



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

**Tropical Tuna and Billfish Fisheries
Management Advisory Committee
TTMAC 18**

Meeting Minutes

17 April 2018

Holiday Inn Sydney

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1. Preliminaries

1.1. Welcome and Apologies

1. The Chair, Ms Catherine Sayer, opened the meeting at 8:30am and welcomed members, invited participants and observers to the 18th meeting of the Tropical Tuna Management Advisory Committee (TTMAC 18).
2. The following participants were in attendance at the meeting:

Table 1 Members, invited participants and invited observed in attendance at TTMAC 18

Members	
Ms Catherine Sayer	Chair
Mr Trent Timmiss	AFMA Member
Mr Terry Romaro OAM	Industry Member
Mr Pavo Walker	Industry Member
Mr Grahame A Williams OAM	Recreational/Charter Fishing Member
Invited Participants	
Dr Rich Hillary	Research Scientist (and TTRAG member, attended from agenda item 2.5)
Mr Gary Heilmann	Industry representative
Mr Paul Williams	Industry representative
Mr Ian Bladin	Recreational/Charter Fishing
Mr Phil Bolton	NSW State Government
Mr David Ellis	Tuna Australia
Mr Brian Jeffriess AM	Australian SBT Industry Association
Paul Lavalle	Industry Member
Observers	
Mr Mat Kertesz	Department of Agriculture and Water Resources
Ms Renata Brooks	AFMA Commissioner (attended from Agenda Item 2.4 to 5.3)
Ms Amelinda Byrne	AFMA
Executive Officer	
Ms Sara Murphy	AFMA
Members not present	
Dr Robert Campbell	Research Member
Mr Peter Trott	Conservation Member
Cathal Farrell	Industry Member

- Written apologies were received from Mr Cathal Farrell, Dr Robert Campbell on 14 March 2018 and from Mr Peter Trott on 25 March 2018 (Mr Trott also advised his inability to attend at the previous MAC meeting - TTMAC 17).

1.2. Adoption of agenda

- The agenda was adopted by TTMAC noting that the addition of a late agenda item – 5.6 - Transshipping in WTBF. The agenda was accepted with no further amendments (Attachment A).

1.3. Declarations of interest

- The Chair stated that as outlined in the Fisheries Administration Act 1991 and Fisheries Management Paper 1, all members and invited participants of TTMAC must declare any interests in tropical tuna fisheries as they relate to specific agenda items at the commencement of the meeting (Table 1). TTMAC noted that if a member or invited participant discloses an interest in an agenda item, the person must absent themselves from the meeting while TTMAC makes a decision as to whether they can participate in the discussion and in the making of recommendations, or remain absent from the meeting for the agenda item. The attendees declared their conflict of interests as follows:

Table 2 Declared interests of members, invited participants and invited observers at TTMAC 18

Name	Declared Interests	Agenda Items Relevant to Declared Interests
Members		
Ms Catherine Sayer	Chair TTMAC, CEO of Food South Australia. No pecuniary interests in tropical tuna fisheries. Chair of charter boat management plan review committee (SA).	Nil
Mr Trent Timmiss	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interests in tropical tuna fisheries.	Nil
Mr Terry Romaro OAM	Director of a company that owns Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) boat statutory fishing rights (SFRs), minorline SFRs, ETBF longline SFRs, Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery (WTBF) boat SFRs, WTBF longline SFRs, Coral Sea Trawl permit, Western Skipjack Tuna Fishery (WSTF) purse seine permit, Small Pelagic Fishery (SPF) purse seine, mid-water trawl SFRs, and SPF quota SFRs. Shareholder of a company that owns shares in a proposal to fish with foreign longliners in the WTBF. Industry member on Southern Bluefin Tuna (SBT) MAC and industry representative at the Commission for the Conservation of SBT (CCSBT). Invited participant for squidRAG and squid concession holder. Alternate on the Board of Tuna Australia.	3

Name	Declared Interests	Agenda Items Relevant to Declared Interests
Mr Paul Lavalle	Director of a company that owns ETBF boat SFRs, minorline SFRs and ETBF quota SFRs for all five species. Director and member of fish receiving co-operative. Board member of Tuna Australia.	3
*Mr Cathal Farrell	Manager of fish receiving business and holder of an ETBF boat SFR. Director of fishing company that holds boat and quota SFRs.	<i>Not in attendance</i>
Mr Pavo Walker	Owner of several ETBF boat SFRs, and ETBF quota SFRs for all five species. Holds a Coral Sea permit and minorline permit. Director of Tuna Australia	3
*Mr Peter Trott	Director of an environmental consulting business (Fishlistic), no pecuniary interests in tropical tuna fisheries. Member of the Great Australian Bight MAC, Commonwealth Fisheries Research Advisory Committee, Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) Board Member and Lead Auditor for ME Certification (MEC) in relation to the Walker Seafoods MSC annual audit. Local tuna assessments.	<i>Not in attendance</i>
*Dr Robert Campbell	Employee of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), no pecuniary interests in Australian tropical tuna fisheries. Actively engaged in research on the ETBF and WTBF. Principal investigator for the research project: <i>Data management, provision of fishery indicators and implementation of the harvest strategies for Australia's tropical tuna fisheries.</i>	<i>Not in attendance</i>
Mr Grahame A Williams OAM	Past President of the Game Fishing Association of Australia, Treasurer and Records Officer of the NSW Game Fishing Association and Game Fishing Association Australia Executive Officer. No pecuniary interests in tropical tuna fisheries.	Nil
Executive Officer		
Ms Sara Murphy	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interests in tropical tuna fisheries.	Nil
Invited Participants or Regular Observers		
Mr David Ellis	CEO of Tuna Australia (industry association), previously involved in the SA tuna fishery, Managing Director of consultancy company (David Ellis and Associates).	Nil
Mr Paul Williams	Director of a company that holds ETBF boat SFR and ETBF longline SFRs, minorline SFRs and a	3

