being done at AAD that may over-lap with level 2 communities work but unfortunately the research is still underway so it can’t be cited.

SouthMAC noted that the HIMIF ERA’s are being finalised by CSIRO. The final documents will be provided to members (**Action arising 8**).

SouthMAC thanked Drs Bulman and Sporic for attending the meeting and for all their significant work.

CCAMLR New and Exploratory Fisheries

Agenda item 16 – Expressions of Interest for 2017/18 season

SouthMAC noted that AFMA released the AFMA-AAD Guide to CCAMLR New and Exploratory Fisheries on 2 February 2017. AFMA received an Expression of Interest and application from one company. The CCAMLR Inter-Departmental Committee and Consultative Forum met on 27 April 2017 and supported the application.

Members noted that CCAMLR member country Exploratory Fisheries Notifications are required to be submitted to the CCAMLR Secretariat by 1 June 2017. AAD, with input from AFMA and the applicants, will prepare the research components of the applications, prior to lodging a full proposal with the CCAMLR Secretariat.

Mr McNeill noted that Australian Longline Pty Ltd applied for four CCAMLR statistical areas 88.1, 88.2, 58.4.1 and 58.4.2 and planned to use two vessels to fish these areas. SouthMAC noted that industry will not know how the TAC for 2017/18 will be allocated in areas 58.4.1 and 58.4.2 until after CCAMLR, and sea ice will impact on fishing strategy and determine where the company will fish.

Members further noted that the impact of the Ross Sea Marine Protected Area is currently unknown but it may result in the northern area of 88.2 being opened up which has been previously closed.

Agenda item 17 – Ross Sea MPA update

SouthMAC noted that a workshop was held in Italy on 26-28 April 2017 to develop a research and monitoring plan for the Ross Sea region Marine Protected Area (MPA) which was adopted at CCAMLR 2016. The draft plan will be going to CCAMLR this year but members noted that there was no discussion regarding the impact of the MPA on surrounding fishing activity.

SouthMAC noted that Australia weren't able to attend although many other CCAMLR countries did. Australia informally provided input through UK colleagues who noted that the meeting was very science focused and concentrated on ensuring countries maintain research.

The AAD observer stated that there are several meetings between now and CCAMLR in October and members noted that, although not part of the formal agendas for these meetings, Australia will seek to meet with other member countries to discuss the impact of the proposed MPA on fishing with a view that it will be discussed at CCAMLR 2017.

Finance

Agenda item 18 – 2017/18 budget process

SouthMAC noted the draft AFMA budget for 2017/18 was released for comment on 31 March 2017. Members noted that compared to the 2016/17 budget, the HIMIF budget had decreased mainly due to a reduction in observer costs (under the new cost recovery impact statement observer costs are now 80% cost recovered and 20% government funded). The MITF budget has increased due to a significant research milestone payment being due next financial year.

Other

Agenda item 19 – Other business

Agenda item 19a – Update on US Marine Mammal Imports

SouthMAC noted that the United States has established import provisions that require harvesting nations to meet US standards for fisheries management with regard to interactions with marine mammals within the next 5 years. As part of this, the US sought information on each export fishery's recorded interactions with marine mammals and management measures to mitigate marine mammal interactions. AFMA submitted a one page document for each AFMA managed fishery to the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAWR). Members noted that DAWR will be coordinating a submission to the US National Marine

Fisheries Service (NMFS) and this information will be used by the NMFS to determine whether an export fishery is 'exempt' from the US Marine Mammal Rule.

Agenda item 19 b – Bycatch Policy, Harvest Strategy Policy and draft National Plan of Action for seabirds

SouthMAC noted that the DAWR is currently undertaking public consultation on the revised Commonwealth Fisheries Bycatch Policy, the Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy and the draft National Plan of Action for Seabirds (NPOA). MACs have been invited to provide comments to AFMA assist in developing a consistent position on key issues.

Fisheries Bycatch Policy

Members noted that the draft policy was first released in 2000 and reviewed in 2013. The new draft has a revised definition of bycatch to provide greater clarity on the distinction between bycatch and commercial species. The bycatch definition has changed from the broad scope of 'all non-targeted catch' to 'species that physically interact with fishing vessels and/or fishing gear and which are not usually kept by commercial fishers' and Bycatch also includes species protected under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

Members noted that ABARES is developing guidelines that will provide detailed practical guidance for the development and implementation of ecological risk management (ERM) and strategic plans across the diverse range of Commonwealth fisheries. They will also provide important contextual information to assist interpretation of the policy and support ERM/strategic plan development and implementation.

Harvest Strategy Policy

Members noted that the proposed changes to the Harvest Strategy Policy won't affect sub-Antarctic fisheries as CCAMLR is considered a regional fisheries management organisation even though it is a conservation organisation with the attributes of an RFMO.. SouthMAC noted that total allowable catches are set in accordance with CCAMLR conservation measures. Members noted that the new policy is an update on the 2007 policy.

