



Australian Government
Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Torres Strait Prawn Management Advisory Committee

Meeting No. 22

5 – 6 November 2024

meeting record

Note minutes are available on the PZJA
webpage: www.pzja.gov.au

Contents

1	Preliminaries	3
	Agenda Item 1.1 Acknowledgment of traditional owners, welcome and apologies	3
	Agenda Item 1.2 Adoption of agenda	3
	Agenda Item 1.3 Declarations of interest.....	3
	Agenda Item 2.1 Action items from other meetings	5
2	Reports	7
	Agenda Item 3.1 Native Title update	7
	Agenda Item 3.2 Industry update	7
	Agenda Item 3.3 PNG Update	9
	Agenda Item 3.4a AFMA update	9
	Agenda Item 3.4b QDAF management update.....	12
	Agenda Item 3.4c TSRA update.....	13
	Agenda Item 3.5 AFMA Compliance report.....	14
	Agenda Item 3.6 Data report	16
	Agenda Item 4.1 Bycatch and Discard Workplan	17
	Agenda Item 4.2 TSPF Stock Assessment	24
	Agenda Item 4.3 Rules on take of Spanish mackerel and coral trout in the TSPF	26
	Agenda Item 4.4 TSPF Management Plan Amendments	29
	Agenda Item 4.5 AFMA Climate risk framework.....	30
	Agenda Item 5 Other Business endeavour prawn stock assessment	31
	Summary of actions arising from TSPMAC 22	34

1 Preliminaries

Agenda Item 1.1 Acknowledgment of traditional owners, welcome and apologies

1. The Chair welcomed members and observers to the 22nd meeting of the Torres Strait Prawn Management Advisory Committee (TSPMAC). The Chair acknowledged the traditional owners of the land on which the meeting was being held, as well as the lands and seas which the meeting was due to discuss, and paid respect to respect to Elders past, present and emerging.
2. An opening prayer was offered by Gavin Mosby.
3. The Chair provided an overview of the meeting agenda and noted an apology from Mr Rocky Stephen.
4. Chair reminded people of the importance of mutual respect and care during discussions.

Agenda Item 1.2 Adoption of agenda

5. TSPMAC adopted the draft agenda noting the other business item relating to Marine Stewardship Council certification, would be covered under the industry update.

Agenda Item 1.3 Declarations of interest

6. The Chair advised members and observers, that as required by the Protected Zone Joint Authority (PZJA) Fisheries Management Paper No. 1 (FMP1), at the commencement of the meeting they must declare all conflicts of interest, direct or potential, related to the Torres Strait Prawn Fishery (TSPF) and agenda items.
7. Where it is determined that a conflict of interest exists, TSPMAC may allow the member(s) to continue to participate in the discussions relating to the matter but may also determine that the member, following the discussions, should exit the meeting for the remainder of the discussions and decisions on that particular item.
8. Declared interests are in **Table 1** below. Members and observers were asked to leave the meeting to enable the remaining members to:
 - a. Discuss any potential conflicts of interests that should be considered during the meeting;
 - b. Discuss if any declared or identified conflicts of interest should preclude the members from participating in any discussions or decisions; and
 - c. Agree on actions to manage declared conflicts of interest.
9. The Traditional Inhabitant Boat (TIB) licence Industry members including the TSRA observer removed themselves from the meeting while the remaining members discussed their participation in the meeting. There were no conflicts identified with these members.
10. The Transferrable Vessel Holder (TVH) industry members left the meeting, with the remaining members discussed whether they should be present for the discussion and recommendation of items where they may have real or perceived conflicts of interest. There were no concerns or conflicts for these members.
11. Government officials exited the room while the remaining members discussed their participation in the meeting. No conflicts were identified.
12. The scientific member Clive Turnbull left the room, and TSPMAC discussed the declared interest as TSPMAC would be discussing his research proposal and assessing the project for the Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee (TSSAC). TSPMAC agreed that Mr Turnbull should be present for the

discussion on the project approach, noting that a recommendation was needed between two stock assessment approaches, in which Mr Turnbull's advice on the pros and cons of each option will be important. He would then leave the meeting before TSPMAC decides on a preferred approach, the project assessment form is completed and summarise advice to the TSSAC.

Table 1. Declared interests from each attendee.

Name	Position	Declaration of interest
John Glaister	Chair	Chair Torres Strait Rock Lobster Working Group. Member Parks North Management Advisory Group. No specific conflicts of interest against this agenda.
Lisa Cocking	Executive Officer (AFMA)	Australian Fisheries Management Authority employee. No specific conflicts of interest against this agenda.
Darci Wallis	AFMA member	Australian Fisheries Management Authority employee. No specific conflicts of interest against this agenda.
Thomas Hartley	QDPI member	Fisheries Queensland Employee. No specific conflicts of interest against this agenda.
Edwin Morrison	Industry member	TSPF Licence Holder and operator. Carrier and fish receiver in Torres Strait. No specific conflicts of interest against this agenda.
Shawn McAtamney	Industry member	Owner of independent seafood producers. Marketing specialist in company. No specific conflicts of interest against this agenda.
Clinton Farman	Industry member	TSPF licence holder. No specific conflicts of interest against this agenda.
Glen Duggan	Industry member	TSPF licence holder and Qld East Coast Otter Trawl Fishery (ECOTF) licence holder. No specific conflicts of interest against this agenda.
Jim Newman	Industry member	Licence holder in TSPF and Qld ECOTF and active in QSIA. No specific conflicts of interest against this agenda.
Clive Turnbull	Scientific member	Independent scientist employed to undertake TSPF annual data work. Has application in for TSPF Stock Assessment to be discussed under agenda item 4.2. TSPMAC discussed conflict against this agenda item and agreed for Mr Turnbull to take part in discussions but be excluded from decisions related to his project, and which stock assessment method should be used.
Damian Miley	TSRA member	Torres Strait Regional Authority employee. No specific conflicts of interest against this agenda.
Gavin Mosby	TIB Industry member	Traditional inhabitant member for Masig. Traditional fisher for BDM, TRL and Finfish. RNTBC Masigalal Director. ZK Fisheries member. Member of finfish WG and RAG. No specific conflicts of interest against this agenda.

Horace Baira	TIB Industry member	TSRA deputy chair, TSRA FAC member, ZK fisheries director. No specific conflicts of interest against this agenda.
James Akiba	TIB Industry member	TIB licence holder, ZK Fisheries member. No specific conflicts of interest against this agenda.
Observers		
Yen Loban	TSRA Fisheries portfolio member – permanent observer	TSRA Fisheries portfolio member, TIB licence holder for TRL. ZK Fisheries Chair
Ian Butler	ABARES	ABARES. No specific conflicts of interest against this agenda
Quinten Hirakawa	TSRA	Hold 2 TIB licences and co-investigator on SM and CT biological sampling project. TSRA hold licences.
Lyndon Peddell	AFMA Compliance Manager	Australian Fisheries Management Authority employee. No specific conflicts of interest against this agenda.
Joseph Posu	PNG	PNG NFA. No conflicts against agenda.

RECOMMENDATION 1.3.1

That TSPMAC members and observers:

- a. **NOTED** the previously declared real or potential conflicts of members and update this list with current real or potential conflicts of interest (**Table 1**).
- b. **AGREED** that only one member had a declaration of interest that would require exclusion from a recommendation.
- c. **AGREED** that Mr Clive Turnbull could be present for discussions on which tiger prawn stock assessment approach should be used, however be excluded from the decision on this, as well as the assessment of his proposal and formulation of advice to the TSSAC regarding the proposal.
- d. **ABIDED** by decisions of TSPMAC regarding the management of conflicts of interest.
- e. **NOTED** that the record of the meeting must record the fact of any disclosure, and the determination of TSPMAC as to whether the member may or may not be present during discussion of, or decisions made, on the matter which is the subject of the conflict.

Agenda Item 2.1 Action items from other meetings

13. TSPMAC noted the ratified minutes were provided to members in February 2023.
14. TSPMAC noted the actions arising from past meetings. Progress against a number of action items were discussed in more detail below.
15. *Action 21.1 'TSRA to confirm whether funding could be available for Torres Strait community member observers if this project (community observers collecting data on Endangered, Threatened and Protected (ETP) species or species of interest) was to go ahead, and further explore options for this sort of work, with the support of AFMA as needed'.*
 - a. The TSRA noted that employment is important, however their current focus is on longer term employment opportunities and requested this be removed as an action item and can be added again in future if required.

- b. In reference to better reporting of ETP species, TSPMAC also noted that Fisheries Queensland are currently rolling out training to improve reporting and handling of ETP species on the ECOTF. This will also benefit the TSPF with all fishers operating in the TSPF being cross endorsed with the Qld ECOTF.
- c. One initiative of the project has been to photograph sea snakes in a basket with a ruler, which a computer program can then identify and measure the length of the sea snake, as well as determine whether a snake recovers from being still or sluggish. The TSPF could consider inviting similar procedures.
- d. Workshops are scheduled to be held in Cairns in January and February 2025 for the northern based TSP fishers, noting that training isn't mandatory.
- e. TSPMAC noted the desire from many Torres Strait communities to have greater transparency around what is taken, and what is landed on all fishing boats, and having a program where a Torres Strait community member is employed to observe offloading and see what species are being retained would assist with building trust.

ACTION: AFMA and Fisheries Queensland to stay in contact regarding QLD ETP species training and consider ways to employ techniques in the TSPF.

16. *Action 21.3: 'AFMA to write to TSPF licence holders seeking fuel and prawn grade and species data and explaining the purpose of collecting this data and how personal information will be protected.'*

- a. TSPMAC noted that this information is needed if catch rates drop in the fishery, so TSPMAC can identify whether it is due to economics or environmental issues. The industry members explained that running costs and maintenance are the key economic pressures at present for the fishery.
- b. TSPMAC noted the concerns identified by industry with providing economic data, noting that different operators have different arrangements and business decisions around sale of product, so relying on beach prices rather than sale prices would be more useful data.
- c. Mr McAtamney offered to provide beach price data to Mr Turnbull historically.