Name	Declared Interests	Agenda Items Relevant to Declared Interests
	Commonwealth fish receiver permit. Member of TTRAG. Board member of Tuna Australia.	
Mr Gary Heilmann	Director of companies that hold a fish receiver permit and a Coral Sea permit. Member of TTRAG.	Nil
Mr Brian Jeffriess AM	CEO of Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Industry Association.	Nil
Mr Ian Bladin	Game Fishing Association of Australia executive, Queensland Game Fishing Association and charter boat owner, no pecuniary interests in tropical tuna fisheries.	Nil
Mr Phil Bolton	Recreational Fisheries Manager at the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI), no pecuniary interests in tropical tuna fisheries.	Nil
Dr Rich Hillary	Employee of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), no pecuniary interests in Australian tropical tuna fisheries. Actively engaged in research on the ETBF and WTBF.	Nil
Observers		
Ms Renata Brooks	AFMA Commissioner	Nil
Ms Amelinda Byrne	Employee of AFMA, no pecuniary interests in tropical tuna fisheries.	Nil
Mr Mat Kertesz	Employee of the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, no pecuniary interests in tropical tuna fisheries.	Nil

* Did not attend the meeting.

6. The following members and invited participants declared interests under Agenda Item 3:

- i. Mr Terry Romaro OAM – as per requirements as a MAC member who has declared interests under an agenda item, Mr Romaro left the room. The remaining members of TTMAC agreed that Mr Romaro should be allowed to return for all discussions and recommendations made under Agenda Item 3.
- ii. Mr Pavo Walker – as per requirements as a MAC member who has declared interests under an agenda item, Mr Walker left the room. The remaining members of TTMAC agreed that Mr Walker should be allowed to return for all discussions and recommendations made under Agenda Item 3.
- iii. Mr Paul Williams – as per requirements as a MAC invited participant who has declared interests under an agenda item, Mr Williams left the room. The remaining

members of TTMAC agreed that Mr Williams should be allowed to return for all discussions and recommendations made under Agenda Item 3.

- iv. Mr Paul Lavallo – as per requirements as a MAC invited participant who has declared interests under an agenda item, Mr Lavallo left the room. The remaining members of TTMAC agreed that Mr Lavallo should be allowed to return for all discussions and recommendations made under Agenda Item 3.

1.4. Adoption of minutes from TTMAC 17

7. The minutes from the TTMAC 17 meeting held in Canberra on 16 November 2017 were circulated out of session to the MAC on 1 December 2017.
8. Comments were received from Ms Catherine Sayer, Mr David Ellis, Mr Phil Bolton, Mr Trent Timmiss and Mr Brian Jeffriess AM and the suggested changes were incorporated into the final draft.
9. The MAC endorsed the final draft of the minutes with no further amendment.

1.5. Actions arising from previous meetings

10. The MAC discussed the action items arising from previous meetings and commented on the progress on each item (**Error! Reference source not found.**).

Table 3 Status of actions arising from previous MAC meetings

Item	Meeting raised	Issues	Action	Responsibility	Status	Discussion at TTMAC 18
1	TTMAC 14 – action arising 3	WTBF shark trip limits	A change to the WTBF shark trip limits from per trip to per day to be investigated and discussed with the Western Australian Government.	AFMA	Ongoing AFMA has contacted WA Fisheries, who have sought additional information. Landings of shark in WTBF are currently very low so this action has been a low priority for AFMA. Issue discussed at TTMAC 17 – AFMA member and TA invited participant agreed to try to progress issue out of session. A range of shark management measures will be discussed at IOTC in May, after this meeting AFMA will prepare a position on shark management for WA to consider.	AFMA will progress this issue in June/July.
2	TTMAC 15 – action arising 2	ETBF and WTBF overcatch / undercatch accessibility	AFMA to work with Tuna Australia to look at options to improve overcatch and quota accessibility and flexibility for the ETBF.	AFMA and Tuna Australia	Ongoing/Completed 200 t YFT TACC increase for the 2016/17 season and Tuna Australia previously discussed the YFT 20% overcatch issue with Commission. At this stage no further changes to the overcatch / undercatch arrangements are proposed. ETBF fishing season was changed to 1 January to assist with quota management.	Completed. AFMA are not proposing further action. Industry noted the need for flexibility throughout year in being able to access overcatch not just in the last month of year.

