

**WESTERN ROCK LOBSTER COUNCIL Inc.**

**GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING**

WAFIC Offices, Osborne Park

9:30pm Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2009

**AGENDA OF THE MEETING**

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ATTENDANCE: DEXTER DAVIES, ANDREW WINZER, JOHN FITZHARDINGE, BOB STONE, TERRY PARISH, IVAN SPALDING, TERRY MOUCHEMORE, ANTHONY PIRROTINA, STEVE MCLEARY, MAL MILLARD, PETER HAMMOND, VICKY KERR.

GUESTS: NICK CAPUTI, JO KENNEDY, PETER STEPHENSON

APOLOGIES: DARREN MCTAGGART, GARY PARKER, JAMES PARATORE

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**1. Welcome**

The Meeting was declared open at 9:30 by the Chairman, and he introduced the guests from the Department of Fisheries, Nick Caputi, Jo Kennedy and Peter Stephenson, who will be answering all their questions

**2. Department of Fisheries Research**

Any new information and answer questions

Nick Caputi and Jo Kennedy gave a comprehensive presentation and answered questions for over 2 hours of latest research (see rl wrlc2009 08.pps) and handed out a Research Information and Advice paper.

**3. Congress**

**A. Summary of Friday and Saturday – Dexter’s take**

**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July**

- Over 250 in attendance and vast majority stayed all day
- Minister, CEO of Department of Fisheries and senior staff in attendance all day and available for anyone to speak to, or to be questioned
- Quality of speakers and relevance of topics very good
- Probably tried to get too much into one day
- Allowed Walter Stark to speak at short notice (Pros: allowed another point of view and prevented the allegation that we didn’t want other views. Cons: Difficult to rebut some claims). Believe it was a good decision although distracted focus a bit, especially press.
- The presentations and panel of John Hammond, Neville Perryman, Caleb Gardiner and Roger Edwards were outstanding. They gave a very balanced view of the pros and cons of both management systems. The take home message was if you did go to quota:
  1. Make sure you take the time to design it right

2. Make sure you get the allocation right – Involve the industry – it can be inequitable (transfer of wealth)

3. Don't expect it to fix the price

4. Do expect fleet rationalisation

**5. It is the confidence in the level of the breeding stock and abundance available for catch that sets the value of units not the management system**

**6. Listen to the scientists and take the hard decisions regardless of the management system**

**7. It is how well a system is implemented that is important not so much the system**

8. It provides more secure collateral for the banks

- Simon De Lestang Department of Fisheries Research presented extremely well under a lot of pressure and expectations, and took questions for over 30 mins (contrary to claims there wasn't an opportunity to ask questions at the time the presentation was made)
- The Independent Facilitator was OK, however could have been done better by someone with good industry knowledge. I don't believe it was necessary on first day and it just did not work well on the Saturday as the majority of attendees simply did not want to participate in the process (hindsight is a wonderful thing)

### **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> July**

- There is no appetite for the 4 consecutive days off option
- There is very strong resistance to the 5000tn Notional TACC and, scepticism around the science
- There was a very strong view that zones should be managed separately
- There was a very strong view that separate TACC's should be set for each zone
- The Department of Fisheries needs to provide RLIAC and the WRLC the Department of Fisheries Research Division's best estimate of the appropriate sustainable catch for each Zone for 2009/10 based on the Management Objectives of maintaining the breeding stock at an appropriate level (above the 1980 threshold and likely to be maintained above that threshold and preferably improving) into the future based on the best science and information available

Clearly state the reasons for this estimate (this requirement applies equally to RLIAC and the WRLC when they are stating a case as well)

Packages can't be set or suggested without this target being set and reasons for it being set clearly stated and explained

- What would 50% pot usage (same as last year in C Zone) and fishing 5 days a week deliver in terms of estimated catch in each Zone and overall for 09/10 season (this was an overwhelming view put by Congress)
- What would be the estimated catch in A, B and C Zones and overall, for 09/10 season with the following package: 50% pot usage all season (C Zone) 42% pot usage all season (A & B Zone) 3 days off in peaks (5 weeks Whites – Dec/Jan and 5 weeks Reds – March/April – these timeframes can be adjusted up or down to help achieve notional TACC) 2 days off rest of season, no summer closure (this makes sound marketing sense but sends an odd message when looking for such big effort reductions – need to identify what summer closure means in terms of effort and what the biological and quality implications are). Maintain Big Bank closure – however seriously consider moving all boundaries of the closed area South and West. 55mm escape gaps. 76mm or 77mm gauge but same for all Zones. Maximum size same as last year.
- The above option with 42% pot usage all season in C Zone

- Modelling of at least 3 scenarios of what effect these scenarios (especially the 09/10 estimate) would or should have on next year's package
  - Very low puerulus settlement (already done)
  - Low puerulus settlement (already done) – even this seems to make a massive difference, this needs to be explained clearly
  - Average puerulus settlement
  - Good puerulus settlement (a bit above average)
  - High puerulus settlement (better than 25% above average)
- A clear explanation of where C Zone is going in terms of estimated catch and the importance or not of egg production in this Zone (the recognition of the importance of the Northern settlement and breeding stock seems to have created the perception that the C Zone settlement and egg production are not important)
- Support the further collaborative development of the Post Puerulus Settlement research project proposed (this had huge support from the Congress) with a view to urgent implementation once agreement has been achieved
- A clear statement on the status of the decision rules/ harvest strategy
  - The MSC placed the following condition on the WRLF's certification after the November 2008 annual audit  
*The harvest strategy and decision rules need to be finalised in the light of the puerulus settlement problems and concerns over the effective breeding stock in the fishery. A report needs to be made available to the certifying body [MSC auditor] before the opening of the 2009-2010 fishery*
- Serious consideration should be given to Gil Waller's suggestions when considering a new decision making framework