ACTION: Shawn McAtamney to provide historic beach prices data to Clive Turnbull.

- d. Mr Turnbull noted it would be useful to have fuel prices three times a year to support building a time series and future analysis.
- e. TSPMAC agreed that both Cairns prices and prices from the Torres Express (where boats now get fuel in Torres Strait) should be obtained three times a year. Cairns prices are publicly available and Mr Morrison, the owner of the Torres Express agreed to provide their fuel sale price data and has historic data back to 2010 from Seaswift supply too.

ACTION: Mr Morrison to provide historic fuel data back to 2010 (including Seaswift data), and current and future fuel data three times per year to Clive Turnbull.

17. *Action 21.7: 'Future discussions to be had around whether some discarded finfish could be provided to TIB fishers for use as bait, instead of all being discarded.'*

- a. AFMA informed TSPMAC that under legislation, it is not permitted to provide any bycatch to communities under legislation, aside from the allowable species identified in the *TSPF Management Plan 2008*.

18. *Action 21.9: 'AFMA to consider the requirements around licence renewals, and update licence renewal and transfer forms as required, in order to seek information regarding foreign interest the proposed operations to ensure the PZJA can meet its obligations under the TSF Act and Torres Strait Treaty. This should be completed alongside the Management Plan amendments.'*

- a. AFMA have placed a declaration for new and transfer/lease of licences to report any foreign investment in licences.
19. *Action 21.10: 'AFMA to check whether provisions around licence expiry and renewal which result in licences being cancelled if they are not paid on time are changing within the suite of TSF Act amendments. AFMA to inform TSPMAC out-of-session.'*
- a. AFMA noted that provisions around cancellation have been removed in the management plan amendments of the TSPF Act still in place but part of the TSF Act amendment changes.
20. *Action 21.11: 'AFMA to speak to the licensing section about whether the licence renewal and application fee can be issued on the same invoice.'*
- a. AFMA explained that unfortunately they cannot be issued on the same invoice, as levies and licence renewals are in different systems.
21. *Action 21.20: 'TSRA to discuss with their FAC whether a scoping study for Traditional Owner involvement in the TSPF is a priority. If so, TSRA to develop a scope in time for the 2024-25 funding round, which is due in July 2023.'*
- a. The TSRA advised that the TSRA Fisheries Advisory Committee (FAC), which provides advice to the TSRA board, discussed this matter decided it is not an immediate priority. This is noting the uniqueness of the TSPF, which means it would be a significant task to develop this.
 - b. TSPMAC agreed to remove it as an action item and raise in the future as needed.
 - c. TSPMAC noted that the access to a licence is the main barrier, and the only way to access licences is through purchase or lease, noting the TIB dedicated licences were surrendered for compensation, and won't be re-issued.

2 Reports

Agenda Item 3.1 Native Title update

22. A native title update was not able to be provided as no Native Title representative was able to attend the meeting.

Agenda Item 3.2 Industry update

23. The industry members provided updates on the fishing industry. The following major points were discussed:
- a. The prawn catches and quality were very good this year, however prices were not. Some operators are choosing the fish the Qld ECOTF for this reason.
 - b. Some industry members have been holding prawns in the freezer until they can get a better price for them. There were periods of receiving only \$10/kg.
 - c. The Fuel prices in Cairns are coming down and prawn prices slowly increasing, however the season is now over so they won't see the benefit.
 - d. There has been a drop off in tiger prawns recently, which they attribute to the increase in water temperatures, which usually means the prawns move away (although this usually happens closer to the end of the season).
 - e. It is becoming less viable for smaller boats to fish in the TSPF, as they cannot complete longer trips which improves economics.
 - f. The mothership (Torres Express) is improving things, and industry believe that is why there are more boats up there this year.

- g. 2024 has been the most challenging years in 40 years in terms of the marketing for both domestic and export. There isn't sufficient consumption in Australia right now to eat the prawn being caught, and trading is down internationally. This is partially linked to lack of independent certification of some prawn fisheries in Australia.
 - h. Prawn farming is also affecting the wild caught market, as places like Woolworths are currently only purchasing farmed prawns.
24. TSPMAC went on to discuss the recent pre-assessment of the TSPF and Qld ECOTF under the Marine Stewardship Council. David Bobbermen from Qld Seafood Industry Association provided a presentation, and the following points were noted and discussed:
- a. A group within QSIA have initiated and funded pre-assessments of some of the Fisheries Queensland and the TSPF under MSC.
 - b. The intent was to check whether management arrangements are adequate that the fisheries could meet the level for MSC certification.
 - c. The group who funded the pre-assessment will now be working with industry to gauge the level of interest for investment in the certification process. Certification can be for a whole fishery, for certain species, or for certain boats within a fishery.
 - d. The assessment is based on internationally recognised criteria, and the pre-assessment reports are not made public – with the assessment being made under the revised version 3.
 - e. The outcomes for the TSPF are stronger than Fisheries Queensland, where the pre-assessment for tiger and endeavour prawns determined that the TSPF met the MSC fishery standard, which means the fishery would likely pass MSC full certification.
 - f. There are two different steps that can be taken to move towards MSC certification: 1) a fishery improvement program (FIP), and 2) full MSC accreditation.
 - g. The FIP is a step that can occur before full assessment. It can be in place within a few months and would cost around \$15,000 to \$30,000. However does not hold the same level of benefit as a full assessment and accreditation.
 - h. Fishery Progress.org is the company that undertakes a majority of the FIP, with MSC also undertaking them although it is more expensive.
 - i. Full MSC accreditation takes around 12 months and costs around \$100,000.
 - j. An auditor needs to be appointed to administer the annual auditing of the certification which costs around \$30,000 to \$40,000 initially and around \$15,000 annually.
 - k. There are no rules about who can be an auditor, if they meet the MSC requirements. QSIA could do this role, or a new TSPF industry association could be established, as the NPF Industry Association manage the Northern Prawn Fishery (NPF) accreditation auditing.
 - l. There are some examples of people paying a higher price for MSC certified product, however the main benefits are gaining market access to buyers who only buy MSC certified product.
 - m. The pre-assessment report will be made available to any industry wanting to participate in progressing MSC certification for the TSPF.
 - n. From here, the parties who funded the pre-assessment will be working with TSPF industry to determine how many fishers would be interested in being a part of the assessment process, and which process should be followed (FIP, full assessment, and for specific species and licence holders, or the whole fishery).
 - o. AFMA explained that there will be management work associated with a certification. Discussion in the NPF Resource Assessment Group (RAG) is largely driven by the MSC

certification conditions, although these often align with the key focus points for AFMA in the fishery. For this reason, it is easier if the whole industry is onboard, as any management work to meet MSC requirements would still need to be charged to the levy base.

Agenda Item 3.3 PNG Update

25. TSPMAC noted the following updates from the PNG NFA:

- a. PNG continue to have little interest in prawn trawling, except in the Gulf of Papua, within 3-4nm of the coastline. There is some extension of trawling to the mouth of the fly river, which is a very productive area for prawn trawling.
- b. There was no interest raised at the last Fishery Bilateral meetings of expanding effort into the Torres Strait Protected Zone for the prawn fishery. PNG NFA are interested to look at more catch sharing opportunities in the future, however for now, the focus is on developing existing fisheries, such as Tropical Rock Lobster (TRL), and looking for feasibility of new/emerging fisheries too.
- c. There is a limit of 15 boats that can fish in the Gulf of Papua, with around eight vessels currently active. They are all older vessels, often purchased retired Australian prawn trawling boats.
- d. Fuel prices are a major issue for domestic fisheries (both commercial and artisanal fisheries), although industry is hoping economics will improve in the future.
- e. Mr Mosby, TIB member, raised the issue of many PNG vessels not having vessel IDs during COVID, so it was very difficult to track and protect communities.
- f. PNG NFA noted that all cross-endorsed vessels that come over to fish now (even dinghies) must be fitted with VMS, which will help this issue.

Agenda Item 3.4a AFMA update

26. TSPMAC noted the following updates from AFMA:

TSPF Harvest Strategy and Bycatch Reduction Devices

27. The Harvest Strategy and Bycatch Reduction Device Instrument were approved by the PZJA in May and are now both in place. Licence holders were informed of these changes via a letter.

Sunsetting Instruments

28. Three TSPF legislative instruments are due to sunset in December 2025 with AFMA commencing a process to re-make these instruments.
29. These instruments are 'Prawn general prohibitions' (transit zones and VMS exemptions), Prawn closed areas and Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs).
30. No changes are required to the closed areas or TEDs, however minor changes are required to the 'general prohibitions' instrument. There are several rules within this instrument that are now covered in licence conditions, so will be removed from this instrument. There will also be removal of the 'steaming exemption', as its not consistent with the broader AFMA VMS policy, nor required given the temporary switch off permissions that are still allowed.
31. TSPMAC noted the changes and provided 'In-principle' support to remaking these instruments as outlined in the paper.

RECOMMENDATION 3.4a

TSPMAC RECOMMENDED that the three sunseting TSPF instruments be remade, noting no changes are required to the closed area and TED instrument, and agreed to the minor changes proposed to the general prohibitions instrument, relating to VMS.

