

## Summary of outcomes from open abalone fishery Workshop

### Eden Fisherman's Club, February 28 2013

**Attendance.** About 20 fishery Shareholders and divers attended the meeting, with apologies being received from many Shareholders, divers and other stakeholders, particularly again with the weather. Three DPI representatives also attended the meeting.

### General summary

The meeting received a brief presentation from Stacey Patterson (EconSearch) on the economic survey of the NSW Industry.

The meeting received a presentation from Dean Lisson (Abalone Council Australia) on management of Research and Development programs by the ACA.

Industry members discussed and agreed to approaches on four issues, including the TAC, separate quota, Fishing Period and Management Charges.

Geoff Allan, the Director of Fisheries, was then introduced to the meeting and addressed a series of management issues raised by Industry.

**Management Charges.** The meeting expressed concern about the size of Management Charges, the level of service delivery, and the recent process to determine Management Charges. Concern was also expressed about the delays with resources for the GPS and measuring logger projects. It was agreed that DPI would review the Management Charge budget, and finalise resources for the research projects as soon as possible.

**Size limits.** The meeting expressed concern about the impact of the size limit change south of Wonboyn, particularly with the shift in catch. It was agreed to review the size limit change when data was available at the end of the fishing period.

**Separate quota.** The meeting expressed support for a separate quota, perhaps north of Dalmeny. It was agreed to progress a separate quota when the new electronic catch reporting system was in place, and for Industry to circulate a paper about the proposal.

**Fishing Period.** The meeting expressed support for a change to the timing of the fishing period, perhaps starting in January or April. It was agreed that Industry would circulate a brief discussion paper and, if necessary, arrange a vote for a change in the timing of the fishing period.

**DPI and diver OHS.** DPI is reviewing procedures for approaching divers and their boats. It was agreed to discuss further when the review was complete.

A series of issues were also raised, that have been raised for some time, including at the last MAC and also the quarterly phone hook-up in Nov 2012, and have not been progressed to the satisfaction of Industry.

**Indigenous Permits policy, procedures and guidelines.** DPI responded with a link to the DPI website, which outlines general policy on indigenous fishing. Industry requested information about the specific procedures and guidelines being used, and again expressed concern about the Indigenous Interim Compliance Policy.

**Catch reporting change advice, call flow.** DPI responded catch reporting changes are delayed due to the need for legislative change, and the need to respond to the general review of fisheries management, but work on this project, including a smart phone app is ongoing. Industry again requested information on the proposed changes and particularly the call flows.

**Protocols for bin weight.** DPI responded this will continue to be reviewed.

**A4 docket book.** DPI responded that A4 dockets are in progress with a draft soon to be sent to industry.

**Outstanding budget items.** Industry requested a formal response on specific items. DPI responded all shareholders were consulted and the reasoning behind the budget decisions was sent to all shareholders.

**Beach price reporting and GVP calculation.** Industry requested detail to the process and a formal response in writing. DPI responded they are satisfied with current arrangements.

**Harvest Strategy and FSM progress.** Industry requested advice about progress with a Harvest Strategy, as requested by the TAC Committee and following the draft prepared by Industry.

**Marine park permit.** Industry has applied for a Research Permit to complete size and abundance surveys in the Batemans Marine Park. The application was submitted in early 2012, but no response has been received. Industry requested the ongoing delay be investigated.

## Research projects

The meeting received a summary of the research programs being run by the Abalone Council of NSW, including GPS, depth and measuring loggers. Only limited funding has been received for these projects to date in 2012-13, with no funding available for analysis of logger data or measuring loggers.

New research projects including abundance surveys on southern reefs have also been delayed because of funding uncertainty. The meeting expressed concern about the lack of funding for agreed research programs, and the delay and limited funding for the GPS logger project. Research projects with support from FRDC were summarised including the use of loggers in Structured Fishing and more objective TAC decision process, the national Biotoxin survey and Economic survey.

## TAC advice

The final part of the meeting involved consideration of recommendations for the 2013-14 TAC. This involved consideration of the data available about each area, and seeking consensual agreement from Industry and DPI about an appropriate TAC allocation for the area in 2013-14.

The meeting reached a general consensus on an increase in the TAC during 2013-14, as long as the catch could be spread away from the area where fishing is currently concentrated between Bunga and Wonboyn (Table 1). This increased spread of catch could be achieved by greater catches from areas south of Wonboyn as abalone hopefully grow through the size limit increase and processors encourage fishing from this area, and from areas north of Bunga through more travelling, possibly encouraged by a northern quota.