National Plan of Action for Seabirds

SouthMAC noted that for the NPOA there will be no additional requirements for sub-Antarctic fisheries other than those already required under the Threat Abatement Plan for Commonwealth fisheries.

SouthMAC noted that individual member comments should be provided to AFMA by 31 May 2017 to enable AFMA to compile all the responses and consolidate key points made for a submission to the DAWR (**Action arising 9**). AFMA stated that members were welcome to make their own submission straight to DAWR.

Agenda item 20 - Next meeting

SouthMAC discussed holding the next SouthMAC meeting in conjunction with the Kerguelen Plateau Symposium. The Symposium has been set for the 13-15 November 2017 and SouthMAC discussed meeting for half a day on 16 November 2017, however this was to be confirmed with members out-of-session (**Action arising 10**) At the next meeting, SouthMAC will need to discuss SARAG and CCAMLR's consideration of the HIMI stock assessment.

The Chair closed the meeting at 12:50pm

Item	Action arising from SouthMAC 35	Action person
1	Tag re-capture - CSIRO stock assessment scientists to discuss the reduction of the number of days released to re-capture	CSIRO
2	HIMI Patagonian Toothfish TAC - Industry requested that the AFMA process for setting the TAC be reviewed.	AFMA
3	Stock assessment timetable - AFMA to produce a timetable for the MITF, HIMIF and CCAMLR New and Exploratory fisheries	AFMA
4	MITF Seabird status - Industry asked if update could be provided at the next meeting on the bird population status.	AAD
5	MITF one bird limit in the MITF - AFMA and AAD agreed to a discuss the species included in the one bird limit list (Wandering albatross, Black-browed albatross, Grey Headed albatross, Grey petrel and Soft-plumaged petrel).	AAD/AFMA
6	Gear loss and recovery paper - in future papers hooks set, gear loss and recovery be presented in a table with an overall net result reported	EO
7	HIMIF ERA - AFMA to provide gear loss and gear recovery data to CSIRO	AFMA
8	HIMIF ERA - Final ERA's for the HIMIF to be sent to members	AFMA
9	Harvest Strategy, Bycatch strategy and NPOA policies - individual members to provide comments on policies by 31 May 2017.	Members
10	SouthMAC 36 - Confirm SouthMAC meeting in Hobart on 16 November 2017.	AFMA

Sub-Antarctic Fisheries Management Advisory Committee (SouthMAC) - Meeting 35

Final Agenda

Thursday 18 May 2017

9.00 am – 3.00 pm

Cove Room - CSIRO Marine Laboratories

Castray Esplanade, Hobart

Introduction

- | | | | |
|----|--|-------|-----------------|
| 1. | Preliminaries | | |
| | 1.1 Declaration of interests | Chair | For Discussion |
| | 1.2 Apologies | AFMA | For Information |
| | 1.3 Adoption of Agenda | Chair | For Decision |
| 2. | Minutes from SouthMAC 34 and November teleconference | AFMA | For Information |
| 3. | Action Arising | AFMA | For Discussion |
| 4. | Correspondence | AFMA | For Discussion |
| 5. | Fishing operations update (HIMI, MITF, Exploratory) | All | For Information |

Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------|-------|-----------------|
| 6. | Toothfish stock assessment 2017 | AFMA | For Information |
| 7. | Assessment of Management Plan | AFMA | For Decision |
| 8. | Breakout rules | CSIRO | For Information |

Heard Island and McDonald Islands Fishery

- | | | | |
|-----|--|----------|-----------------|
| 9. | Breakout rules | CSIRO | For Information |
| 10. | Toothfish stock assessment timeline for 2017 | AFMA | For Information |
| 11. | Assessment of Management Plan | AFMA | For Decision |
| 12. | Season extension periods | AFMA&AAD | For Discussion |
| 13. | 25.5% minimum quota holding for trawl access | AFMA | For Information |
| 14. | Update on longline gear loss and mitigation | Industry | For Information |
| 15. | ERA/ERM | AFMA | For Discussion |

CCAMLR New and Exploratory Fisheries

- | | | | |
|-----|--|------|-----------------|
| 16. | Expressions of Interest for 2017/18 season | AFMA | For Discussion |
| 17. | Ross Sea MPA update | AAD | For Information |

Finance

18. 2017/18 budget process AFMA For Information

Other

19. Other Business

- a. Update on US Marine Mammal Imports AFMA For Information
- b. draft Commonwealth fisheries Harvest Strategy, Commonwealth Fisheries Bycatch Policy and National Plan of Action for seabirds harvest strategy (NPOA) AFMA For Discussion

20. Next Meeting Chair For Discussion