TSP Logbook Instrument and e-logs

32. At the November 2023 meeting, TSPMAC recommended e-logs be included as an option for TSPF fishers.
33. The e-log schema used is EPRAWN and is also used by the NPF. The electronic schema includes a range of fields, with relevant ones for each fishery 'turned on' for that fishery only.
34. The Torres Strait Fisheries logbook instrument was updated in 2023, however further changes have been made recently, as a new Finfish Logbook was printed which needed to be introduced. During review of the instrument, it was noted some of the current requirements for the TSPF in completing logbooks were overly burdensome, and some additional information was required relating to the catch of mackerels by TSPF fishers. Therefore the following changes were introduced:
 - a. Removing the requirement to provide the sex of any fish.
 - b. Reducing the requirement to report the weight and number of fish for all fish caught, to only a requirement for byproduct species (numbers only required for Mackerel, not all finfish).
 - c. Reducing requirements for discarded fish being reported to just target and byproduct species, and mackerel.
 - d. New requirement to specify retained and discarded Mackerels to genus level.
35. TSPMAC noted that there would be further discussion on the finfish requirements, and their feasibility under agenda item 4.3.

VMS Guidelines

36. Minor changes were approved by the PZJA, to the VMS guideless for the TSPF in October 2024. These guidelines are referred to in the TSPF MP, and are not legally binding, however provide one place for licence holders to find information related to VMS. The rules continue to be enforced through licence conditions.
37. The guidelines were updated to make them consistent with the AFMA VMS guidelines, with no change to the intent of them. They just remove outdated information (permitted VMS units) and information which is now covered on the AFMA website (manual reporting requirements, approvals for Temporary switch-offs).

MAB and Data Summary

38. The new management arrangement booklet (previously TSPF Handbook) has recently been published and is available on the PZJA website along with the 2023 Data summary. The following key updates were made to the MAB:
 - a. 'Fishery Snapshot' Section.
 - b. Inclusion of bycatch handling guide.
 - c. Updated allowable BRD and permitted species list (following queries around bug/crab limits).
 - d. Updated information on VMS.

New Commonwealth Minister

39. The Hon. Julie Collins MP was appointed the Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Minister, with Anthony Chisholm the assistant Minister. For the purposes of the PZJA, the Commonwealth Minister is responsible to administering the *Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1984*.

AFMA Indigenous Engagement Update

40. The FRDC project 'Development of an Indigenous Engagement Strategy for fishing interests with a focus on Commonwealth Fisheries' is nearing completion, which was co-funded by AFMA, DAFF and FRDC.
41. The project goal was to develop a strategy for effective engagement between Indigenous groups and Commonwealth Fisheries Management agencies, with the strategy aiming to meet AFMA's legislative objective to take account of indigenous interests in commercial fisheries decisions and any wider implications of the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's (DAFF) resources sharing policy.
42. The project steering committee included project staff from the University of Technology Sydney, Indigenous experts, FRDC reference group, DAFF and AFMA, meeting regularly since 2021.
43. Key initial findings and suggested approach to engagement recommend a national engagement structure that includes:
- a. National coalition or peak body for indigenous fisheries and fisheries related to sea country issues, with development funded by ILSC in cooperation with other Commonwealth agencies.
 - b. An Indigenous Fisheries Technical Working Group, funded and implemented by DAFF to facilitate indigenous expertise into fisheries policy and management processes.
 - c. An indigenous unit inside DAFF and AFMA to advance Indigenous engagement in day to day business.

Observer Program

44. The current TSPF observer target is 2.6% of fishing effort each fishing season. Fishing effort is monitored during the season, with observer deployment adjusted to meet the coverage targets depending on effort levels.
45. Recent observer coverage was lower during COVID-19, although has been higher than the target some years.
46. AFMA thanked licence holders who continue to accommodate observers and the crews who assist observers wherever possible. This cooperation and coverage across a range of vessels supports:
- a. Maintaining US export approval to the US.
 - b. Providing data to assist management decisions, particularly for ETP species.
 - c. Collect information on 'species of interest' to support management of these species.
47. A list of 10 'species of interest' was compiled by TSRA in 2010 and traditional Inhabitant members on TSPMAC, with information collected on these species by AFMA observers.
48. No species of interest have been reported by observers in the 2022, 2023 or 2024 fishing seasons.

ABARES Fishery Status Reports

49. Mr Ian Butler provided an update on the fishery status report.
50. He noted that the report has been recently published on the ABARES website, and going forward the reports will be published annually in July.

51. AFMA noted that the only issue of noting in the report, is the continued listing of uncertainty for endeavour prawn stock status, due to a lack of any assessment. This issue was discussed further in other business.

Agenda Item 3.4b Fisheries Queensland Management Update

52. Matt Campbell from the Animal Science section of the Queensland Department of Primary Industries provided a short update on research being conducted in the Qld ECOTF with BRD trials and education programs for ETP species interactions. The project is jointly funded by the Queensland Department of Primary Industries, the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water (DCCEEW), the Australian Council of Prawn Fisheries, the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation and James Cook University.
53. The project was initiated following results of an Ecological Risk Assessment for the fishery conducted in 2012, which proposed a need to reduce the ecological risk posed by the fishery to sea snakes and elasmobranchs.
54. The main objectives of the project are to:
- a. Quantify the effects of Bycatch Reduction Devices (BRDs) on sea snakes (and to reduce capture of animals through improved BRDs).
 - b. Develop strategies to reduce the catch of skates, rays and small demersal sharks.
 - c. Implement a pilot crew member observer program.
 - d. Develop safe-handling protocols for ETP species.
55. The project is testing new BRDs under commercial conditions as it is cheaper and is more likely to be accepted by industry if tested by industry. Observers are on board for a 10-day trip to test the BRD.
56. Two BRDs are being tested, the Tom's Fisheye (TFE) and the fish window (a device developed in Moreton Bay). To date, data has been recorded from 183 trawl shorts, with the BRDs 70-80 meshes from the drawn string.
57. Initial results for the TFE indicate a reduction in sea snakes by between 18% and 64% depending on the distance the BRD is placed from the drawstring.
58. The fish window trial showed a 91% reduction in sea snakes but may only be suitable in Moreton Bay where there are generally lower levels of bycatch.
59. A trial was also completed using a Turtle Excluder Device (TED) with 77mm bar spacing. It was found to reduce the catch of rays, small sharks and large sea toads. This led to improved catch quality too.
60. Project staff hope to have enough data collected by June 2025, although a formal legislative change is not likely until 2026.
61. Project staff are trialling a crew member observer (CMO) program, where crews are provided with a camera and basket for placing sea snakes. They photograph the snake, placed on a laminated measurement grid which allows computer software to determine the length of the sea snake, and someone to identify to species level, rather than expecting CMOs to do this at sea, given identification can be hard. The camera also records the GPS location, with 800 snake photos obtained to date.



62. AFMA requested Fisheries Queensland to keep them in the loop on any discussions, or be invited to meetings discussing legislative changes, so effects on TSPF can be considered in Qld ECOTF decisions.

ACTION: Fisheries Queensland to keep AFMA in the loop on management meetings discussing potential management changes to BRDs and TEDs, to consider complimentary arrangements in the TSPF.

63. TSPMAC also noted that there have been four industry workshops regarding the ETP species handing program, and further to be carried out in the north in early 2025.

64. Tom Hartley provided a more general Fisheries Queensland update:

- a. Fisheries Queensland and DCCEEW have been delivering a voluntary camera field trial since 2023, concluding in Dec 2024.
- b. Six different systems have been tested across 11 vessels.
- c. The cameras are proving to successfully observe large ETP species interactions, although are less successful with smaller ETP species observation, species ID of any TEPS, and general bycatch volume and composition monitoring proving challenging.
- d. MRAG Asia Pacific consultants have been contracted by DCCEEW to review onboard camera footage and to test the performance of different camera systems review software.
- e. Fisheries Queensland and MRAG Asia Pacific will publish a high-level qualitative report in early 2025 and the outcomes and key learnings of the field trial will be used to inform further design of an IOM program across the fishery.
- f. 2023 stock assessments have been completed for tiger prawns, endeavour prawns, Moreton Bay (sand and mud) bugs and red spot king prawn, although the red spot king prawn and mud bug results were not definitive.
- g. These are being used to inform catches for key trawl regions.

Agenda Item 3.4c TSRA update

65. TSPMAC noted the following updates from TSRA:

- a. There are a number of climate change projects going on in Torres Strait fisheries and within TSRA. The climate modelling project recommended by TSSAC is underway, there is a TSRA climate adaptation plan being developed, and DCCEEW, are working with communities to set up a Centre of Climate Change Excellence.

- b. A project looking at removing Crown of Thorns starfish has been underway around specific Torres Strait islands (Ugar, Erub, Mer and Masig), funded by TSRA, which has now been taken over by the Australian Institute of Marine Sciences (AIMS).
- c. The WAPIL project has recommenced, with investment to fishers to grow fishing community. The types of supports being offered through the program include:
 - i. Managing issues with compliance, China export markets and economic impacts.
 - ii. Focus on supporting fishers to meet AMSA requirements (currently 50% non-compliant).
 - iii. Replacement of motors/trailers though grant process to keep fishers fishing and fishing safely.
 - iv. Improving infrastructure on communities.
- d. TSRA are supporting ZK Fisheries through funding a specialist consultant to develop a pathway to financial path of independence for Zenadth Kes Fisheries.

