

QUOTA HOLDER SUB-COUNCIL
Wednesday August 16, 2017

Minutes

Welcome:

The Chair, Alan Gray welcomed members present and acknowledged the passing of Paddy Maguire.

Attendance:

B Amos, A Brown, B Cobbing, H Cutts, B Denny, H Gasparinatos, A Gray, C Gunson, B Hall, A Hansen, D Hansen, A Hitchens, J Hoult, A Jaworski, T Lesser, B Lesser, D Lisson, A Marriott, M Marriott, N McDonald, J McKibben, S McKibben, T Ni, L Norris, M O'May, B Polanowski, M Porteus, B Rex, R Scanlon, S Seabourne, P Seabourne, S Sharp, P Sharp, M Steane, D Tory, G Woodham, R Young, Jack Xie

Apologies:

N Wallace, F Bender, B Russell, W Clark, M Clark, P Pollard, B Cutts, M Maddock, G Bull, L Bull, M Hoult, L Hoult, B Wilson

The Minutes of previous meeting:

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday August 24, 2016 were accepted as a true record; moved John Hoult seconded Avril Brown.

Business arising from previous meeting:

Nil

2017 catch and FRAG up-date:

FRAG #3 – Alan ran through the IMAS data reports for all zones and explained the science behind the CPUE summary plots.

Western Zone and Bass Strait zones are travelling well showing improved CPUE data. Central western zone not responding to quota level reductions and the zone will be split between northern and western zones for the start of 2018.

Greenlip zone travelling ok with a few blocks showing signs of falling IMAS CPUE data.

Northern and Eastern zones are not responding to quota reductions over a number of years and industry may need to reduce the TAC further in these two for 2018.

There was discussion on responsible management of the fishery, the effects of pulse fishing and how industry needs to spread effort e.g. via reverse capping, catch caps etc. A few comments from the members stated that the TAC reductions that were applied for 2017 have not had enough time to show signs of improvement.

Major environmental events in 2016 on the East Coast have made an impact on fishery recruitment; a major storm event in June 2016, the 200 day heatwave event and overgrazing by *Centrostephanus* urchins. Members agreed this is a combined problem to all fisheries and TACL should work with TSIC/Govt (federal and state) to help eradicate and manage these problems.

National Abalone Levy/ACA update:

Abalone Council Australia (ACA) Board members are currently making final adjustments to the marketing levy prospectus. The Commonwealth Department of Agriculture and the FRDC will then sign off on the contents of the prospectus prior to it being mailed by the Australian Electoral Commission to all Quota Holders in all States in October/November 2017. The levy will potentially start in July 2018 (subject to Ministerial and Parliamentary approval) if it is supported by industry via the levy ballot.

The collection mechanism for the levy is still being negotiated – it will either be based on 1.5% of the beach price or a “flat” cents per kilogram. If implemented, the levy will be collected for 5 years and then another ballot will be conducted to determine if there is sufficient industry support for it to continue.

All quota owners are strongly encouraged to go to www.abalonepal.com to obtain detailed information regarding the levy proposal. This website also has a facility which allows stakeholders to make comment or ask questions about the proposed levy.

For levy related information go to: www.abalonepal.com

There was some discussion on Tasmanian product marketed in China as a premium product.

Royalties update:

Prior to the last State election a letter from the Premier “will effect change which will, over time, place the wild caught abalone sector in a position, which is no worse than comparable sectors” ie. Rock Lobster 4.5%

The Liberal Government has undertaken to reduce the royalty to 5%. Dean, Avril and Joey have been meeting with the Minister to have a date in writing for the reduction.

Salmonid update:

There were 2 events in the last month;

- FloMo, which saw 300 boats on the water and 4,000 people in and around the Hobart docks.
- 6,500 submissions were received by the Spring Bay Council for the most recent Tassal/Oakhampton Bay Development Application.

At a recent symposium conducted by the National Environmental Law Association Wes Ford, the Director of the EPA, outlined the proposed new legislation that will provide the EPA with the powers to oversee the development and compliance of fish farm aquaculture in Tasmania. There were numerous questions from the floor, many pertaining to the level of absolute power vested in the Director’s position. (a copy of the draft bill and a summary sheet is available on (<http://dpipwe.tas.gov.au/sea-fishing-aquaculture/marine-farming-aquaculture/changes-to-salmon-industry-regulation/finfish-farming-environmental-regulation-bill>)

Minister Rockliff recently released a Draft Salmon Farming Growth Plan for Tasmania.

The current map provided by the Govt is not high resolution but shows areas designated for research, established farms and proposed areas available for finfish farms.

A quick overview of the maps shows:

Large tracts of Bass St including King, Flinders and 3 Hummock and Hunter Islands have been nominated as potential Salmon Farming growth area. – The area nominated involves >85% of our Greenlip fishery.

The Actaeons is nominated as a no-go area but permits fish farm development within 200m of the eastern side of the reef. Huon Aquaculture already has a permit to research the eastern side of South Bruny Is between Adventure Bay and the Fryers.

Storm Bay is nominated for aquaculture with Huon Aquaculture already well established and Petuna Seafoods and Tassal already nominating sites. Tassal have re-activated leases that have been fallow at Port Arthur.

Discussion:

Suggest the TACL put in a submission for the Actaeons and Channel areas, to protect the highest value abalone areas.

There are also environmental issues that affects tourism and recreational fishers, it was noted that the Map doesn't show any allocation for onshore fish farms.

Dive Questionnaire –74 members responded to the questionnaire. The questionnaire asked FLAD owners and supervisors which potential restructure option they supported. The objective of a restructure is to reduce the number of divers.

32 supported no action,

25 supported a catch cap limiting the amount to be caught by each FLAD

16 supported 2 for 1 amalgamation for new divers

1 supported a buyback and shelving of FLADs

'The Board has stated there is potentially a case for restructure but that the results from the questionnaire were inconclusive and thus provided no guidance or mandate for further action on this matter'

General Business:

Biosecurity Tasmania – there is an application for the importation of brood stock from Victoria to stock an aquaculture facility at Dunalley. This processing facility is an 'open loop' system, which may lead to bio-security issues to our wild industry.

TACL will consult with the CVO and put in a submission

MSC Certification- IMAS have undertaken preliminary testing to see what needs to be undertaken prior to full Certification.

Election of TACL Quota-Holder Sub Council Chairman

Alan stood down and CE Dean asked for nominations for Quota Holder Sub-Council Chair.

Alan Gray was nominated by Chris Gunson and seconded by Barry Hall,

Alan accepted the nomination.

As there were no other nominations Alan was elected unopposed

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 11.50am