Item	Meeting raised	Issues	Action	Responsibility	Status	Discussion at TTMAC 18
3	TTMAC 16 – action arising 1	ETBF levy formula	AFMA to review the apportionment model used to calculate ETBF levies, in light of recent management changes including EM and shifts in effort.	AFMA	Ongoing. This is being progressed out of session by AFMA in consultation with Tuna Australia and ASBTIA.	The question of how recover EM costs from boats fishing for SBT will be covered under agenda item 3.1.
4	TTMAC 16 – action arising 3	Transshipment in the WTBF	AFMA to advise industry and TTMAC of IOTC transshipment requirements in the WTBF, in particular under what circumstances fresh fish can be transferred.	AFMA	Ongoing. AFMA provided information to TTMAC 17 under agenda item 3.12, which indicated that transshipment without an observer was not possible under IOTC rules.	This item will be discussed under agenda item 5.6.
5	TTMAC 16 – action arising 4	Change to fishing season start date	AFMA to undertake further analysis on options for TACC setting (AFMA Commission to set TACCs in October vs. December) and	AFMA	Completed, the current fishing season is 10 months to allow for a 1 January season start date next year.	Completed. Fishing Season changed to 1 January.

Item	Meeting raised	Issues	Action	Responsibility	Status	Discussion at TTMAC 18
			present this analysis and the TTMAC recommendation to change the ETBF season start date to 1 January, to the DoAWR and then the AFMA Commission for consideration.			
6	TTMAC 16 – action arising 5	Discard figures	AFMA to review the figures provided to TTMAC 16 and provide corrected figures for TTMAC 17.	AFMA	Completed. Revised Discard figures are included in agenda item 4.4.	Completed. AFMA member reported that discard figures now in paper 4.4 with data.
7	TTMAC 17 – action arising 1	Resource sharing for Striped Marlin in ETBF (Arose during discussion of agenda item 3.2)	TTMAC to recommend to AFMA Commission that it communicate to Department of Agriculture and water Resources that resource sharing for Striped Marlin be progressed as a matter of priority.	AFMA	Completed. AFMA wrote to the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources. AFMA has also written a paper to Australian Fisheries Managers Forum to use Striped Marlin and Blue-eye trevalla as case studies for progressing resource sharing.	Department of Agriculture and Water Resources has stated that Striped Marlin is not a priority, they are working on SBT. Since March 2018, AFMA has taken the lead on this issue and will take striped marlin and blue-eye trevalla resource sharing case studies to AFMF. AFMA will organise a workshop with both sectors (working with NSW fisheries) This will be a lengthy process, and may not

Item	Meeting raised	Issues	Action	Responsibility	Status	Discussion at TTMAC 18
						just include NSW, 2006 process is on file.
8	TTMAC 17 – action arising 2	Follow up on work undertaken by AFMA's economic working group (arose out of discussion during 3.5 Research Update)	AFMA to follow up on the work being undertaken by AFMA's economic working group for outcomes of relevance to the ETBF	AFMA	Ongoing. The next economic working group meeting will be on 10 April. The AFMA member will provide a verbal update.	First meeting was 10 April 2018. Chair; Ian Cartwright. Main issues discussed were: Economic indicators, how fisheries are performing economically, analysis of data needs for the group, agreed to use data already collected by ABARES.
9	TTMAC 17 – action arising 3	discussed how to best utilise the economic data that is currently available for the ETBF and whether there are economic indicators that can be provided alongside the RBCC advice that is given to the MAC and Commission	The MAC recommended the TTRAG Economic Working Group comprised of Tuna Australia, AFMA, ABARES and the RAG economic member further explore the need and options for collecting economic information	TTRAG Subcommittee	This sub-committee has not met yet.	TTRAG subcommittee - TTRAG Economic Working Group - has not yet formed or met. The first meeting is expected to meet in conjunction with next RAG meeting (July 2018).

1.6. Interseasonal correspondence between TTMAC 17 and TTMAC 18

11. TTMAC noted the correspondence circulated out-of-session since TTMAC 17 held on 16 November 2017 (Table 4).

Table 4 Correspondence circulated out-of-session since TTMAC 17

Date	Item
1 December 2017	Draft TTMAC 17 minutes circulated for comment.
9 January 2018	Letter to WTBF operators stating TACCs for 2018
18 January 2018	Letter to ETBF Industry regarding TACCs for 2018 transitional fishing season
22 January 2018	Letter to ETBF Operators about move to e-logs from paper logs and request to participate in survey identifying reasons why some operators may not use e-logs.
22 February 2018	Letter to Industry with ETBF Management Arrangement Booklet attached.