Agenda Item 3.5 AFMA Compliance report

66. TSPMAC noted an update on the AFMA compliance program for the TSPF from the Torres Strait compliance manager, Lyndon Peddell. The following major points were noted:
- a. Torres Strait compliance came into AFMA in 2018, previously the jurisdiction of Fisheries Queensland.
 - b. There are two compliance officers based on Thursday Island, supported by fisheries officers in other AFMA offices.
 - c. They work with Maritime Border Command, Border Force and Qld police as AFMA don't have their own vessel.
 - d. AFMA use a Compliance Risk Management Tool (CRMT) to set priorities of AFMA compliance (risk-based framework).
 - e. When there are compliance breaches, AFMA start with education and a warning or official caution, before taking any further compliance action.
 - f. Torres Strait Fisheries do not yet have a Fishery Infringement Notice (FIN) system in place.
 - g. AFMA conducted four at sea inspections of TSPF boats and one carrier boat. From those inspections officers issued one official caution, one seizure of prohibited species, and educated the operators and licence holder. Only one vessel was fully compliant. The following breaches were detected:
 - i. Failure to report ETP species interactions (including near misses).
 - ii. Failure to report retained by-catch species.
 - iii. Failure to report finfish and Spanish mackerel – 20kg bag limit.
 - iv. Retention of prohibited species – Crabs.
 - v. Non-nominated agents completing logbooks.
 - h. TSPMAC noted that the legislation containing the crab prohibitions was a little uncertain, and legal advice was being sought to bring greater clarity to the rules around retention of spanner crabs specifically. TSPMAC also noted that operators are allowed to retain crab in the Qld ECOTF, so information will be added to the prawn MAB, as well as a new cheat sheet being added to the logbooks to cover off on some of these rules that are a bit ambiguous regarding the reporting requirements.

- i. There is increased funding to do more compliance on IUU fishing, however this is not related to domestic compliance for fisheries.
- j. Mr Peddell issued a reminder to report any boats which may be undertaking illegal fishing, as there is an increase of foreign incursions into AFZ.
- k. TSPMAC discussed how it would be best to deal with continued non reporting of ETP species, noting its likely these species are being under reported, given amounts that are reported during observer trips.
- l. Industry recommended more focus on continued education around ETP species reporting when compliance are boarding boats.
- m. TSPMAC also noted the difficulties industry find with completing different logbooks for the Qld ECOTF and TSPF. They requested there be more consistency wherever possible in what requires reporting and what does not.
- n. AFMA noted that they are going to investigate possibilities of using Fisheries Queensland reporting app for Torres Strait fisheries, however this would be look at a global Torres Strait level, not just for the TSPF, and may take some time. It is also uncertain whether they will be suitable or able to be used.
- o. TSPMAC Chair noted that it would be a suitable time for industry to raise any issues with Qld paper logbooks, which are difficult for fishers to use.
- p. Qld member Tom Hartley noted that Fisheries Queensland is focusing on logbook improvement through the development of electronic logbooks, rather than fixing the existing paper logbooks. They are wanting to promote the electronic logbook uptake in the fishery.
- q. Industry noted the Qld e-log system is certainly more user friendly.
- r. AFMA noted they are aware of benefits in standardising logbooks as much as possible across Qld, although do have different requirements.
- s. Mr Gavin Mosby, TIB industry member noted that there have been times he has been driving for the reef pilots, and came across boats on dark nights that do not have their AIS running. He requested industry share with their colleagues and skippers the importance of tuning it on to avoid marine incidents, particularly around the dark moon each month.

RECOMMENDATION 3.5.1

TSPMAC **RECOMMENDED** that Qld and AFMA to consider the status of logbooks and ways to improve their usability.

ACTION: TSPMAC industry members to spread word to industry on ensuring they are using their AIS systems, particularly on dark nights, for safety of non-fishing traffic.

Agenda Item 3.6 Data report

67. The following main points were noted during the data report, including the 2022, 2023 and 2024 fishing seasons, from the scientific member:

- a. 2022 was an average season in terms fishing effort and catch per unit of effort (CPUE) when compared with recent years (2016-2023).
- b. 2023 was the lowest effort (consistent but low through the season) and catches since 1980s despite high catch rates (above average CPUE) for both tiger and endeavour prawns. The 2023 endeavour prawn CPUE peaked in March and September/ October.
- c. The 2024 fishing effort appears to largely be driven by factors other than TSPF catch rates (CPUE).
- d. The April – June tiger prawn CPUEs are the highest recorded since 2015.
- e. Effort peaked (logbook records) in May and based on VMS in September.
- f. Estimated final effort ~1300 days, effort is already higher than 2023 and has been increasing over the course of the season.
- a. A drop in catch rates in the Qld ECOTF fishery in the later part of this 2024 and the Torres Express mothership arriving in Torres Strait would have provided increased incentive for fishers to fish in the Torres Strait.

68. TSPMAC discussed the sea snake data, which was included in the 2023 Data Summary and noted the large variations in the reporting, so AFMA recommended removing it from the data summary noting it is unlikely accurate data to report.

- a. TSPMAC noted Mr Turnbull analysed sea snake reporting data for all vessels from 2018-2023, compared to the total days fished.
- b. Reasonable numbers were reported for five vessels.
- c. When all days fished compared to the number of seasnakes were grouped, it was very high for 2023 but very low for 2022. The average across all data was around 0.4 seasnake/night.
- d. The Qld Government monitoring trawl surveys in 2007/08 showed an average of around 0.43/night (minimum 0.2, maximum 0.73) however these were much shorter shots, so the survey data was adjusted by a multiple of 20 to account for 10 hr trawling then adjustment factor of 0.8 to adjust for net changes (4 to 5 fathoms, which is now the most common currently used in the TSPF).
- e. Overall, there are similar catch rates being reported on average however there is a lot of variability between years and boats.
- f. TSPMAC looked at the seasnakes reported in observer data, as a comparison to what is being reported in logbooks (**Table 2**).
- g. TSPMAC noted that this observer data would indicate seasnake interaction rates are higher than that being reported in logbooks.
- h. TSPMAC agreed that AFMA should make connections with the key boats fishing and contact skippers to discuss the importance of reporting ETP species including sea snakes.

Table 2. Seasnakes reported by observers from 2019-2023, including CPUE figure.

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Elegant Seasnake	5	25	5	7	17
Ornate Seasnake	21	0	5	8	17
Olive Headed Seasnake	1	1	1	0	0
Black Headed Seasnake	3	0	0	0	1
Horned Seasnake	1	4	4	0	0
Stagger Banded Seasnake	1	0	0	0	0
Stokes Seasnake	1	1	1	6	8
Olive Seasnake	2	0	0	2	0
Large-headed Seasnake	0	0	0	1	2
Spectacled Seasnake	0	0	0	1	0
TOTAL	35	31	16	25	45
Observed Fishing Days	51	21	21	20	29
CPUE	0.69	1.48	0.76	1.25	1.55
Fleet	0.39	0.61	0.27	0.16	1.04

ACTION: AFMA to contact active skippers to discuss importance of reporting ETP species including sea snakes.

Agenda Item 4.1 Bycatch and Discard Workplan

69. TSPMAC discussed the new TSPF Bycatch and Discard Workplan (BDWP), which was developed by AFMA, following TSPMACs advice at the November 2022 meeting.

70. The development of new BDWP considered the existing TSPF BDWP and NPF Bycatch Strategy, including the relevant NPF objectives. TSPMAC suggested the following points on the new TSPF BDWP:

- a. Remove the specific objectives on Sygnathids, although consider having information within the plan that highlights the low interaction rates.
- b. Review the content on safe sea snake and turtle handling in the TSPF prawn handbook to ensure this remains current.
- c. Consider whether the analysis methods being trialled in Qld, which use VMS data to track trawl footprint, could be useful in the TSPF bycatch and discard workplan.
- d. Priority of improving TRL reporting in the TSPF.

71. TSPMAC reviewed and discussed Table 2 of the TSPF BDWP, which contains the objectives, risks, performance indicators and actions to be taken under the workplan. The recommended updates are summarised below and further detailed in red in Table 3 below.

72. Objective 1 - Improve reporting of bycatch and ETP species interactions.

- a. TSPMAC recommended adding actions related to the current work relating to identifying and handling ETP species in the Qld ECOTF.

73. Objective 2 - Explore methods to gain a better understanding of any sea snake hotspots in the fishery or at certain times of day or year.

- a. Industry noted that the weather and time of day would be key parameters they think would affect sea snake interactions the most. They also noted the continued difficulties with getting crew to report the interactions to either the skipper, or within logbooks, due to fear of fishing closures or other action. TSPMAC recommended that this objective be removed from this plan, with an initial focus on building trust with industry to ETP species reporting under current requirements before moving to more detailed reporting goals.

74. Objective 3 - Fishing operations take all reasonable steps to avoid the mortality of, or injury to, species listed under the EPBC Act, with particular focus on sea snakes.

- a. TSPMAC generally supported this objective and associated actions. They suggested changing the wording regarding an industry code of conduct to industry guidelines, which more accurately reflects the purpose of the document.
- b. TSPMAC also discussed the importance of working with other jurisdictions where possible, when developing management arrangements or guidelines, as it is difficult for industry to manage different rules across jurisdictions.
- c. TSPMAC also recommended removing the suggestion to improve education around hopper use, noting many boats are not suited to hoppers, and they are very expensive and complex to place on a boat, so there may be better objectives to focus on.

75. Objective 4 - Improve mitigation measures to reduce interactions with ETP species.

- a. TSPMAC agreed with this objective and actions, although suggested considering combining this with objective 3. However, AFMA explained that the objectives are slightly different and should remain separate.

76. Objective 5 - Avoid and/or minimise interactions with general bycatch species.

- a. Two additional actions were recommended to support this objective.
- b. TSPMAC proposed an action to explore the use of some bycatch species instead of discarding. Industry felt it unfortunate to have to discard finfish species that Torres Strait Islanders may be able to use for their fishing.

RECOMMENDATION 4.1.1

TSPMAC **RECOMMENDED** that AFMA reach out to the Torres Strait Finfish Working Group (FWG) and RAG to determine whether a discrete list of species, such as pinkies (threadfin bream), pilchards, goaties and small crabs could be retained and given to communities for use in fishing.

77. Objective 6 - Investigate and implement options, where feasible, to improve understanding of bycatch compositions across the fishery by species, area and season.

- a. No changes were suggestion to objective 6 and associated actions.