South of Wonboyn, a combination of size limit changes, reduced catch rates, summer and processing requirements have led to catch targets not being reached. Because of limited travelling, most targets north of Bunga are also not likely to be reached. Limited catch in the south and north has led to increased catch from Bunga to Wonboyn (red in Table 1). As catch targets had been reduced through part of this area because of reduced fishing in past years, several catch targets are well above target, and it is these areas where catch targets were increased.

From Long Beach to Green Cape (i.e. areas 13-16), the target for each area was increased by about 2 t, while the target was increased about 1 t for both areas from Bunga to Turingal (i.e. areas 10-11). This is generally consistent with catches in 2012-13, although targets for 2013-14 are still below likely 2012-13 catches in 4 of the 6 areas, and were combined with good catch rates, sizes of abalone and observations of stocks in general. Catches in Disaster Bay (i.e. areas 17 and 18) were above targets, but targets were maintained considering their increase in recent years and the decline in catch rates over the recent summer period. The recommendations from the meeting about the distribution of catch are included in Table 1 and 2.

Table 1. Catch monitoring for 2012-13 Fishing Period. Assessment data compares the last 3 months to the same 3 months a year ago. Blue shows areas below target catch and red shows areas above target catch.

Area	Assessment data		2012-13 Fishing period								2005-07	2008-11	2013-14
	Catch rate	Mean size	to date	%Target	if 120 t	Target	Review	T <sub>+30%</sub>	T%99-02	T%08-11	min-max	min-max	
01 Tweed A-E	-	-	0.1	6%	0.2	2.0	3.0	1.4-2.6	90	724	0.0-0.0	0.0-1.0	2.0
02 Port Stephens F-J	-	-	0.3	16%	0.6	2.0	3.0	1.4-2.6	104	7017	0.0-0.0	0.0-1.0	2.0
03 Kiama K-M	-	-	0.5	17%	0.9	3.0	4.0	2.1-3.9	25	278	0.0-0.0	0.0-2.1	3.0
04 Ulladulla N	-	-	0.1	5%	0.2	2.0	3.0	1.4-2.6	40	219	1.4-7.5	0.5-1.6	2.0
05 South Brush P	+35%	+8%	3.9	78%	6.8	5.0	6.0	3.5-6.5	42	120	3.7-10.9	3.7-5.4	5.0
06 Batemans Q	-	-	0.1	12%	0.2	1.0	2.0	0.7-1.3	16	296	1.8-5.4	0.0-1.2	1.0
07 Moruya R-S	-	-	0.6	63%	1.1	1.0	2.0	0.7-1.3	9	60	3.1-7.5	0.3-4.4	1.0
08 Narooma T	-	-	0.7	19%	1.3	4.0	5.0	2.8-5.2	23	123	5.6-10.0	1.6-4.4	4.0
09 Bermagui U1-3	+25%	+16%	1.8	23%	3.1	7.8	10.0	5.5-10.1	26	124	7.4-9.0	4.4-9.3	7.8
10 Bunga U4-V2	-12%	+2%	4.3	62%	7.4	6.9	9.0	4.8-9.0	43	118	7.6-9.8	3.7-8.3	8.0 (+1.1)
11 Moon Bay V3-W1	+8%	0%	6.9	89%	12.0	7.7	8.0	5.4-10.0	43	97	7.9-10.1	7.1-8.5	9.0 (+1.3)
12 Turingal W2-X1	+13%	+4%	4.2	49%	7.3	8.5	11.0	6.0-11.0	59	129	6.6-8.0	5.5-7.4	8.5
13 Long Beach X2	-1%	0%	4.0	129%	7.0	3.1	5.0	2.2-4.0	33	113	4.3-5.8	1.9-3.1	5.0 (+1.9)
14 Eden Y11-21	+24%	-2%	7.5	94%	13.1	8.0	10.0	5.6-10.4	34	104	8.1-10.8	6.1-9.6	10.0 (+2.0)
15 Saltwater Y22-23	+16%	+1%	4.4	74%	7.7	6.0	8.0	4.2-7.8	40	116	4.9-8.1	3.9-6.2	8.0 (+2.0)
16 Bittangabee Y24	+4%	+5%	8.3	139%	14.5	6.0	8.0	4.2-7.8	34	112	6.9-7.5	5.1-5.7	10.0 (+4.0)
17 Greencape Y31	-16%	+1%	7.3	71%	12.8	10.3	13.0	7.2-13.4	55	146	7.5-10.3	5.9-8.6	10.3
18 City Rock Y32	-15%	+1%	5.0	61%	8.7	8.2	10.0	5.7-10.7	77	187	4.1-7.4	3.6-5.5	8.2
19 Wonboyn Z1-3	+3%	+10%	2.8	41%	5.0	7.0	9.0	4.9-9.1	45	111	8.5-12.3	4.3-7.6	7.0
20 Saltlake Z4	-28%	+12%	3.3	37%	5.7	9.0	11.0	6.3-11.7	37	131	7.5-12.5	5.2-10.3	9.0
21 Howe Z5	-9%	+14%	2.6	16%	4.5	16.0	20.0	11.2-20.8	79	136	10.3-12.4	8.7-16.4	16.0
<b>Total</b>			68.8	57%	120	124.5			42	127	119-162	93-97	