2. Background and discussion items

2.1. AFMA management report on the ETBF and WTBF

12. TTMAC noted the report provided by the AFMA Member regarding developments and issues relevant to the management of the ETBF and WTBF. It was explained that a number of management issues would be discussed under later agenda items however the MAC noted that:
 - i. WTBF TACCs were agreed by AFMA Commission for 3 years, with the Commission seeking feedback about the level of catch needed to require the use of a harvest strategy. AFMA will start the process to determine this by presenting a paper to the July meeting of TTRAG.
 - ii. Out of Session the AFMA Commission approved the change of season start and end dates which move the ETBF season to a calendar year and also approved the ETBF TACCs for a 10 month season to fit this change.
 - iii. The Commissioners considered the draft FMS and stated its usefulness, as well as making some suggestions and comments that were incorporated into the version presented to TTMAC.
13. The AFMA member congratulated Ms Catherine Sayer on her reappointment as Chair of TTMAC and members noted that TTMAC member reappointments are underway with applications closing on 27th April.
14. The new Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources is the Hon. David Littleproud MP (with Senator the Hon. Anne Ruston remaining in the position of Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources). Minister Littleproud is keen to meet industry in Mooloolaba. David Ellis of Tuna Australia will identify times/dates and arrange this meeting, in the next few months.
15. Minister Ruston is due to release the Harvest Strategy and Bycatch Strategy in the next few weeks.

16. AFMA and DoAWR are currently exploring Regional Swordfish management options and will pursue further regional management of swordfish at this year's FFC and Commission meetings.
17. AFMA is currently finalising a Transshipment Policy for approval by the AFMA Commission.
18. AFMA still holds several deeming applications on file in relation to the ETBF and WTBF and is awaiting more information from applicants.

2.2. WCPFC Fisheries Commission and IOTC meetings update

19. The AFMA Member provided a verbal update on the 14th Regular Session of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) held in Manila, Philippines during December 2017. The delegation included DoAWR, AFMA, Industry members David Ellis and Pavo Walker, DFAT, ABARES.
20. The WCPFC meeting focussed mainly on the Tropical Tuna Measure. Other dominant items discussed were the Target Reference Point for South Pacific Albacore Tuna and the updating of harvest strategies for all species.
21. The outcome regarding the tropical tuna measure was more relaxed management of Bigeye Tuna than preferred by FFA, but not as weak as favoured by the US and the European Union (EU). A new assessment will be completed in 2018.
22. General outcomes from the meeting included; a 3-month Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) ban for the Purse Seine fishery and additional 2-month ban on the high seas, high seas effort limits imposed between 20°N and 20°S and a catch retention provision between 20°N and 20°S meaning that all Bigeye Tuna, Skipjack Tuna and Yellowfin Tuna must be kept. Australia has also maintained a 2000 tonne catch limit (in zone) for Bigeye Tuna, but there is a new commitment to agree hard limits on all allocations by 2020.
23. As Australia already has a strong quota management system in place and high levels of monitoring and compliance, the WCPFC has high confidence in Australia's management.
24. TTMAC further noted that the Dr Robert Campbell and Dr Jess Farley from Australia will be attending WCPFC Scientific Committee meeting on 17-20 April 2018. More tissue samples for Bigeye Tuna are being collected and results will be presented at the meeting. The ageing study will also be revisited for Bigeye Tuna as well as the growth models. It is important to get the new assessment right. However, TTMAC noted that this means that the updated assessments for other species such as Striped Marlin and Swordfish will be delayed for another year.
25. The AFMA member would like to see a move towards stronger international management of Swordfish and will investigate the best tactical option to achieve that progress and will then take this forward to the Commission meeting in December. It appears that Swordfish management is only really a priority for Australia, so it is difficult to encourage the Commission to address this species and agree on a way forward. This situation is the same for Striped Marlin.
26. The AFMA member also relayed key issues for the upcoming series of Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) meetings in Bangkok, Thailand during May 2018. The 22nd meeting of the IOTC Commission will take place from 21-25 May 2018 and Mr Trent Timmiss will attend the meeting. Australia will continue to advocate the use of EEZ size as indicator for eventual allocation of catch limits as the use of catch history would lead to a small and very inequitable catch history for Australia. Using recent catch

history alone would not accurately reflect Australia's past history of responsible TACC-constrained fishing activity.

2.3. Forum Fisheries Agency Meeting Update

27. The AFMA Member provided a verbal update on the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) pre-WCPFC workshop and FFC meeting held in Manila, Philippines (24-30 November 2017) – the delegation was limited to DoAWR and AFMA.
28. Prior to the WCPFC, the FFA pre-meeting was held to enable FFA members (Australia, New Zealand and some Pacific Island countries) to discuss and develop unified positions.
29. The main outcome from the meeting was that FFA members agreed to continue to push for a zone based tropical tuna measure.

2.4. Tuna Australia/Industry Update

30. TTMAC noted the report provided by the Tuna Australia (TA) Invited participant advising of recent industry association activities.
31. TA is well into its third year of existence. The main issues TA is currently addressing are: Marine parks: labour agreements and specifically Pacific region labour agreements seeking access to a pool of workers in Tuvalu, Nauru and Kiribati. TA is continuing to work with NSW DPI to secure permits for continued access to baitfish.