78. Objective 7 - Improve the reporting of incidental TRL take in the TSPF.

- a. TSPMAC noted that no licence holders have commenced reporting of TRL following the AFMA letter requesting voluntary reporting in early 2024. AFMA raised the possibility of bringing in mandatory reporting to try to further encourage reporting.
- b. TSPMAC industry members suggested taking an initial step of calling active skippers to discuss this rule, noting many skippers do not read emails, and may also respond more favourably with a conversion. TSPMAC also noted that with the new changes relating to reporting of finfish, introducing an extra mandatory reporting change for TRL would be many changes at once.

- c. A TIB Industry member suggested having a Torres Strait community member on boats to witness unloading (not just in the TSPF), as this will increase transparency of what is coming out of the water and increase trust from communities with the fishing industry. It is likely to bring more transparency of what is being caught using this sort of technique.
- d. AFMA agreed they are comfortable postponing mandatory reporting, understanding education and building trust with industry is an important step, although advised that if a significant improvement in reporting wasn't seen over the next 12 – 18 months, mandatory reporting would be revisited.

ACTION: AFMA and TSRA to consider whether a Torres Strait community member could be employed to board boats as they unload, to see what product is being unloaded, to increase transparency.

79. Objective 8 - Improve understanding of possible ongoing habitat impacts from trawling.

- a. TSPMAC noted that the ECOTF has a 15-minute polling rate, which was sufficient for showing the trawl footprint was small in that fishery, although the effectiveness in the TSPF will be dependent on the AFMA VMS polling rates.
- b. Despite this comment, TSPMAC suggested no changes to this objective and associated actions.

ACTION: AFMA to consider whether the AFMA VMS polling rate will be suitable for assessing trawl footprint for the TSPF.

Table 3. Updates to draft bycatch workplan for TSPF.

Objective Number	Objective	Risks being addressed	Performance indicator	Actions
1	Improve reporting of bycatch and ETP species interactions.	Potential under-reporting of interactions with ETP species and general bycatch.	Improve percentage of seasnakes reported to species level. More TSPF operators reporting interactions with seasnakes.	<p>Data collected through observer program (2.6% of actual effort coverage with scientific observers) and logbooks.</p> <p>TSPMAC to discuss methods for improving reporting of ETP species interactions.</p> <p>Update seasnake ID guide and provided to licence holders to improve species level ID.</p> <p>Work with Fisheries Queensland to consider any collaboration to increase exposure of Torres Strait licence holders to their Endangered, Threatened and Protected Species training programs.</p> <p>Consider suitability of rolling out similar methods for reporting sea snakes (photos) as being trialled in the Fisheries Queensland trial Crew Member Observer program.</p> <p>Contact active TSPF fishers by phone or a video conference to remind licence holders of requirements for reporting ETP species and risks for not doing so (other measure that may need to be implemented without improved reporting such as e-monitoring).</p>
2	Explore methods to gain a better understanding of any seasnake hotspots in the fishery or at certain times of day or year. Consider similar analysis for sawfish if possible.	Seasnake interactions. Sawfish interactions. Crew member safety.	Report provided to TSPMAC identifying hotspot areas or discussing barriers to identifying hotspots such as data deficiencies.	Analyse location and time of day seasnake and sawfish interactions occur most commonly, using logbook data.

3	Fishing operations take all reasonable steps to avoid the mortality of, or injury to, species listed under the EPBC Act, with particular focus on sea snakes.	Interactions with seasnakes and other ETP species.	<p>Ongoing collaboration with Fisheries Queensland regarding transition of TSPF fleet to newly introduced BRDs (2024), noting dual endorsed boats require matching arrangements between fisheries.</p> <p>Continue to monitor gear advances and research in the Northern Prawn Fishery and Qld ECOTF and adopt new measures to avoid and/or minimize interactions with high-risk species where appropriate.</p> <p>Increased uptake of newly approved BRDs (2024 legislative instrument).</p> <p>Understanding of hopper use in the TSPF and improved uptake by industry.</p>	<p>Update seasnake handling guide in TSPF management arrangement booklet. During this process, consider recent research into sea snake identification occurring in Western Australia which is reviewing identification of and handling safety for sea snakes. Attempt consistency in the handling guide across jurisdictions (TSPF, NPF and QECOTF). Consider development of Industry guidelines code of conduct for responsible handling of bycatch, particularly ETP species. Work with other jurisdictions where feasible to ensure consistency between fisheries. (particularly the Qld ECOTF).</p> <p>Active fishers to complete annual gear surveys to support understanding of which BRDs are being used.</p> <p>Review number of licence holders using hoppers and promoting their use for ETP species protection and improving prawn catch quality. Undertake education for promotion of hopper use.</p> <p>AFMA compliance continue to take gear, BRD and TED measurements to ensure compliance with minimum standards.</p> <p>Annual review (including TSPMAC discussion) of progress on research and technology and management advances in the NPF and Qld ECOTF including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECOTF BRD trials. • ECOTF bycatch handling education programs. • NPF seasnake electronic monitoring research. • NPF BRD research and advances.
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				Continue regular TED accreditation with the US, thus meeting world best practice standards.
4	Improve mitigation measures to reduce interactions with ETP species.	Interactions with seasnakes and other ETP species.	<p>Ongoing collaboration with Fisheries Queensland regarding transition of TSPF fleet to new BRDs, noting dual endorsed boats require matching arrangements between fisheries.</p> <p>Continue to monitor gear advances and research in the Northern Prawn Fishery and Qld ECOTF and adopt new measures to avoid and/or minimize interactions with bycatch where appropriate.</p> <p>Increased uptake of newly approved BRDs (2024 legislative instrument).</p>	<p>Monitor uptake of new approved BRDs through annual gear surveys.</p> <p>Review number of licence holders using hoppers and promoting their use for ETP species protection and improving prawn catch quality.</p> <p>Consider developing industry code of conduct regarding bycatch interactions.</p>
5	Avoid and/or minimise interactions with general bycatch species.	General bycatch.	<p>Ongoing collaboration with Fisheries Queensland regarding transition of TSPF fleet to new BRDs, noting dual endorsed boats require matching arrangements between fisheries.</p> <p>Continue to monitor gear advances and research in the Northern Prawn Fishery and Qld ECOTF and adopt new measures to avoid and/or minimize</p>	<p>Consider developing industry guidelines regarding bycatch interactions.</p> <p>Active fishers report which BRDs are used via annual gear survey.</p> <p>AFMA compliance continue to take gear, BRD and TED measurements to ensure compliance with minimum standards.</p> <p>Provide information to industry, on avenues for industry to trial new BRD technology through a scientific permit.</p>

			<p>interactions with bycatch where appropriate.</p> <p>Increased uptake of newly approved BRDs (2024 legislative instrument).</p> <p>Fisher compliance with minimum gear standards.</p>	TSPMAC to consider opportunities for utilisation of certain species of bycatch.
6	Investigate and implement options, where feasible, to improve understanding of bycatch compositions across the fishery by species, area and season.		Data collection and monitoring in place for general bycatch through independent scientific observer program and analysis undertaken as required.	<p>Independent scientific observers collect data on catch compositions (ongoing).</p> <p>Identify options to improve understanding of catch compositions across the fishery for consideration by TSPMAC.</p>
7	Improve the reporting of incidental TRL take in the TSPF	<p>Operators not reporting incidental take of TRL species.</p> <p>Voluntary reporting being requested from the 2023 fishing season.</p>	<p>Increased reporting of TRL in NP16 logbooks.</p> <p>Implementation of new measures to support logbook reporting of TRL</p>	<p>Review logbook data to monitor the reporting of TRL in logbooks.</p> <p>TSPMAC to discuss methods for encouraging better TRL reporting.</p> <p>Undertake additional education around the importance of reporting incidental catches of TRL, including during any port inspections.</p>
	Improve understanding of possible ongoing habitat impacts from trawling	Impacts of trawling on habitat	<p>Better understanding of the feasibility for using trawl footprint as an assessment of new habitat impact in the TSPF.</p> <p>If the method is suitable, presentation of trawl footprint data to TSPMAC for discussion.</p>	<p>Review of Qld methods for monitoring trawl footprints using VMS.</p> <p>AFMA to consider costs and benefits of an assessment of trawl footprint in the TSPF as a mechanism for understanding changes to the fleets trawl footprint.</p>

Agenda Item 4.2 TSPF Stock Assessment

80. TSPMAC noted the need to undertake a new tiger prawn stock assessment in 2025, given the recommendation within the new TSPF Harvest Strategy, to complete one at least every five years.
81. Dr Andrew Penney attended the meeting for this item to provide additional scientific advice regarding the assessment. This was both given his role in the redevelopment of the harvest strategy, as well as to provide independent advice on the best stock assessment approach, given the TSPMAC Scientific Member, Mr Turnbull, is the consultant who will undertake this research.
82. AFMA advised that research projects in the TSPF are eligible for up to 25% Government funding, with TSSAC will consider this project in February 2025 against other Torres Strait research priorities and may result in up to 25% government funding of the project cost.
83. TSPMAC noted that the 2019 stock assessment showed the post 2008 annual tiger prawn harvest is well below the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) estimates, estimating the tiger prawn biomass at 60-88% of virgin biomass (B_0) and well above B_{MSY} . These are the main reasons for the higher post 2008 mean annual CPUE (~twice) in the fishery compared with 1991-2003, with these results indicating that the stocks are at sustainable levels with current fishing effort.
84. The next stock assessment will be the first to occur under the new harvest strategy, which uses a constant TAE model unless annual triggers indicate a need to change the TAE.
85. TSPMAC noted that there are two proposed options for completing the next stock assessment:
 - a. Base line stock assessment
 - b. Stock assessment including updated fishing power
86. The key difference between the two options is that the fishing power update option includes:
 - a. Undertaking a gear survey.
 - b. Updating the fishing power model with the new gear survey data and logbook data and re-running the model.
 - c. Fitting the stock assessment model with the revised fishing power time series.
87. The difference in the estimated costs between the two options is due to the additional work to undertake the gear survey (which would be reduced if AFMA undertook this work) and the additional data analysis and update the fishing power model required.
88. TSPMAC discussed the benefits of completing a full fishing power analysis, the risks of not completing one and reasons for lower risk in the TSPF. They noted that while accounting for changes in fishing power is very important in effort-controlled fisheries like the TSPF, TSPMAC advice is sought on a preferred option (considered from a risk-catch-cost perspective). AFMA explained some of the risks of not completing a full fishing power analysis include:
 - a. The TSPF is a relatively simple stock assessment, with nominal CPUE used in the TSPF Harvest Strategy as the key stock status indicator, so it would be more important to ensure all elements of the assessment are as current as possible.
 - b. There is a risk of not detecting changes in fishing power under a five-year stock assessment cycle (i.e. if not updated each stock assessment, changes in fishing power would not be detected or accounted for in management for 10 or more years).
89. TSPMAC noted that some of these risks may be less in the TSPF, where the fishing power of vessels clearly increased from 1980 to 1999, however it has remained relatively stable since 2000. Further, given the very low level of fishing effort in the fishery in recent years, it's not unreasonable to assume that there hasn't been any significant level of effort creep in the fishery.

