

CHAIR'S SUMMARY

The first meeting of the Council in 2020 was held via Microsoft Teams on 20 May 2020. Three new members - Jo-anne McCrae, Matthew Hansen and Greg Finn - were welcomed to their first meeting, along with the recently appointed Deputy Director General, Fisheries in DPI, Sean Sloan.

Members discussed the current Council Strategy including each sector's top 5 priorities reflecting the fishery sector they provide expertise on. These were in addition to the top priorities carried over from the previous Council as follows:

- Harvest Strategy Policy
- Cost Recovery Policy
- Cultural Fishing Policy
- Marine Estate Management
- Co-Management Policy

The next Council meeting will further review the Council Strategy taking into account the need to establish what is possible within the resources available to DPI and consistent with Council's terms of reference.

Council then considered a presentation from the DDG Fisheries, Sean Sloan, outlining a first draft of proposed Harvest Strategy Policy and Guidelines for NSW Fisheries. The draft documents have been developed using the National Guidelines for Fisheries Harvest Strategies and foreshadowed the approach which will apply to harvest strategies in NSW. The DDG emphasised the need to maintain a flexible and pragmatic policy approach to accommodate the diversity of fisheries and all fishing sectors in NSW. Members provided comments on the drafts which will enable further policy refinement. The documents will now be referred to the 3 other Councils representing Aboriginal, Commercial and Recreational Fishing sectors.

Council discussed the impacts of the COVID-19 virus on the seafood industry, including the impact on coastal communities relying on fishing and the measures undertaken by DPI to deal with the situation.

The next meeting of the Council will be held in Coffs Harbour in August 2020, subject to restrictions on travel being lifted in time for a face to face meeting to occur.

Richard Stevens OAM
Chair

12/06/2020