2.5. General update from members, invited participants and observers

32. TTMAC noted the following updates provided by members and invited participants:
33. TTMAC noted the paper provided by Mr Brian Jeffriess AM, CEO of the Australian SBT Industry Association (ASBTIA) regarding CCSBT and total SBT quota allocations.
34. An Industry member noted that catches off Ulladulla for the first three months of the year were reasonable for Yellowfin Tuna and Striped Marlin and there have been some larger Bigeye Tuna caught more recently (around 50kg).
35. An Industry invited participant observed that there was a good run of Yellowfin Tuna in February, but this has since dropped off. This was echoed by several other industry members, but they noted that Bigeye Tuna should become more available in the coming month.
36. The TTMAC Recreational Fishing member cited great fishing in Western Australia off Exmouth recently contrasting this with very poor fishing off Perth. He also noted Striped, Blue and Black marlin and smaller amounts of good quality Yellowfin Tuna off NSW amounting to the best fishing in five years at game fishing tournaments this year.
37. The recreational member also thanked the Commonwealth Government (Department of the Environment and Energy) for its work in putting in a reservation on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS) listing of dusky whalers and blue sharks.
38. The MAC also heard from the Recreational/Charter fishing invited participant that game fishing off Queensland since TTMAC 17 last November has seen some good catches closer inshore. There have also been good numbers of Yellowfin Tuna caught.

39. The NSW State Government Invited Participant also commented on a great season off Sydney and down to Lakes Entrance. He further noted that there have been meetings regarding bait fish permits with little progress made.
40. The Chair thanked the AFMA Commissioner Ms Renata Brooks for attending TTMAC 18 as an observer and invited her to contribute during this agenda item or to answer any MAC questions.
41. The Commissioner thanked the Chair and MAC for the opportunity to observe her first MAC meeting noting her desire to engage with industry more and also expressed AFMA Commission support for the MAC and RAG process. She noted that this process will now be further expanded with the requirement to take into account recreational and Indigenous. She was very pleased to see this demonstrated at this MAC meeting.

3. Consideration / Decision items

3.1.2018 CRIS and 2018/19 Budget

42. The AFMA member gave an overview of the 2nd budget under the 2017 AFMA CRIS.
43. TTMAC noted that the AFMA 2018/9 budget has been released to industry for comment.
44. TTMAC noted the major changes in the draft 2018/19 budget compared to the final 2017/18 budgets for each of the fisheries outlined below;
 - i. for the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) the levy budget has reduced by \$286,974 (17%)
 - ii. for the Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery (WTBF) the levy budget has reduced by \$46,945 (15%)
 - iii. for the Skipjack Tuna Fishery the levy budget has reduced by \$21,244 (25%)
45. Overall the amount of money that AFMA recovers from the fishing industry will be approximately \$25,000 less than 2017/18. All of the budgets for TTMAC fisheries have decreased, the main reasons for this are outlined below.
46. For ETBF the draft levy budget has reduced by \$286,974 (17%) mainly due to reductions in e-monitoring and research.
47. The biggest change to the budget is a reduction of \$130,955 in the e-monitoring budget to \$524,194 (20%). Approximately \$90,000 of this reduction is the removal of maintenance costs from the levy based budget. It is expected that these costs will be recovered directly from boat owners from 1 July 2018. Most of the other reductions in the ETBF e-monitoring budget are the result of the attribution of the costs of monitoring targeted SBT fishing to the SBT Fishery levy base.
48. Licensing costs have increased by \$11,056 (22.6%) due to an increase in the overall licensing budget to account for licensing work done by staff members outside the licensing section, not increased usage by the fishery.
49. The AFMA member explained that the research budget has declined by \$110,358 (47.4%), with a similar proportion reduction in research administration which is charge based on research spend. This reduction is mainly about timing of milestone payments of 3 year research projects rather than any change in the research in the fishery. It is likely that this budget will increase next year.

50. For WTBF the draft levy budget has reduced by \$46,945 (15%) mainly due to reductions in e-monitoring and direct costs.
51. A large proportion of the recent management activity in the WTBF has been driven by processes involved with potential new boats into the fishery, rather than current active boats. There has been a slight reduction in staff time allocated to the WTBF and a reduction in overheads that has resulted in a \$23,719 decrease (17.2%).
52. The WTBF e-monitoring budget has reduced by \$23,443 (29.5%) for similar reasons to the ETBF and a reduction from 3 to 2 boats in the fishery.
53. For the skipjack fishery the budget has been reduced by \$21,244 (25%), almost entirely due to the removal of anticipated observer coverage in the fishery. For the previous two years, a permit holder was in active engagement with AFMA about commencing purse seine fishing in the Skipjack Fishery. This has not eventuated and does not look as though it will occur in the next financial year. The non-usage of the observer coverage will also result in a similar underspend of the current year's budget.
54. The MAC noted the budget explanation.

