

Chair's Summary

Barramundi Fishery Management Advisory Committee

Meeting #5

Participating Members: Mr Rob Fish (commercial fishing), Mr David Ciaravolo (recreational fishing), Dr Peter Kyne (environmental science/conservation), Dr Rachel Groom (environmental science/ conservation), Mr Murray Knyvett (Aboriginal traditional marine harvest), Mr Brenton Cardona (Aboriginal traditional marine harvest), Mr Kane Dysart (proxy NTGFA).

Permanent Observer: Ms Katherine Winchester (NTSC), Mr Bo Carne (ASC), Ms Joanne Rudd (AFANT).

Observers: Mr Jaime Damaso (NLC), Mr Ashley Perez (NLC), Mr Cameron Berryman, Dr Leonardo Guida (AMCS), Dr Jackie Gould (CDU), Mr Grant Rubock.

DITT Staff: Mr Will Bowman (DITT), Dr Brien Roberts (DITT), Dr Blanche d'Anastasi (DITT), Mr Blake Taylor (DITT), Ms Emily Rees (DITT).

Apologies: Mr Daniel Keyes (Aboriginal traditional marine harvest), Ms Tarun Richards (Aquaculture industry), Mr PJ (Traditional Owner).

PRELIMINARY BUSSINESS

The fifth meeting of the Northern Territory Barramundi Fishery Management Advisory Committee (the committee) was held on 21 April 2023 at the NT Fisheries Building, Berrimah, Darwin.

Members were advised that the Barramundi Fishery Manager, Jonathan McPhail, has resigned from NT Fisheries and thanked him for his efforts in the review and management of the fishery.

The meeting agenda was adopted by members, with business items focussing on the progress of:

- The Barramundi Fishery Harvest Strategy;
- Threatened, Endangered and Protected Species Strategy;
- Resource Sharing process; and,
- FRDC Project.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Update on development of Barramundi Fishery Harvest Strategy

The Department presented an update on the development of the draft version of the Barramundi Fishery Harvest Strategy. The MAC also considered how the Australian Monsoonal Index (AMI) could act as an environmental performance indicator. The AMI can support the development of the Harvest Strategy by providing a prediction on recruitment and biomass of the fishery, particularly in key fishing areas of Anson Bay, Mini Mini/Murganella, Buckingham and Arnhem bays, and the Roper River.

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The application of performance indicators across all fishing sectors was discussed more generally, noting that the interim Harvest Strategy focussed on the Commercial sector and not on the recreational and Aboriginal fishing sectors. The Department advised that this was in line with meeting the Minister's direction to initially focus on localised sustainability of target species in relation to managing commercial sector activity.

Members proposed that to accurately reflect the focus of the document, the Harvest Strategy should be re-titled 'Interim Commercial Harvest Strategy' to make it clear that it is one critical component of the final Harvest Strategy that will be developed for the fishery, which will take account of other sectors.

Meeting #4 discussed the inclusion of the Gulf of Carpentaria (GoC) area in the draft Interim Commercial Harvest Strategy. Members noted that this area will not be included as it does not receive as much commercial fishing pressure and is therefore not considered a key area for the commercial harvest of barramundi. It was proposed that the inclusion of GoC be considered when formulating the final Harvest Strategy for the fishery, when consideration of areas of significant recreational fishing pressure will also be considered.

The Committee discussed the need to define the conceptual and operational objectives of the Harvest Strategy. It was agreed that the Department would convene a Harvest Strategy Working Group to develop recommendations to the MAC on conceptual and operational objectives and further refinements the Harvest Strategy.

Update on the Threatened, Endangered and Protected Species (TEPS) Strategy

The Department presented progress on developing a TEPS Strategy designed to minimise interactions with protected species. The TEPS Strategy proposed a staged implementation process that includes: standing voluntary provisions; standing mandatory provisions; electronic monitoring and on-board observer coverage; a broad range of risk management actions; and a hierarchical management action framework linked to species/species group specific performance indicators.

It was proposed that for the first two years of implementing this strategy, there would be a focus on data collection to better understand and monitor on how the fishery interacts with TEPS, and to assess individual Approved Operators to identify and promote preferred fishing practices.

The Department advised the TEPS Expert Panel had not yet been convened due to unforeseen delays to the on-boarding of the new Research Scientist and the resignation of the Fishery Manager. The Committee noted that the next steps of developing the TEPS strategy would include expert consultation, including advice from a reconvened TEPS Strategy Working Group. This would be followed by an external peer review process.

Resourcing Sharing

The Department provided an update on information to inform the resource sharing process. A third party service provider is to be engaged to undertake a preliminary social and

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economic assessment of the values and contributions to the fishery. It was noted that the assessment would ideally coordinate with the spatial areas of the proposed management framework to better inform decisions. However, the Department highlighted the need to work with the providers to determine if this approach is feasible based on available data.

Update on FRDC Project: Incorporating Aboriginal perspectives into fishery management review processes, using the Northern Territory Barramundi Fishery as a case study

Dr Groom and Dr Gould provided an overview of the FRDC project. Dr Groom discussed the first series of workshops that had been completed and advised of the outcomes and issues highlighted by members of the communities visited. The Committee discussed the practical pathways for the integration of Aboriginal perspectives into fisheries management and into the review of the NT Barramundi Fishery.

Next Meeting

July 2023

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ian Cartwright". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ian Cartwright
Chair, BFMAC