

## **DIVE SUB-COUNCIL MEETING**

**Tuesday March 12, 2019**

---

### **Minutes (DRAFT)**

**Present:**

B Greene, G Hurd, S Anning, M Baker, C Baker, T Chadwick, B Cobbing, R Daft, J Dale, M Debnam, B Denny, M Florence, J Gasparinatos, N Harris, J Huddleston, G Hughes, J McKibben, R Menadue, G Moroney, S Palmer, B Rex, P Richardson, B Richardson, S Sharp, B Wilson, G Woodham. Craig Mundy & Matt Bradshaw (speakers)

**Apologies:**

B Ransom, N Forsyth, R Baillie, C Pepper, S Larby, B Allen, D Lisson

**Welcome:**

The Chair Paul Richardson welcomed divers to the meeting.

**Minutes** of AGM held Friday August 31, 2018 were approved by J McKibben, and seconded by T Chadwick'

**Business** arising from previous minutes:

Nil

**West Coast** size limit increase:

Paul asked the following questions to start off the discussion;

1. Is it too late?
2. Is it necessary?
3. Is it an impost?

The divers discussed various previous changes to the fishery, their effectiveness, as well as the future of the industry.

Dr Craig Mundy explained the historical role that science has played in the industry and how the data is interpreted from divers and the 350 dive sites that IMAS has established around Tasmania. Research delivers facts and evidence; papers have been written on the data received and these findings have been peer reviewed by the Division Chief at CSIRO.

1. *Size limits preserve the level of spawning biomass to contribute to the future of the fishery*
2. *Size limits prevent localised depletion*

The West Coast size limit has been too low for too long and is showing a decline in the stock; increasing the size limit on the west coast will preserve the fish for 5-6 months

leaving more fish on the bottom adding to the biomass. Science modelling shows 150mm as being the 'sweet spot'.

*When setting TACs and size limits – consideration is given on how the decision will affect all sectors of the industry; what are the personal and social consequences?*

Some divers noted there may be more fish mortalities because of increased measuring although others agreed that it was a reasonably quick process to 'get their eye in'.

The West coast is considered to be sustainable as only one block is considered not sustainable.

On the East Coast environmental drivers are affecting the fishery with low reproduction and declining productive fishing reef.

IMAS science cannot be compromised by different sectors, the Harvest Strategy is world's best practice.

Status Australian Fish Stocks (SAFS) report on sustainable fish stocks is a requirement for an export permit.

IMAS – each diver has a unique code for CPU standardisation and takes into consideration zones, weather, doubling up, and measures the impact of all variables and trends. The decision making process is objective, if there is a massive downturn in catch after a size limit increase then the effect will be monitored and will show up in the standardisation process. There are complexities in spacial locations, being driven to dive in extreme weather.

IMAS will run a series of diver workshops to explain the new GPS/dive loggers to divers; what data will be collected, how the divers have changed their dive patterns and what they are seeing on the bottom. IMAS has collected 7 years of data.

The Chair asked for a show of hands on increasing the size limit to 145mm on the West Coast from July 1, 2019

The majority of divers agreed to the size limit increase of 145mm on July 1, 2019
---

### **General Business:**

1. East Coast opening on January 1, - the majority of divers voted No.  
Opening Cape Pillar north (not biosecurity blocks that are closed) on April 1 - the majority of divers voted yes.
2. West Coast Caps – north of Strahan  
The majority of divers voted NO to a Central West Zone from Strahan to Sandy Cape.  
Divers prefer the catch be allocated to the whole West Coast so the divers can move about freely without Caps.
3. Digital platform, is underway in other states. The back end logistics in the Dept is a considerable task, with more resources being allocated to progress the project. Cyber security is an issue.

4. AMSA – most divers are having issues with the new legislation. AMSA are also having issues understanding the local fleet. Vic, SA, and WA agree with Tasmania that each state should have a local division.
5. CSIRO Shark monitoring – beacons are being installed in areas where sharks are close to productive areas.
6. Industry – there is an abundance of divers to harvest a quota that has been reduced by 1,000t.
  - In 2014 – pre paid = 25% return value of the fish
  - In 2018 – the return was 18%
  - Economics = 70 divers
7. 1<sup>st</sup> Aid Refresher Courses for Divers and Deckhands
  - Dover – July 9
  - Moonah – June 28, July 3, 5 and 26

Meeting closed at 4.03pm