3.2.ETBF Harvest Strategy Review

55. Dr Rich Hillary, Scientific member on TTRAG, attended the TTMAC meeting to report and further explain the progress of the Harvest Strategy (HS) Review following its meeting held in Canberra on 21 – 23 March 2018. He reported that TTRAG has agreed that the current ETBF HS for swordfish will not be used to provide advice on TACCs in future.
56. Between 2011 and 2016, TTRAG members raised various concerns about the effectiveness of the current HS model for swordfish and striped marlin and the CPUE indices it is based on. Some of the issues raised were deferred to be addressed during the ETBF HS Review.
57. TTRAG considered that a central question with regard to Swordfish is whether or how connected the WCP stock is to the Australian stock? Exploration of this issue will inform if the HS and CPUE standardisation are able to be effective in managing the ETBF Swordfish catch. The current model used for assessing Swordfish takes catches from the within the Australian zone and then higher catches from the WCPFC area and this has resulted in decreasing the ETBF TACC in the last few years, despite catches within the Australian EEZ remaining above the CPUE.
58. Dr Hillary explained that during the next 18 months TTRAG will develop a revised or new harvest strategy for Swordfish.
59. TTRAG will also develop an interim TACC advice process to inform the AFMA Commission's setting of the 2019 TACCs.

3.3.ETBF Ecological Risk Assessment

60. The AFMA member provided an update on the draft ETBF Ecological Risk Assessment. He noted that TTRAG has requested ABARES conduct further work on dusky whaler sharks following the revised ERA as this species was identified as being a potentially high risk species. ABARES will use existing literature to establish how well this shark species survives post capture and release in the ETBF because post 2015 data shows an increase in reported catch numbers (likely due to EM) and that a high percentage of dusky whalers are released (discarded), with industry indicating these animals would be cut off before being hauled.
61. TTMAC noted that should TTRAG find that dusky whaler shark is still assessed as at high risk, AFMA and TTMAC will need to explore management options and following

this AFMA will need to implement management measures to reduce the risk posed by the ETBF to dusky whaler sharks.

3.4.ETBF Fishery Management Strategy

62. The AFMA member introduced the most recent draft of the ETBF Fisheries Management Strategy, noting that TTMAC has previously seen drafts at TTMAC 15 and 17. He recapped the need for strategic documents for each fishery to be gathered into a single comprehensive document - a FMS. He drew the MAC's attention to several tables within the document which capture key long term operational objectives.
63. The MAC noted the draft FMS and during discussion made the following comments:
 - i. the development of resource sharing agreements needs to accompany the development of the FMS
 - ii. it would be useful for the FMS to meet the 3rd party certification requirements – for example ISO and MSC certification;
 - iii. should 'fit' with requirements and standards in the Harvest Strategy and Bycatch Strategies;
 - iv. reporting tools in the FMS should try to replace some of the existing reporting requirements to limit 'process work' for the fishery manager.
64. The AFMA member acknowledged these comments and explained that AFMA is working to ensure that resource sharing discussions take place; is working with International Standards Organisation specialist on the FMS; is designing FMS reporting tools for multiple uses and has taken account of the draft HS and bycatch documents so far.
65. The AFMA member noted that TTRAG and TTMAC members will have further opportunity out of session to read and provide comment on the draft ETBF FMS.
66. Tuna Australia CEO, David Ellis agreed to work with Dr Don Bromhead out of session on the FMS chapters still requiring development.

<p>ACTION: David Ellis and Don Bromhead to work out of session on FMS chapters still requiring development.</p>
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3.5.Research update

67. The AFMA Member presented the research update to the MAC, noting in particular an AFMA management review of the Research Program is due to conclude in June. The review's purpose is to identify efficiencies while still delivering Commonwealth fisheries research needs and will report to the July AFMA Research Committee (ARC) meeting.

3.6 Other outcomes from TTRAG 20

68. The MAC noted current (FRDC) research projects undertaken in tuna fisheries including a Genetics project conducted by Dr Karen Evans at CSIRO which is investigating the level of connectivity of the principal target species of the ETBF with the broader Western and Central Pacific Ocean.
69. Dr Alistair Hobday (CSIRO) is conducting a three-year project due to conclude in December 2020, looking at the abundance, distribution and availability of highly migratory tuna and billfish species in eastern Australia and how they are influenced by the ocean-climate system. This is a collaborative project and CSIRO are partnering

with other domestic, recreational and international fisheries to determine the influence of climate factors on an ETBF and south-west Pacific regional scale. The AFMA member, Mr Trent Timmiss, will attend a meeting in Cook Islands in May 2018 during which he will invite other nations to contribute data to this project.

70. A Recreational fishing project undertaken by Dr Julian Pepperell and Dr Robert Campbell is investigating the differences in availability of Yellowfin Tuna between the recreational fishing and commercial industries. The challenge is to obtain all available recreational fishing data from NSW fisheries, including club and tournament data. Unfortunately this is difficult as there is currently no centralised database of recreational fishing data. A final report is due 30 Sept 2018.