90. Dr Penney provided some more background on the relationship between biomass and CPUE in the TSPF, and links between the fishery stock assessment, harvest strategy, and relative importance of fishing power analysis. The following major points were noted:
- a. Analysis completed by Dr Penney with the redevelopment of the harvest strategy showed a strong correlation between biomass and CPUE. For this reason, the biomass can accurately be predicted based on the CPUE, so a regular stock assessment is not required to identify changes in biomass.
 - b. As there is also a strong correlation between the nominal and standardised CPUE in the TSPF, standardisation of CPUE isn't required for annual monitoring of stocks using nominal CPUE levels, which is the method used under the new harvest strategy.
 - c. When a stock assessment is undertaken, the correlation equation (between standardised CPUE and biomass) changes with new inputs of data, particularly if there is a substantial change in fishing power. If this correlation equation changes substantially, it means the CPUE target and triggers within the harvest strategy would need to change to meet the same biomass target and triggers the CPUE corresponds too.
 - d. Given the long history of data in this fishery, it's unlikely it will change much if at all, meaning the risks of not doing a full assessment of fishing power are reasonably low. However ensuring we track fishing power changes is vital in ensuring the CPUE target and triggers within the harvest strategy remain suitable for the biomass target and triggers agreed upon.
91. Dr Penney asked TSPMAC whether there have been changes to the fishery that change the fishing power being exerted by the fleet in the TSPF (e.g. engine power, nets, rigging length and height, fuel carrying capacity so only larger vessels go to fish). He noted that if there are large changes that have occurred, we would likely want to do an updated fishing power analysis, but if only small changes occurred, the analysis may not be required.
92. Mr Turnbull explained that the changes to headline length all reduced at the same time (so we didn't see the impact) but from 2003-2006, there were increases to fishing power detected, which were likely a result of the boats choosing to fish, rather than technological changes (i.e. years with more larger vessels).
93. TSPMAC industry members noted the following observations of fishing power changes in the fishery:
- a. Vessels with better sorting capacity are more efficient (hoppers vs. old sorting trays).
 - b. It is not financially viable for smaller boats to fish in the TSPF anymore, as they cannot carry enough fuel and product to make it a viable trip length. This could influence fishing power of the fleet as smaller boats are not fishing.
 - c. Recent analysis in the Qld ECOTF indicated that bigger boats do have increased fishing power, however they question that larger boats are not necessarily more efficient, as they tend to trawl at the same speed with the same size nets and net spread.
 - d. They noted that bigger boats can work less days, however fishing power looks at per boat day catch efficiency so this would not be relevant.
94. AFMA noted that given the very low effort in the fishery (well below the triggers), there is really no risk to sustainability of the stock, if fishing power has changed. There would need to be a huge change in fishing power to cause any risk.
95. TSPMAC noted that given there are a few industry members undertaking refitting and upgrades on vessels that will likely increase efficiencies, although these will not be completed before this

stock assessment is undertaken. Therefore, a stock assessment with fishing power could be postponed until the next stock assessment and suggested that a fishing power analysis should be completed a minimum of every 10 years.

96. TSPMAC also noted that the baseline stock assessment has sensitivity analysis built in, so they will be able to see the effect fishing power does have on the assessment, for consideration in future decisions around conducting full fishing power analysis.
97. Mr Butler from ABARES noted that staff at ABARES thought it strange there would be no increase in fishing power found in the TSPF. Dr Penney explained that it isn't unusual, noting that the South East Trawl Fishery has found no change in fishing power since 1970, as people have not been building new boats with better fuel efficiency. He noted that there are likely a lot more changes to vessels in NPF due to the higher investment people make in this fishery.

Mr Turnbull left the room, so TSPMAC could further discuss and make a recommendation of which option to choose, as well as consider the project application against the TSSAC assessment criteria. Comments and discussion on the application are treated as commercial in confidence, and not shared as a part of the public meeting record.

RECOMMENDATION 4.2.1

TSPMAC **RECOMMENDED** that the base line stock assessment be completed, with sensitivity analysis, and that a full fishing power analysis be completed in the 2030 stock assessment.

RECOMMENDATION 4.2.3

TSPMAC **DISCUSSED** the research proposal and made comments against each of the TSSAC assessment criteria as detailed in [Attachment A](#).

Agenda Item 4.3 Rules on take of Spanish mackerel and coral trout in the TSPF

98. TSPMAC discussed the current legislation regulating bycatch of finfish in Torres Strait fisheries aside from the Finfish fishery. The following main points were discussed:
 - a. There are three relevant pieces of finfish fishery legislation relating to the take or possession of finfish by Torres Strait licenced boats that do not hold a finfish symbol. Two instruments allow the retention of 20kg of Finfish at any time, however the *Finfish Fishery Management Plan 2013* (Finfish Plan) prohibits the retention of finfish by anyone who is not licenced to fish specifically in the finfish fishery (holding a finfish symbol).
 - b. When the Finfish Plan was introduced, the Finfish RAG had recommended that this should be used to prohibit at least the retention of mackerels and coral trout, as the key target species and agreed a lower priority to amend the other instruments, as the finfish management plan would supersede them.
 - c. However, the latest advice received by the TSPF management team is that the finfish instruments need to be amended to be consistent with the Finfish Plan.
 - d. There are also currently challenges with compliance regarding any finfish which may be held onboard, as AFMA cannot be certain whether the finfish were taken by recreational catch, or during trawling. This creates difficulties if a licence holder were to sell the product, as recreationally caught fish cannot be sold.
99. The Finfish RAG and FWG will consider recommending changes to the instruments at their 2025 meetings, with this advice to be considered by the PZJA in their decision. As TSPMAC won't meet

again prior to the PZJA decision, advice was sought on any potential issues for TSPF licence holders if the 20kg provision was removed to include in this process.

100. AFMA management advised their support to remove the 20kg finfish allowance noting the:
- a. Inconsistency between the Finfish Plan and instruments.
 - b. Potential for recreationally line caught finfish to be sold as commercial catch.
 - c. Provision for take home packs has been removed in Commonwealth Fisheries.
 - d. FWG have previously recommended the removal of the 20kg finfish allowance, with the Finfish Plan being amended to only allow the take of finfish under a finfish licence.
 - e. Enforcement complexities due to the conflicting legislation.
101. TSPMAC discussed the proposed changes, discussing the following points:
- a. Many Torres Strait community members would like more certainty about what is being caught, as was discussed earlier in the agenda.
 - b. Fisheries Queensland informed TSPMAC that that TSPF licence holders can recreationally fish with lines on commercial boats in the TSPF, however must comply with all Qld recreational fishing rules (i.e. cannot sell the catch and only retain three mackerel at a time per person and six per boat).
 - c. TSPF licence holders are comfortable with the change, if they are still allowed to recreationally fish.
102. AFMA questioned whether recreational fishers must abide by the Torres Strait commercial finfish closures, and noted further discussion should be had with Fisheries Queensland before feeding information back to the Finfish RAG on issues raised at this meeting.

ACTION: Fisheries Queensland to advise whether commercial closures (such as in the Torres Strait Finfish fishery) under Torres Strait Fisheries legislation apply to recreational fishers.

103. TSPMAC agreed it was comfortable with the removal of the allowance to retain finfish caught during trawling, if fishers are still allowed to fish recreationally and retain these catches.

RECOMMENDATION 4.3.1

TSPMAC **SUPPORTED** the removal of the 20kg finfish retention rules within the Finfish instruments, and fishery rules more generally, noting fishers will still be able to recreationally fish for finfish and retain these fish as per recreational fishing regulations.

104. TSPMAC also discussed the new logbook reporting requirements, applying to both electronic and paper logbooks, which include recording to genus level, discards for byproduct and target species and mackerels instead of all species. The following main points were discussed:
- a. TSPMAC noted that while it has always been a requirement to report all discarded species, because this hasn't been enforced, that implementing all the proposed requirements at once would be to greater change for industry. Industry members recommended focusing on the most important elements initially, including improving TRL and Mackerel discard reporting (numbers only not weights), and implement the other changes later on.
 - b. Industry members advised that most crew on boats wouldn't be able to make accurate eyeball estimates of total catch weights, so this requirement would either result in very rough estimates or would require weighing which be prohibitively burdensome.

- c. TSPMAC also noted it may be better to use observer data related to finfish, and extrapolate this, noting logbook data can be less reliable. AFMA noted observer data is useful, however is only a small percentage of effort, so accurate reporting in logbooks is still required.
- d. Industry members explained that some crew on boats are unsure how to report TRL in their logbooks, despite this information being provided in a letter. AFMA agreed to write up a 'cheat sheet' to stick within the logbook to explain this. The information can also be added into the e-log instructions, and it may also be able to be added to favourites. This will also be included in an education session for active fishers (either through direct phone calls or a video conference with fishers).