## **B. 2009 Congress Outputs Document – Facilitators**

See attached document (Western Rock Lobster Council Outputs.doc)

## **C Discussions on outcome – What to present to RLIAC and the Minister**

**Options put forward to RLIAC and Minister as per the WRLC Board of Directors meeting on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> August:**

### **Suggested Management Parameters for 2009-10**

- These suggestions are based on the puerulus settlement for this current season 09/10 remaining at the record low levels of 08/09 and meeting the “STATED” management options of: Maintaining the egg production in each zone above the threshold now and with a 75% probability of still being above this level in five years time.
- These suggestions are based on the latest and best scientific advice available, (received on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2009) and take into account the outcomes of the WRLC Congress.
- These suggestions are designed to continue to move the fishery towards achieving MEY by dramatically increasing the “catch per unit effort”.

## **Main Objective**

Notional TACC of between 6000 tn. and 6500 tn. Based on the latest Department of Fisheries figures and management objectives and certainty stated.

## **Suggested options to achieve main objective:**

- Notional TACC for each Zone allocated as equitably as possible using management objectives, estimated season catches and average proportion of catch based on low catch years.
- Start Season: C Zone 25<sup>th</sup> November. B Zone 15<sup>th</sup> November.
- 3 Days off during Peaks. 2days off rest of season.
- Consider varying the 3 days off during the peak catch periods between the zones. E.g. zone B: Friday, Saturday, Sunday; zone C Saturday, Sunday, Monday.
- Peaks - Whites Peak 15<sup>th</sup> Dec to 15<sup>th</sup> Jan. Reds Peak 15<sup>th</sup> Mar to 15<sup>th</sup> April. Increase or decrease length of peaks to achieve objective.
- Pot Usage: should be fixed for Season once set, vary days or other measures if necessary to achieve objectives and Notional TACC.
  - C Zone: 50% if possible however down to 45% if required to achieve objective.
  - B Zone: 40%
  - A Zone : 40% (consider 3 days off to end of season instead of further pot reduction)
- If necessary close fishery from 25<sup>th</sup> December to 2<sup>nd</sup> January inclusive, this would take 4 days fishing out of the peak of the “WHITES” (the main objective of the package) it also gives an 11 day break over the Christmas period providing large cost reductions for processors. B Zone had indicated they wanted to keep Summer Closure, however would consider this.
- Consider 77mm gauge and 55mm escape gap all year ( this had 50% for 50% against) this would have a significantly greater effect in the North therefore in conjunction, increase max female in North to 100mm.
- Consider 105 mm max female in C Zone and consider being able to catch females over 135mm (these were only ideas discussed not agreed upon).
- Review catch fortnightly and be willing and able to act quickly. Definitely review early as possible in January.
- Support proposed Post Puerulus research project to enhance information this should begin urgently to provide baseline data as soon as possible.
- Support the Big Bank closure area being shifted South (10-15 miles) and West.
- Amateurs Season should start same date as commercial season and consider closing amateurs after Easter.

**To do: Vicky to a detailed costing of the congress**

#### **4. 09/10 Management Package**

See point 3 C

#### **5. AGM & Election Plans - timeline**

Dates that need to be decided on in order to give ample notice and time for voting is:

Suggested Dates are as follow:

Nominations for Directors Form:	To be sent no later than Wednesday 5 Aug
Nomination Closes:	Friday 4 September (allows 4 weeks for nominations)
Voting Ballots to be mailed:	Week of the 14 <sup>th</sup> September
Voting Closes:	Friday 16 October

AGM            Friday 30 October 2009

**\* need to consider change because of Portuguese Fishing Industry festival of which prior notice have been give**

Board is fine with proposed dates

A Motion to present at the next AGM has been proposed:

To change the Constitution for elected members to be nominated onto the Council the Members have to be MFL holders, and that the Board should consist of 4 members from C Zone, 2 Members from B Zone and 2 Members from A Zone.

John Fitzhardinge moved; Peter Hammond Second. All in favour

**To do: Vicky to add to the Agenda on AGM**

#### **6. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes from the previous meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2009 were accepted

Moved: Terry Parish; Seconded: Terry Mouchemore; Carried: unanimously

#### **7. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting**

All matters arising from the previous Minutes are to be addressed as Agenda Items

#### **8. Financial Report – nothing to approve**

Haven't reconciled month as bank statement not in mail yet

#### **9. Letters/papers to be tabled**

United MidWest FA open meeting minutes

The minutes of the United Midwest Fishermen's Association has been tabled

## **10. General Business**

There was no other general business to discuss

## **11. Project Updates**

See attached update by Andrew Winzer (WRLC research update.doc)

- Full support for proposed project

## **12. Next Meeting Date & Close**

The next meeting TBA

Dexter Davies declared the meeting closed at 4:30pm