3.7 Longtail tuna in the WTBF

71. The AFMA member explained that AFMA recently received a letter from the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council (WAFIC) requesting a reconsideration of the current 35t fishery limit on longtail tuna in the WTBF.
72. Longtail tuna was considered to be a recreational species following a resource sharing policy decision by the then Fisheries Minister, the Hon Ian Macdonald MP in 2005. AFMA has taken this policy into account by setting an annual limit of 35t for longtail tuna in each of the ETBF and WTBF since 2006.
73. The MAC noted that the WAFIC proposal is to increase the current 35t limit to 250t, while maintaining the designation of the species as recreational only.
74. The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) currently considers longtail tuna a single stock within the Indian Ocean for assessment purposes. Most of the IOTC catch of longtail tuna is reported from the northwestern Indian Ocean, well away from Australia, although there are considerable catches in Indonesian waters.
75. The estimated recent catch in the Indian Ocean is 154,000t, so the proposed WTBF limit is less than 0.2% of the total catch, meaning there should not be any overall sustainability concerns about the proposed catch level. Localised impacts may need to be considered, especially if all of the catch is proposed to be taken from a relatively small area.
76. In response to Industry questions about potential catch history allocation, given Industry's avoidance of this species due to its recreational status, the AFMA member noted it is unlikely a low value species such as longtail tuna destined for canning would be subject to a quota allocation.
77. The Chair sought clarification of what is expected of the MAC by AFMA in relation to this issue.
78. The AFMA member responded that AFMA will seek advice from the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources on an initial reaction from the Minister and will provide further information regarding this issue to the MAC out of session.
79. MAC Industry members gave in-principle support for the initiative provided any changes are closely monitored and reversible if necessary.
80. The recreational member and invited participant were less amenable noting that it is a recreational species so is of some significance on the East Coast though it is less important to recreational fishers in the west.
81. The AFMA member concluded by noting that WAFIC would likely seek to have a response from AFMA soon after the next meeting of the MAC.

4. Other Information/Discussion Items

4.1. US Import Regulations (Marine Mammals) Update

82. The AFMA member noted that the US Government Department - National Marine Fisheries Service has published a final 2017 List of Foreign Fisheries (LOFF), as required by the regulations implementing the Fish and Fish Product Import Provisions of the Marine Mammal Protection Act 1972 (MMPA) which classifies the longline Sectors of the ETBF and WTBF as 'export' fisheries.
83. He further noted that that this will mean Australia will need to undertake further work with the US Government to ensure that product from the ETBF and WTBF can continue to be exported into the US after 2022. AFMA will maintain a watching brief on this issue and will continue to brief TTMAC as it develops.

4.2. Electronic Monitoring Update

84. TTMAC noted the AFMA member's update on the electronic monitoring program in the ETBF and WTBF. He noted that the current program is meeting its stated objectives and is providing good logbook data for the majority of species.

4.3. Environment Update a: Seabird TAP b: Turtle Interactions Update

85. The AFMA Member presented the Environment Report noting that the Conservation Member, Mr Trott, had raised questions at TTMAC 17 in relation to turtle interactions in the ETBF but given his absence these would be followed up to out of session.

ACTION: Due to Mr Trott's absence from TTMAC 18, his questions from TTMAC 17 in relation to turtle interactions in the ETBF will be followed up out of session by the AFMA member.

86. Mr Brian Jeffriess AM, seconded by the AFMA Member Mr Trent Timmiss, congratulated Mr David Ellis of Tuna Australia on the prolonged effort that went into Marine Park negotiations undertaken by TA with the Department of the Environment and Energy.
87. The AFMA Member reminded MAC members that due to the listing of Scalloped Hammerheads as protected under the EPBC Act, exporters will need a non-detriment finding to continue to export this species. He urged operators to contact AFMA first if unsure of the right people to talk to within the Department of the Environment and Energy regarding this issue.
88. In relation to an Industry question regarding the possibility of models to predict turtle interaction hot spots in the ETBF, AFMA agreed to follow up with CSIRO the potential to model this information.

ACTION: AFMA to work with CSIRO to investigate data content required and the possibility of developing a model to indicate most likely turtle interaction hot spots.

4.4. Fishery Catch data – 2016/17 Season to date

89. TTMAC noted the 2017/18 season catch of the quota species and Blue and Black marlin in the ETBF and WTBF to date, as recorded in daily fishing logbooks and catch disposal records.

5. Other Business

5.1. Bait Collection near gamefish tournaments

90. The AFMA member reminded the MAC of the gentlemen's agreement in relation to bait collection near gamefish tournaments. The NSW state government invited participant noted that the system generally works quite well where there are organised tournaments it is occurring but is less effective where general, high density recreational fishing is occurring.

5.2. Recreational and Indigenous fisheries objective

91. The AFMA member noted that AFMA's Act was recently amended to take into account the Recreational and Indigenous fishing interests. Management Advisory Committees (MACs) now have the potential to have up to 10 members, as well as the Chair and AFMA member.
92. He further commented that TTMAC has had both a recreational member and invited participant for some time so he could not foresee significant changes in composition for TTMAC, particularly in the short term. AFMA is also working with the FRDC Indigenous Group to identify interests in Commonwealth fisheries. The AFMA Commissioner, Ms Renata Brooks, explained that the change to membership rules for MACs attempts to apply a common sense approach to gaining the widest possible range of views in relation to fisheries management issues.

