

Harvest Strategy Working group
West Coast Demersal Scalefish Resource
Meeting No.1 – 4 September 2020

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) has established a stakeholder based Working Group to develop a harvest strategy for the West Coast Demersal Scalefish Resource (WCDSR) that will ensure the recovery and future sustainability of the resource and accommodate 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, Marine Tourism Western Australia, commercial, recreational and charter fishers and DPIRD, and is chaired by an independent facilitator.

The HSWG has been asked to develop a Harvest Strategy for the WCDSR that is consistent with Western Australia's Harvest Strategy Policy (Fisheries Management Paper No. 271), and according to an agreed Project Plan. Over time this will ensure all harvest strategies in WA have a uniform structure, but with adaptations to reflect the particular fishery/resource being considered.

It is intended to have a draft Harvest Strategy released for public comment during October this year.

The first meeting of the HSWG was held at Hillarys on Friday, 4 September 2020. The first meeting was undertaken in two sessions, with the opportunity provided for additional commercial, recreational and charter fishers to attend the first session as observers.

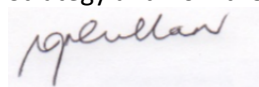
The first session included briefings on the WA harvest strategy policy, WCDSR research and stock assessment and WCDSR management. The first session also provided an opportunity for stakeholders to identify their aspirations and issues regarding the WCDSR. These were recorded in a register. Where issues and aspirations raised were outside the scope of the WCDSR harvest strategy, relevant processes and notional timeframes were identified to consider and address them.

In the second session, the HSWG commenced working through the core elements that will form the basis of the ecological objectives of the draft Harvest Strategy for the WCDSR.

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 and recovering this important resource, noting that the resource is 10 years into a 20 year recovery plan that was implemented in 2010.

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/default.aspx>.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, 14 September 2020 in Perth. At this meeting the HSWG will continue to work through the ecological objectives for the WCDSR and begin to consider the development of suitable economic and social objectives for the WCDSR to be included in the Harvest Strategy and how these might be measured.



Michael McMullan

HSWG Chair