ACTION: AFMA to develop a 'cheat sheet' for the key new reporting elements to focus on in logbooks and send with hard copy of MAB to all licence holders. The instructions should include information on where to report TRL and mackerel discards, and what needs to be reported (i.e. numbers of mackerel and TRL). AFMA may also have a section at the start of the handbook saying 'what's new this year' to make these recent changes clear.

ACTION: AFMA to update the TSPF MAB with information regarding the retention of finfish (once this rule is changed), how to report TRL discards and rules around crabs.

ACTION: AFMA to consider whether any additional observer data should be collected on finfish, and whether this can be used to estimate finfish catch and discards across the fishery.

105. TSPMAC also noted that there are some finfish species (e.g. barramundi cod and wrasse) that are important species to communities, and they would prefer they were not even taken recreationally. This information could be fed back to the Finfish RAG and FWG for discussion.

ACTION: AFMA to provide information to the Finfish RAG and FWG regarding important finfish species that are taken recreationally, to be discussed regarding management (such as barramundi cod and Māori wrasse).

RECOMMENDATION 4.3.2

TSPMAC **AGREED** AFMA should focus on seeking reporting of numbers of TRL and Finfish caught (and discarded) in the logbooks before broadening to other species.

RECOMMENDATION 4.3.3

TSPMAC **RECOMMENDED** that a cheat sheet be developed to insert into the logbook, explaining how to report TRL and finfish which are discarded.

RECOMMENDATION 4.3.4

TSPMAC **RECOMMENDED** that AFMA arrange a video conference and invite all skippers and owners, but specifically targeting active skippers and owners, to discuss:

- Reporting of TRL, how to do this within your logbook.
- Importance of reporting of ETP species.
- New reporting requirements for finfish.
- Allowable species take in the fishery (particularly information on crabs).
- Qld ECOTF ETP species handling training and extension into the TSPF.
- Provide information session on e-logs to encourage uptake.

A Torres Strait community member should also be invited to this education session to provide the perspective on why species such as TRL and certain finfish are important to gather data on.

ACTION: AFMA and TSRA to work together to determine which Torres Strait community representative would be best placed to attend the TSPF industry online education session to provide context on reporting important species (such as TRL and finfish) in logbooks.

Agenda Item 4.4 TSPF Management Plan Amendments

106. TSPMAC noted the progress on the drafting of the TSPF Management Plan Amendments:

- a. TSPMAC supported the key changes to the TSPF Management Plan at its last meeting in November 2022.
- b. AFMA has worked with a drafter to develop a draft amendment to the Management Plan, to enact these changes. AFMA have also developed a plain English summary document which explains the purpose of the amendments, details the tracked changes and reasoning for each amendment. This document will be used in the public consultation and targeted Torres Strait community consultation.
- c. The PZJA have approved the Management Plan amendments going out for public comment, which is intended to occur in the first half of 2025. AFMA are hoping to carry out this consultation through the regular community consultation visits, however if they cannot occur in the first half of 2025, TSRA have offered to fund consultation to the three recommended communities (Poruma, Masig and Ugar).
- d. It was requested that TSPMAC members provide any comments on the plain English document prior to the minutes being sent to members for comment.

ACTION: MAC members to review and provide comments on the 'plain English' summary for the management plan amendment consultation.

107. TSPMAC noted that consultation on the changes to the licencing policy, which explain the rules around who will be issued licences in the fishery, will occur at the same time as the Management Plan amendment consultation.

108. The TSRA noted the importance of ensuring the messaging is simple and right for the policy, so communities understand its intention, without being confused with deep detail which may cause conversations to move into other topics not relevant to the simplicity of the policy.

ACTION: TSRA and AFMA to work on the communication plan for the management plan amendments and policy consultation.

Agenda Item 4.5 AFMA Climate Risk Framework

109. AFMA provided an overview of AFMA Climate Risk Framework being rolled out across fisheries, noting the following points:
- a. AFMA and CSIRO developed the 'Adaption of Fisheries to Climate Change Handbook' in 2021, which was designed to help fisheries managers and operators identify effective responses to climate change by working through an evidence-based process.
 - b. This was used as the basis to develop the AFMA Climate Risk Framework, which is designed to work in conjunction with existing processes for consideration when setting TACs and making other management decisions like following harvest strategies.
 - c. Initial workshops have been held with south-eastern and sub-Antarctic region fisheries, with reports available on the AFMA website.
 - d. While this project was developed for Commonwealth fisheries, the process described in the handbook can be equally applied to fisheries managed by all jurisdictions.
 - e. Due to the importance placed on the climate impacts by the Torres Strait communities, and the vulnerability of the fisheries to climate change, AFMA intends to hold specific workshops for Torres Strait fisheries. Subject to resource constraints, AFMA will work through the PZJA to identify priority fisheries and timelines.
 - f. The framework is a risk assessment process, considering climate risks for fisheries and species, with four steps to consider risk:
 - i. Assess the overall risk to a species.
 - ii. Whether there is sufficient precaution in the existing science and management framework to take account of the climate risk for that species.
 - iii. Determination of the residual risk to a species, with existing arrangements.
 - iv. Provide advice to PZJA on any additional measure to respond to climate risk.
 - g. If a species is well above the target reference points but is at high (negative) risk of climate impacts, this would be assessed as a nil risk – with likely limitations on what can be done to protect against this. If a species is currently below the target reference point, with a medium (negative) risk of climate impacts, this would be assessed as a medium to high risk under the framework. Alternatively, if a species were below the target but would have a high, positive climate impact, this would be assessed as a nil/low risk in the future.
 - h. TSPMAC noted that it may be important to separate brown and grooved tiger prawns, as one member advised that grooved tiger prawns have been found to be a more resilient species to the impacts of climate change (based on recent research that is currently unpublished).
110. TSPMAC went on to discuss the Climate and Ecosystem Status Report for the TSPF. The report is intended to be refined over time based on TSPMAC and expert feedback, with specific feedback sought on any 'on-the-water' observations or key indicators that should be included in future reports.
111. TSPMAC discussed the key elements that should be focused on in the TSPF, and incorporated into future climate status reports which included:
- a. Sea level height on reefs; as seagrass is the key nursery grounds for prawns and is more protected at higher sea level heights during the day in periods of high temperatures.
 - b. Temperatures at a more localised level, in particular warrior reef (see point above).

- c. Direction of currents; as the currents push juvenile prawns off the reef into the fishing grounds. Both previous and potential future prediction data would be useful.
- d. Turbidity levels; including rain effects from the Fly River run off.

112. TSPMAC noted there are sensors on several buoys collecting climate data (managed by AIMS) and Mr Turnbull mentioned a historic oceanographic study, which he agreed to provide to AFMA.

ACTION: Mr Turnbull to try to locate historic oceanographic study and provide to AFMA.

113. AFMA noted the TSPMAC suggestions on key environmental indicators and advised a gap analysis would be undertaken to determine what data is available for the TSPF (including consultation with industry and other relevant agencies), with the key gaps identified. If insufficient data is currently available, options for collection of this data will be discussed.

114. TSPMAC also noted that it may be useful to identify key species (e.g. mud crabs), which may be able to be used as early signals that changes may happen in the TSPF.

115. There is currently work being undertaken by CSIRO in the NPF (known as the 'Tiger MICE' project) which looks at the effects of physical parameters on different species. TSPMAC suggested a presentation by Dr Eva Playanyi-Lloyd from CSIRO at a future meeting would be useful.

ACTION: AFMA to arrange presentation from CSIRO on the MICE modelling for the TSPF at a future meeting.

RECOMMENDATION 5.4.1

TSPMAC **RECOMMENDED** that AFMA complete a gap analysis on the main data for collection (listed below) for use in the TSPF climate reports, and work with Torres Strait and commercial industry to determine ways to collect missing data.

- i. Sea level height on reefs; as seagrass is the key nursery grounds for prawns and is more protected at higher sea level heights during the day in periods of high temperatures.
- ii. Temperatures at a more localised level, in particular warrior reef (see point above).
- iii. Direction of currents; as the currents push juvenile prawns off the reef into the fishing grounds. Both previous and potential future prediction data would be useful.

ACTION: AFMA to complete a gap analysis on the main data for collection for and use in the TSPF climate reports, and work with Torres Strait and commercial industry to determine ways to collect missing data.

Agenda Item 5 Other Business

endeavour prawn stock assessment

116. TSPMAC noted the latest status of endeavour prawns from the ABARES Fisheries Status report, which is currently listed as uncertain as there has not been a stock assessment or another analysis undertaken for this species in some time.

117. TSPMAC considered potential analysis options, other than a stock assessment, which could be undertaken that would be sufficient to move the species from uncertain status, with the following points discussed:

- a. Partial logbook data (prior to logbooks being made mandatory) shows anecdotal evidence that endeavour prawns catch rates tend to increase when the species is targeted.
- b. Mr McAtamney noted that in the 1990s, endeavour prawns were targeted due to a higher demand from the European market. This timing fits with the data Mr Turnbull has highlighted.
- c. The outcomes of MSC pre-assessment were overall positive for the TSPF, although one potential focus identified was to reduce some of the uncertainty around endeavour prawns. So there is a benefit in progressing this over the next 12 months, although there is no current urgency from the MSC perspective.
- d. It is hard to fit an endeavour prawn model to the data as it's a byproduct species. Fisheries Queensland have the same difficulties with endeavour prawn and red spot king prawn.
- e. Mr Butler noted that in absence of an endeavour prawn stock assessment, having an analysis using currently available data, rather than only anecdotal evidence, which demonstrates changes in targeting practices (e.g. price data or linking previous catches to locations that are no longer fished).
- f. Currently, if the ABARES analysis for the Fisheries Status Reports sees a drop in catches or CPUE for endeavour prawns, this would usually indicate concerns with the stock. However, if further analysis or data can be provided to ABARES to improve the understanding of the risks to the endeavour prawn stock and any supporting evidence of how targeting drives the CPUE.
- g. TSPMAC noted that price data from the 1990s when endeavour prawns were being targeted would be useful for building the argument around targeting being heavily linked to market prices.
- h. Mr Newman noted that in the Qld ECOTF, they are now reporting what they are targeting within their logbooks, as they can then see links between CPUE and targeting. The inclusion of this within the TSPF logbooks would support future data analysis, although wouldn't be useful for understanding historical data, with price data required to understand the changes in targeting in the fishery.
- i. Fisheries Queensland have also developed an analysis for mixed species fisheries in management, which could be a useful resource too.
- j. TSPMAC agreed that Mr Turnbull should work with AFMA, Ian Butler and Alex Campbell (Fisheries Queensland), to identify a preferred analysis option to provide sufficient evidence to reduce uncertainty in endeavour prawn stock status.