5.3. Bycatch Handling Workshop Update

93. The AFMA member informed the MAC that the AFMA Bycatch Team working with Tuna Australia, will conduct a series of bycatch handling workshops in the ETBF during April and May 2018 to improve awareness within industry of safe bycatch handling techniques. The AFMA Bycatch Team will also distribute the new bycatch handling guidebooks as well as line cutters and de-hookers to industry operators at these workshops.
94. The MAC will be kept informed when more details of the projected workshops become available.

ACTION: TTMAC EO to keep MAC informed of details of Bycatch Handling Workshops.
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5.4. Mandatory e-log reporting

95. The AFMA member asked the MAC to note the paper on mandatory e-log reporting provided for information. The Paper details the mandatory roll-out to all Commonwealth operators with access to e-logs of the electronic reporting system (where they have fished for 50 or more days) by 1 January 2019. He noted that the Tuna fisheries will be the last of the Commonwealth managed fisheries to move to the e-log system.
96. Tuna Australia has agreed in principle to the roll-out, as e-logs provide a more cost effective alternative to paper based reporting, with current e-log subscription fees

costing less than AFMA's fee-for-service fees for paper logbook entry. The roll-out will be conducted in consultation with Tuna Australia.

5.5. MAC Appointments

97. The AFMA member drew the MAC's attention to the upcoming vacancies and selection processes for TTMAC, with all current appointments expiring at the end of June 2018.
98. He noted the AFMA call for applications to fill all TTMAC positions need to be submitted by 27 April 2018.

5.6. Transshipment in WTBF

99. The issue of transshipment in the WTBF was a late addition to the agenda. The issue was previously dealt with at TTMAC 17 where the MAC heard that in international IOTC managed waters, transshipment was only possible with a human IOTC-appointed observer on the carrier boat. Industry stated that this was not cost effective for operators, particularly in WTBF. AFMA noted at the time that change to the current requirement would require engagement by the Australian delegation (led by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources) at IOTC.
100. The Department has received legal advice that AFMA 's interpretation of the IOTC requirements is correct however the advice also indicates that it should be reasonably straightforward to seek a change to the rules for Australian vessels and the Department will pursue this option at the upcoming IOTC meeting. The AFMA member warned that this change to requirements may not happen quickly. Industry acknowledged this but were keen to pursue change at the IOTC level.
101. ETBF Industry members sought clarification of the current requirements in relation to transshipping and transiting high seas in WCPFC waters.

<p>ACTION: AFMA to provide an explanation of the current requirements for fishing vessels in the WCPFC area of competence to TTMAC 19.</p>

6. Date and Venue for next meeting

102. The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for 4 October 2018 in Sydney. The final date and venue will be decided out of session. The chair closed the meeting at 2:30pm and thanked members, invited participants and invited observers for their contribution.

Tropical Tuna Fisheries Management Advisory Committee (TTMAC) 18

17 April 2018
8:30 am – 5:30 pm
Holiday Inn
Sydney Airport
DRAFT AGENDA as at 12 April

- 1. Preliminaries/Matters Arising**
 - 1.1. Welcome and apologies
 - 1.2. Adoption of agenda
 - 1.3. Declarations of interests
 - 1.4. Adoption of Minutes from TTMAC 17
 - 1.5. Actions arising from previous meetings
 - 1.6. Intersessional correspondence between TTMAC 17 and TTMAC 18
- 2. Background Information/Discussion Items**
 - 2.1. AFMA Management report on the ETBF and WTBF
 - 2.2. Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission and Indian Ocean Tuna Commission meetings update
 - 2.3. Forum Fisheries Agency meeting update
 - 2.4. Tuna Australia / Industry update
 - 2.5. General update from members, invited participants and observers
- 3. Consideration/Decision Items**
 - 3.1. 2018 CRIS and 2018/19 budget
 - 3.2. ETBF Harvest Strategy Review
 - 3.3. ETBF Ecological Risk Assessment
 - 3.4. ETBF Fishery Management Strategy
 - 3.5. Research update (Oceanography, Rec Fish, Genetics, Size Monitoring)
 - 3.6. Other outcomes from TTRAG 20
 - 3.7. Longtail tuna in the WTBF
- 4. Other Information/Discussion Items**
 - 4.1. US Import Regulations (Marine Mammals) update
 - 4.2. Electronic Monitoring update
 - 4.3. Environment update – A: Seabird TAP, B: Turtle Interactions Update
 - 4.4. Fishery Catch Data – 2016/17 season to date
- 5. Other Business**
 - 5.1. Bait collection near gamefish tournaments
 - 5.2. Recreational and indigenous fisheries objective
 - 5.3. Bycatch Handling Workshop Update
 - 5.4. Mandatory e-log reporting
 - 5.5. MAC Appointments

Date and venue for next meeting