

FIVE KEY ISSUES WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR DRAFT WCRL FCPs

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The following are amongst the major issues raised the draft FCPs and associated deadlines put forward by WWF/SASSI.

There are various inter-relationships amongst these issues. The intent of this document is to summarise these so that the current draft FCP deadlines can be re-assessed in this context.

<u>ISSUES</u>	<u>DRAFT FCP DEADLINES</u>
1) Sector splits advice	1 May 2016
2) IUU catch quantification	1 October 2016
3) Effort control scheme design	1 July 2016
4) Management plan development	31 July 2016
5) Study to identify minimum viable economic right	1 July 2016

A particular difficulty is that for reasons set out below, the appropriate order of these activities is ideally as follows:

- A) Items 2), 3) and 5), the results from which inform:
- B) Item 4), initial computations for which, advised by initial advice on Item 1), inform:
- C) Item 1) finalisation.

Clearly that is not viable in present circumstances, which is why clarifications are needed – first through a WCRL SWG meeting – on how and at what time scales these inter-related activities are best advanced

Amplifications on each of these key issues follow.

1) Sector splits advice

The immediate clarification needed is whether the intent is that these be in the form of percentages of an overall TAC or tonnages. The former is what has pertained in the recent past, but a comment attributed to Craig Smith in the Aide Memoire of the last DAFF/WWF-SASSI meeting on 16 February suggests otherwise for the future. If that is the case, substantial challenges in developing approaches to manage the fishery consistent with sustainability requirements will arise, and will need more time to discuss and resolve.

Furthermore, sector splits alone are not sufficient to allow the OMP revision (which is a major part of Item 4)) to proceed, as areal splits by Super-area will also need to be advised for sectors for which this is pertinent due to inability of participants in the sectors concerned to move amongst Super-areas. Furthermore advice is required on

what changes, if any, are desired to the current system for buffering smaller rights holders against annual TAC changes, on constraints on the extents of such changes for each sector, and on whether or not any changes in TAC allocations for smaller operators must be independent of the Super area to which their right pertains.

2) IUU catch quantification

Some substantial progress is needed in this area near immediately, as this is a pre-requisite for OMP revision and indeed any advice on TACs for 2016/17 season. Outputs for these will depend heavily on reducing the possible range for the extent of IUU catches that have recently been postulated (and includes scenarios that would necessitate the immediate closure of the legal fishery in terms of the current provisions of the MLRA). It would also seem likely that the sector split decision needs to be based on some sense of what the outcome of this process, and the associated TAC advice, will be.

3) Effort control scheme design

Ideally acceptance of such a scheme and its basic quantitative features are a pre-requisite for OMP revision and are accordingly urgent. The reason is that addition of such restrictions will provide further safety controls on the fishery. These in turn will allow for higher TAC recommendations (on average), which in turn has implications for the sector split decision.

4) Management plan development

A major component of this is the revision of the current OMP. This will be a major exercise requiring substantial time. This is particularly the case given the pre-requisites of 1), 2) and 3) above and potentially 5) below. A further major concern is initial advice from Amahlo that has indicated that effort data contributing to the CPUE indices used in the assessments underlying OMP development may be compromised by certain components of IUU fishing – a matter which will need further input from Amahlo and detailed discussion in the WCRL SWG. Given this, almost certainly Management plan finalisation by 31 July 2016 as envisaged in the draft FCPs is impossible (note that an OMP revision process normally takes 18 months). Indeed the WCRL SWG needs to consider whether OMP revision can be achieved in time to provide TAC advice for the 2016/17 season, or rather that will need to wait until the following season, with this the 2016/2017 advice based on interim updated assessments accompanied by deterministic projections.

5) Study to identify minimum viable economic right

Clearly this should be taken into account in the coming sector split decision and rights allocation process, as well as in constraints on TAC changes built into the revised OMP. However it is unlikely that this study could be completed before some if not all of these activities have to be concluded. In considering priorities and deadlines therefore, attention needs to be given to the possibilities of using the outcomes from

such a process AFTER initial re-allocations. Can those re-allocations be interim awaiting the results from such a study before finalisation, or could those results inform only the next re-allocation process?