ACTION: Clive Turnbull to talk to Fisheries Queensland to determine whether his modelling work on mixed species fisheries could be used for understanding endeavour prawn CPUE in the TSPF.

ACTION: Mr McAtamney to send historic price data for endeavour prawns to Clive Turnbull to assist with exploring historic targeting and CPUE for endeavour prawns.

ACTION: Clive Turnbull to work with Fisheries Queensland staff to determine ways to reduce uncertainty around endeavour prawn stocks based on results of recent Fisheries Queensland stock assessments.

Other Items

118. TSPMAC Chair thanks members for their service on TSPMAC, noting that this would be the last meeting of this committee, before there is another recruitment round for the positions. AFMA

also thanks members, and noted it is very good to have some consistency of members between terms, welcoming any members who still wish to serve to reapply.

119. Thanks meeting was closed with a prayer at 1:15pm.

Summary of actions arising from TSPMAC 22

Item number	Action	Responsibility
2.1	AFMA and Fisheries Queensland to stay in contact regarding Qld ETP species training and consider ways to employ techniques in the TSPF.	AFMA
2.1	Shawn McAtamney to provide historic beach prices data to Clive Turnbull.	AFMA
2.1	Mr Morrison to provide historic fuel data back to 2010 (including Seaswift data), and current and future fuel data three times per year to Clive Turnbull.	Ed Morrison and Clive Turnbull
3.4b	Fisheries Queensland to keep AFMA in the loop on management meetings discussing potential management changes to BRDs and TEDs, to consider complimentary arrangements in the TSPF.	Fisheries Queensland
3.4b	Tom Hartley to provide a video of the camera results from the latest stock assessment survey to TSPMAC.	Fisheries Queensland
3.5	TSPMAC industry members to spread word to industry on ensuring they are using their AIS systems, particularly on dark nights, for safety of non-fishing traffic.	TSPMAC industry members
3.6	AFMA to contact active skippers to discuss importance of reporting ETP species including sea snakes.	AFMA
4.1	AFMA and TSRA to consider whether a Torres Strait community member could be employed to board boats as they unload, to see what product is being unloaded, to increase transparency.	AFMA and TSRA
4.1	AFMA to consider whether the AFMA VMS polling rate will be suitable for assessing trawl footprint for the TSPF.	AFMA

4.3	Fisheries Queensland to advise whether commercial closures (such as in the Torres Strait Finfish fishery) under Torres strait Fisheries legislation apply to recreational fishers.	Fisheries Queensland
4.3	AFMA to develop a 'cheat sheet' for the key new reporting elements to focus on in logbooks and send with hard copy of MAB to all licence holders. The instructions should include information on where to report TRL and mackerel discards, and what needs to be reported (i.e. numbers of mackerel and TRL). AFMA may also have a section at the start of the handbook saying 'what's new this year' to make these recent changes clear.	AFMA
4.3	AFMA to update the TSPF MAB with information regarding the retention of finfish (once this rule is changed), how to report TRL discards and rules around crabs.	AFMA
4.3	AFMA to consider whether any additional observer data should be collected on finfish, and whether this can be used to estimate finfish catch and discards across the fishery.	AFMA
4.3	AFMA to provide information to the Finfish RAG and FWG regarding important finfish species that are taken recreationally, to be discussed regarding management (such as barramundi cod and Māori wrasse).	AFMA
4.4	AFMA and TSRA to work together to determine which Torres Strait community representative would be best placed to attend the TSPF industry online education session to provide context on reporting important species (such as TRL and finfish) in logbooks.	AFMA
4.4	MAC members to review and provide comments on the 'plain English' summary for the management plan amendment consultation.	All members
4.4	TSRA and AFMA to work on the communication plan for the management plan amendments and policy consultation.	AFMA and TSRA
4.5	Mr Turnbull to try to locate historic oceanographic study and provide to AFMA.	Mr Turnbull

4.5	AFMA to arrange presentation from CSIRO on the MICE modelling for the TSPF at a future meeting.	AFMA
4.5	AFMA to complete a gap analysis on the main data for collection for and use in the TSPF climate reports, and work with Torres Strait and commercial industry to determine ways to collect missing data.	AFMA
5	Clive Turnbull to talk to Fisheries Queensland to determine whether his modelling work on mixed species fisheries could be used for understanding endeavour prawn CPUE in the TSPF.	Mr Turnbull
5	Mr McAtamney to send historic price data for endeavour prawns to Clive Turnbull to assist with exploring historic targeting and CPUE for endeavour prawns.	Mr McAtamney
5	Clive Turnbull to work with Fisheries Queensland staff to determine ways to reduce uncertainty around endeavour prawn stocks based on results of recent Fisheries Queensland stock assessments.	Mr Turnbull

Summary of TSPMAC 21 recommendations

Agenda Item	Recommendations
1.3	<p>RECOMMENDATION 1.3.1</p> <p>That TSPMAC members and observers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. NOTED the previously declared real or potential conflicts of members and update this list with current real or potential conflicts of interest (Table 1). b. AGREED that only one member had a declaration of interest that would require exclusion from a recommendation. c. AGREED that Mr Clive Turnbull could be present for discussions on which tiger prawn stock assessment approach should be used, however be excluded from the decision on this, as well as the assessment of his proposal and formulation of advice to the TSSAC regarding the proposal. d. ABIDED by decisions of TSPMAC regarding the management of conflicts of interest. e. NOTED that the record of the meeting must record the fact of any disclosure, and the determination of TSPMAC as to whether the member may or may not be present during discussion of, or decisions made, on the matter which is the subject of the conflict.
3.4	<p>RECOMMENDATION 3.4.1</p> <p>TSPMAC RECOMMENDED that the three sunseting TSPF instruments be remade, noting no changes are required to the closed area and TED instrument, and agreed to the minor changes proposed to the general prohibitions instrument, relating to VMS.</p>
3.5	<p>RECOMMENDATION 3.5.1</p> <p>TSPMAC RECOMMENDED that Qld and AFMA to consider the status of logbooks and ways to improve their usability.</p>
4.1	<p>RECOMMENDATION 4.1.1</p> <p>TSPMAC RECOMMENDED that AFMA reach out to the Torres Strait Finfish Working Group (FWG) and RAG to determine whether a discrete list of species, such as pinkies (threadfin bream), pilchards, goaties and small crabs could be retained and given to communities for use in fishing.</p>
4.2	<p>RECOMMENDATION 4.2.1</p>

Agenda Item	Recommendations
	TSPMAC RECOMMENDED that the base line stock assessment be completed, with sensitivity analysis, and that a full fishing power analysis be completed in the 2030 stock assessment.
4.2	<p>RECOMMENDATION 4.2.3</p> <p>TSPMAC DISCUSSED the research proposal and made comments against each of the TSSAC assessment criteria as detailed in Attachment A.</p>
4.3	<p>RECOMMENDATION 4.3.1</p> <p>TSPMAC SUPPORTED the removal of the 20kg finfish retention rules within the Finfish instruments, and fishery rules more generally, noting fishers will still be able to recreationally fish for finfish and retain these fish as per recreational fishing regulations.</p>
4.3	<p>RECOMMENDATION 4.3.2</p> <p>TSPMAC AGREED AFMA should focus on seeking reporting of numbers of TRL and Finfish caught (and discarded) in the logbooks before broadening to other species.</p>
4.3	<p>RECOMMENDATION 4.3.3</p> <p>TSPMAC RECOMMENDED that a cheat sheet be developed to insert into the logbook, explaining how to report TRL and finfish which are discarded.</p>
4.3	<p>RECOMMENDATION 4.3.4</p> <p>TSPMAC RECOMMENDED that AFMA arrange a video conference and invite all skippers and owners, but specifically targeting active skippers and owners, to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting of TRL, how to do this within your logbook. • Importance of reporting of ETP species. • New reporting requirements for finfish. • Allowable species take in the fishery (particularly information on crabs). • Qld ECOTF ETP species handling training and extension into the TSPF. • Provide information session on e-logs to encourage uptake.

Agenda Item	Recommendations
	A Torres Strait community member should also be invited to this education session to provide the perspective on why species such as TRL and certain finfish are important to gather data on.
4.5	<p>RECOMMENDATION 5.4.1</p> <p>TSPMAC RECOMMENDED that AFMA complete a gap analysis on the main data for collection (listed below) for use in the TSPF climate reports, and work with Torres Strait and commercial industry to determine ways to collect missing data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sea level height on reefs; as seagrass is the key nursery grounds for prawns and is more protected at higher sea level heights during the day in periods of high temperatures. b. Temperatures at a more localised level, in particular warrior reef (see point above). c. Direction of currents; as the currents push juvenile prawns off the reef into the fishing grounds. Both previous and potential future prediction data would be useful. d. Turbidity levels; including rain effects from the Fly River run off.