

Meeting	Solitary Islands Marine Park Advisory Committee (SIMPAC)		
Meeting No	2020.5	Date	10 December 2020
Location	Via VC and phone	Time	10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Attendees	<p>Solitary Islands Marine Park Advisory Committee members</p> <p>Ms Tricia Beatty - Commercial fishing Ms Sally Whitelaw - Local government Mr Ian Shaw - Recreational boating Mr Stephen Sawtell - Recreational water use (Chair) Prof. Stephen Smith - Marine science Mr Mike Davey – Tourism Neil Manson – Recreational fishing</p> <p>Observers and support:</p> <p><u>Solitary Islands Marine Park Advisory Committee alternate members</u></p> <p>Mrs Karen Dallas - Recreational water use Ms Nicola Fraser - Marine conservation</p> <p><u>DPI Staff</u></p> <p>Sarah Fairfull – Director Aboriginal Fishing and Marine and Coastal Environments Rodney James – Program Leader Marine Planning Nicole Strehling – A/Senior Manager Marine Planning Heath Folpp – A/Research Leader Marine Ecosystems Jane Gordois – Administration Officer Anthony Harding – A/Solitary Islands Marine Park Manager</p>		
Apologies	<p>Dr Michael Featherstone - Spear fishing Mr Aj Perkins - Aboriginal culture Dr Duan March - Marine conservation Elise Currey – Maritime industry</p>		
Prepared by	Anthony Harding		

Previous meeting

Action	Status
Action 20.10 SIMP Manager to call all SIMPAC members and alternative members to confirm attendance before the next SIMPAC meeting to ensure a quorum is present.	Completed

This meeting

Action summary
20.11 DPI Fisheries to include a summary list of meeting actions at the top of each meeting minutes.
20.12 DPI Fisheries to circulate a summary of NSW research around each of the three issues to committee members and invite feedback on how these findings could be effectively communicated to the community.
20.13 The Chair to write to DPIE – Water on behalf of the Committee seeking implementation of the NRC’s recommendations for the Coffs Harbour Water Sharing Plan and highlighting risks to Solitary Islands Marine Park estuaries.
20.14 The Chair to write to Coffs Harbour City Council on behalf of the Committee by 18 December 2020 in support of the proposal to introduce a Recycled Water Access and Licensing Charge and Recycled Water Consumption Charge, highlighting risks to Solitary Islands Marine Park estuaries from misuse of recycled water.
20.15 DPI Fisheries to provide advice to East Coast Octopus Pty Ltd regarding the process to seek approval to operate within the Solitary Islands Marine Park, noting the issues raised by the Committee.
20.16 Marine park manager to investigate locations for a potential face to face meeting.
20.17 Alternative meeting time be considered for future meeting.

Item	Issue	Action
1.	Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country	

	Chair provided a welcome to country	
2.	Apologies Please refer to above	
3.	Actions from meeting three Completed as per table above.	Action 20.11 DPI Fisheries to include a summary list of meeting actions at the top of each meeting minutes
4.	Adoption of minutes from meeting four. The Committee was asked to adopt the minutes of the previous meeting	Motion: That the minutes of the 9 June 2020 be accepted as a true and accurate record Moved: Stephen Sawtell Seconded: Ian Shaw Carried unanimously
5.	Update on changes to DPI Fisheries divisional structures and implications Director Aboriginal Fishing and Marine and Coastal Environments provided an update on the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marine Estate Management Authority governance structure • new DPI Fisheries structure. 	
6.	Update on draft management plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A/Senior Manager Marine Planning provided an update on development of the draft marine park management plan. • Since the last meeting in August, DPI Fisheries has worked hard to incorporate the valuable advice received from the five marine park advisory committees, nine government agencies and all branches of DPI Fisheries into a 	

	<p>preliminary draft marine park management plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The draft is currently subject to internal review to ensure it is the best possible initial product for further consideration. • DPI Fisheries appreciates the committee’s patience as the draft plan has been developed and hopes to share the preliminary draft with the committee as soon as possible so that it can continue to be enhanced with their feedback and advice into a draft for the approval of the Marine Estate Management Authority and the Ministers. • Once approved as a draft, the draft plan will be subject to a minimum of two months community consultation. DPI Fisheries will appreciate the additional feedback and advice from the committee throughout that time to enhance the draft into a final plan for the approval of the Ministers. 	
7.	<p>Research update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A/Senior Manager Marine Planning introduced the research presentation. • As DPI Fisheries worked through the marine park planning process this year with the marine park advisory committees, the science around three specific issues has been a particular concern for the community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sanctuary zones ○ Greynurse Sharks ○ Sea Urchins (particularly for Batemans and Jervis Bay) 	<p>Action 20.12 DPI Fisheries to circulate a summary of NSW research around each of the three issues to committee members and invite feedback on how these findings could be effectively communicated to the community.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A/Research Leader (Marine Ecosystems) provided a summary of NSW research findings across the mainland marine park network for each of the three key topics to support a common understanding. Key knowledge gaps were discussed. • The DPI Fisheries focus is on continually improving the research, knowledge and evidence base into the future. • Marine park advisory committees and agencies have identified the need for a research prospectus that identifies priorities for future research in marine parks. • DPI Fisheries has also identified a need to improve communication of research to the community in future and invited the committee’s advice on how DPI Fisheries may do so. • The members were also invited to consider possible future research presentations on issues of interest to the committee. 	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Harvest strategy update</p> <p>Director Aboriginal Fishing and Marine and Coastal Environments provided an introduction to fishery harvest strategies in NSW.</p> <p>The committee was invited to view information at https://www.marine.nsw.gov.au/strategy-implementation/ensuring-sustainable-fishing-and-aquaculture/harvest-strategies.</p> <p>Members were invited to review the draft NSW Fisheries Harvest Strategy</p>	