Table 2. Current, likely and target catches for 2012-13 Fishing Period with Workshop comments and planned catches for 2013-14 within 21 blocks. Red targets show areas agreed at the Workshop and blue shows targets agreed after further consultation.

Block	2011-12 Fishing period				Workshop comment	2013-14 Fishing period	
	to date	%target	if 120 t	target		Target	Review
Northern Pt							
<b>01 Tweed A-E</b>	0.1	6%	0.2	2.0	Catch down, limited travel, maintain target	<b>2.0</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>02 Port Stephens F-J</b>	0.3	16%	0.6	2.0	Catch down, limited travel, maintain target	<b>2.0</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>03 Kiama K-M</b>	0.5	17%	0.9	3.0	Catch down, limited travel, maintain target	<b>3.0</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>04 Ulladulla N</b>	0.1	5%	0.2	2.0	Catch down, limited travel, maintain target	<b>2.0</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>05 South Brush P</b>	3.9	78%	6.8	5.0	Catch above target, stocks good, maintain target	<b>5.0</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>06 Batemans Q</b>	0.1	12%	0.2	1.0	Catch down, limited travel, maintain target	<b>1.0</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>07 Moruya R-S</b>	0.6	63%	1.1	1.0	Catch down, limited travel, maintain target	<b>1.0</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>08 Narooma T</b>	0.7	19%	1.3	4.0	Catch down, limited travel, maintain target	<b>4.0</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>09 Bermagui U1-3</b>	1.8	23%	3.1	7.8	Catch down, limited travel, maintain target	<b>7.8</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>10 Bunga U4-V2</b>	4.3	62%	7.4	6.9	Catch up, stocks good, increase target	<b>8.0 (+1.1)</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11 Moon Bay V3-W1</b>	6.9	89%	12.0	7.7	Catch up, stocks good, increase target	<b>9.0 (+1.3)</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>12 Turlingal W2-X1</b>	4.2	49%	7.3	8.5	Catch below target, stocks good, maintain target	<b>8.5</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>13 Long Beach X2</b>	4.0	129%	7.0	3.1	Catch up, stocks good, increase target	<b>5.0 (+1.9)</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>14 Eden Y11-21</b>	7.5	94%	13.1	8.0	Catch up, stocks good, increase target	<b>10.0 (+2.0)</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>15 Saltwater Y22-23</b>	4.4	74%	7.7	6.0	Catch up, stocks good, increase target	<b>8.0 (+2.0)</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>16 Bittangabee Y24</b>	8.3	139%	14.5	6.0	Catch up, stocks good, increase target	<b>10.0 (+4.0)</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>17 Greencape Y31</b>	7.3	71%	12.8	10.3	Catch above target and stocks ok, maintain target	<b>10.3</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>18 City Rock Y32</b>	5.0	61%	8.7	8.2	Catch above target and stocks ok, maintain target	<b>8.2</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>19 Wonboyn Z1-3</b>	2.8	41%	5.0	7.0	Catch down, stocks good, size limit, maintain target	<b>7.0</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>20 Saltlake Z4</b>	3.3	37%	5.7	9.0	Catch down, stocks good, size limit, maintain target	<b>9.0</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>21 Howe Z5</b>	2.6	16%	4.5	16.0	Catch down, stocks good, size limit, maintain target	<b>16.0</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>68.8</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>124.5</b>		<b>136.8</b>	

