

Harvest Strategy Working Group
Gascoyne Demersal Scalefish Resource

Meeting No. 1 - 9 June 2016

In response to a request from the Minister of Fisheries, the Department of Fisheries has established a stakeholder based Working Group to develop a harvest strategy for the Gascoyne Demersal Scalefish Resource (GDSR) that accommodates the interests of the commercial and recreational fishing sectors. The Harvest Strategy Working Group (HSWG) consists of representatives from the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council, Recfishwest, commercial and recreational fishers and the Department of Fisheries, and is chaired by an independent facilitator. The HSWG has been asked to develop a Harvest Strategy for the GDSR according to an agreed Project Plan, and it is intended to have a draft Harvest Strategy released for public comment during August this year.

The first meeting of the HSWG was held in Perth on Thursday 9 June 2016. It is the first time that both the Commercial and Recreational sectors have jointly been involved in developing a harvest strategy through a working group process. The HSWG considered the Harvest Strategy Policy document and reviewed and discussed the GDSR stock assessment process and results. This information forms the basis of the ecological sustainable component of the Harvest Strategy.

The overall structure of the harvest strategy policy is uniform across all fisheries in WA but is adapted to reflect the particular fishery being considered. On this basis a template Harvest Strategy document which had been pre-populated with factual information about the GDSR was reviewed. That document forms the first working draft of the GDSR Harvest Strategy, which will be released for a period of public consultation prior to being finalised by the HSWG.

During the meeting there was robust discussion on a number of issues. It is clear that all stakeholders are committed to working cooperatively to develop the harvest strategy.

To assist in making the process as transparent as possible, the meeting agreed that the Project Plan referred to above, together with other relevant background information, should be publicly available on the Department of Fisheries' website. This information can be accessed by following the attached link to the Department's 'Open for public comment' page: <http://www.fish.wa.gov.au/About-Us/Public-Comment/Pages/default.aspx>

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 22 June 2016 in Perth. At this meeting the HSWG will begin to consider the development of suitable economic and social objectives for the GDSR to be included in the Harvest Strategy and how these might be measured.



Bardy McFarlane

HSWG Chair