	<p>Policy and Guidelines and provide comment by 22 January 2021.</p> <p>The commercial fishing member provided an in-depth discussion of harvest strategies as a member of the Trawl Whiting Harvest Strategy Working Group. Industry is supportive of harvest strategies, noting the risks associated with very limited time frames for delivery. Effective engagement and ownership by industry will be critical to success. There was also discussion of the importance of communication with individual fishers throughout the process.</p>	
9.	<p>Other business</p> <p>9.1 a Coffs Harbour Water Sharing Plan/Review</p> <p>The local government member provided a summary of the NSW Natural Resources Commission (NRC) review of the Coffs Harbour Water Sharing Plan (https://www.nrc.nsw.gov.au/2019-2020-wsp-reviews).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following comprehensive review, the NRC recommended that the Plan is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ extended for a further two years until June 2022 to allow enough time and resources to make required Plan improvements ○ replaced by June 2022 to address the recommendations of this report. • Coffs Harbour City Council has been advised that the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) – Water plans to roll over the 2009-19 water sharing plan into a draft 2021-30 Water Sharing Plan for Coffs Harbour in February 2021 with 	<p>Action 20.13 The Chair to write to DPIE – Water on behalf of the Committee seeking implementation of the NRC’s recommendations for the Coffs Harbour Water Sharing Plan and highlighting risks to Solitary Islands Marine Park estuaries.</p>

	<p>minimal change from the existing plan. This is contrary to the NRC recommendations and the associated risks identified for Solitary Islands Marine Park estuaries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If risks to marine park estuaries are not addressed in this review, there will not be an opportunity for another ten years. • The Committee resolved to write to DPIE – Water to seek implementation of the NRC’s recommendations and highlighting the risks identified for Solitary Islands Marine Park estuaries if the recommendations are not implemented. 	
	<p>9.1b The review of Council’s recycled water charges</p> <p>The local government member provided the committee with an update on Coffs Harbour City Council’s recycled water access scheme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Coffs Harbour community is invited to provide a submission in response to Council’s proposal to introduce a recycled water access and licensing charge and recycled water consumption charge, from 1 January 2021. • Coffs Harbour’s recycled water users have received their supply free of charge since trials began in the 1990s. • A recent Council audit program revealed a significant level of non-compliance by existing recycled water users, indicating that a large portion of recycled water may not be being used responsibly. 	<p>Action 20.14 The Chair to write to Coffs Harbour City Council on behalf of the Committee by 18 December 2020 in support of the proposal to introduce a Recycled Water Access and Licensing Charge and Recycled Water Consumption Charge, highlighting risks to Solitary Islands Marine Park estuaries from misuse of recycled water.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The audit program indicated low compliance with the conditions of supply agreements, a lack of awareness of environmental harm associated with mismanagement, and a general undervaluation of recycled water as an economically valuable community resource. • Some users have allowed leaks to continue unabated and without repair, or valves were allowed to remain open, which has resulted in unnecessarily large quantities of recycled water entering the natural environment. • A Southern Cross University report found that more than 50% of the Nitrogen in Double Crossing Creek comes from the water reuse scheme. • These elevated levels of nutrients can have significant impacts on fish and marine park health. • Council is proposing a low fee to allow administrative oversight and auditing of the scheme to ensure that it can be sustainably managed into the future. • The Committee resolved to make a submission to Council in support of the proposal and highlighting risks to Solitary Islands Marine Park estuaries if management of recycled water use is not improved. 	
	<p>9.2 Octopus developmental fishery Permit</p> <p>The commercial fishing member advised the committee that East Coast Octopus Pty Ltd is seeking a variation of conditions to its existing octopus developmental fishery permit under the <i>Fisheries Management Act 1994</i>.</p>	<p>Action 20.15 DPI Fisheries to provide advice to East Coast Octopus Pty Ltd regarding the process to seek approval to operate within the Solitary Islands Marine Park, noting the issues raised by the Committee.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nature of a developmental fishery is that it is appropriate to adjust to what we learn and trial new designs as we go through the developmental process. • The existing permit does not permit developmental activities in NSW marine protected areas. • East Coast Octopus Pty Ltd has established their enterprise in Coffs Harbour, but not being able to fish within the marine park is limiting economic viability by making it necessary to travel 100 kilometres north (about 3 hours of travel time) to fish. • East Coast Octopus will seek approval to revise their permit to allow access to habitat protection and general use zones. • Gear and methods used are very similar to the Spanner Crab and Lobster Fisheries. These fisheries already operate within habitat protection and general use zones. <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A separate marine park permit would be required for developmental fishing activity in the marine park under the Marine Estate Management (Management Rules) Regulation 1999. • Existing Solitary Islands Marine Park management rules in place since 2002 prohibit all commercial and recreational take of octopus in habitat protection zones. • The marine science member noted the existing knowledge gap around ecological integrity and function, and that Octopus are a key predator and it would be difficult to assess potential ecological impacts of a 	
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	developmental fishery targeting this species without improved knowledge.	
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Next meeting

TBC

Action 20.16 Marine park manager to investigate locations for potential face to face meeting.

Action 20.17 Alternative meeting time be considered for future meeting.