

**Harvest Strategy Working group**  
**West Coast Demersal Scalefish Resource**  
**Meeting No.2 – 14 September 2020**

The second meeting of the HSWG was held at Hillarys on Monday, 14 September 2020. The HSWG continued with their focus on the ecological objectives for the WCDSR before focusing on the economic and social objectives for each fishing sector and catch tolerance ranges.

As part of the process to consider the ecological objectives, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) provided briefings on setting reference levels for spawning biomass and fishing mortality, performance indicators and their implications for recovering the WCDSR within acceptable timeframes.

The HSWG was provided with information from two other current Western Australian harvest strategies for demersal scalefish (Gascoyne and North Coast) and the recovery plan for Gascoyne oceanic pink snapper to aid discussions.

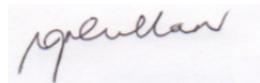
The HSWG also saw benefit in having a higher target reference level to achieve the aspiration of higher abundance to improve economic and social outcomes for all sectors and to continue to build resilience in the WCDSR once recovered.

The HSWG considered economic and social objectives contained in the Gascoyne Demersal Scalefish Resource Harvest Strategy as a case study and a number of available performance indicators for consideration in the development of economic and social objectives for the WCDSR. WAFIC (on behalf of the commercial sector), Recfishwest (on behalf of the recreational sector) and Martine Tourism WA (on behalf of charter fishers) were tasked with developing economic and social objectives prior to the next HSWG meeting, with assistance from the DPIRD as necessary.

The HSWG considered catch tolerance ranges for the WCDSR that take into account IFM allocations between the commercial and recreational sectors and recovery benchmarks to ensure fishing pressure is maintained at a level that allows the WCDSR to continue to recover at an acceptable rate. The HSWG were keen to ensure that there is no ambiguity about the action required to be taken if a threshold or limit reference level is breached. The HSWG considered the merits of monitoring retained catch or total fishing mortality (retained catch + post-release mortality) and decided to move to total fishing mortality as the performance indicator for fishing pressure.

It was agreed that the DPIRD would draft a harvest strategy consistent with the outcomes of the HSWG meeting outcomes and circulate it to HSWG members for consideration prior to the next meeting.

To assist in making the process as transparent as possible, the HSWG has agreed that the Project Plan referred to above, together with other relevant background information, should be publicly available on the DPIRD website at the following link: <http://www.fish.wa.gov.au/About-Us/Public-Comment/Pages/Consultation.aspx>. The next meeting is scheduled for early October 2020. This will allow sufficient time for each sector to develop their economic and social objectives for consideration and inclusion in the draft harvest strategy.



Michael McMullan

HSWG Chair