

**Harvest Strategy Working group**  
**West Coast Demersal Scalefish Resource**  
**Meeting No.4 – 25 March 2021**

The fourth meeting of the Harvest Strategy Working Group (HSWG) was held at Hillarys on Thursday, 25 March 2021. HSWG members reviewed the outcomes of consultation on the draft harvest strategy for the West Coast Demersal scalefish resource (WCDSR), reviewed the current draft document and agreed to any changes.

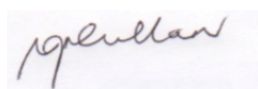
The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) provided the draft harvest strategy with track changes and comments in the relevant sections based on the outcomes of consultation to HSWG members ahead of the meeting. When considering the outcomes of consultation on the draft harvest strategy, HSWG members discussed the merits of any changes to the harvest strategy including:

- The inclusion of an executive summary outlining the key concepts of the harvest strategy;
- To simplify the map of the WCDSR within the scope of the harvest strategy;
- The inclusion of a recommendation for DPIRD to undertake a project to quantify the rate of shark depredation in the WCDSR;
- To be clearer with language used when discussing spawning biomass and fishing mortality that have an inverse relationship when describing the recovery objective (i.e. need to increase spawning biomass and reduce fishing mortality);
- Supported a simpler description of the recovery plan;
- Supported periodic stock assessments being delivered every three years;
- Amend review timeframes from “as soon as practicable” to a specified timeframe consistent with other WA harvest strategies;
- With regards to commercial sector economic and social objectives:
  - include considerations for the inclusion of catch per unit effort as a performance indicator for economic performance into the future;
  - include the supply of seafood to the community as a commercial sector social benefit;
- The inclusion of a recommendation for DPIRD to investigate increases in fishing efficiency of all sectors fishing for WCDSR.
- The inclusion of a recommendation for DPIRD to trial electronic catch reporting of demersal scalefish at the Abrolhos Islands.

The HSWG agreed to deal with any outstanding issues out of session however, if not completely resolved, the HSWG will reconvene for another meeting prior to the finalising the harvest strategy.

Once the harvest strategy is approved, HSWG members supported the HSWG transitioning to a reference group that can be engaged by DPIRD to review the performance of the WCDSR against the harvest strategy on an annual basis (or more frequently as required). Changes to membership may be considered when developing the terms of reference for this reference group.

Once supported by the HSWG, the final harvest strategy will be provided to the Minister for Fisheries for consideration and approval.



Michael McMullan

HSWG Chair