

## **MINUTES INLAND FISHERIES ADVISORY COUNCIL**

The Sixty-Eighth meeting of the Inland Fisheries Advisory Council (IFAC) was held at 10.00 am on Friday the 31st October 2014 at 17 Backriver Rd New Norfolk.

### **1. PRESENT, APOLOGIES and GUESTS**

**Members** – Sue Baker (Chair) Karen Richards, Christine Mucha, Mike Stevens, Gary France, John Diggle and Shaun Finlayson

Acting Executive Officer: Anthony Wright  
Apology: Ministerial Advisor Ashley Bastock

Ms Baker welcomed Mr Finlayson to IFAC and his first meeting.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Mr Finlayson declared his interest in elver sales and stated that he was a licenced freshwater commercial eel fisherman. He advised that he would appropriately declare a conflict of interest if required.

### **3. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES**

Minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed.

**BOAT INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN PRESENTATION** deferred to the after lunch session.

### **4. ACTION LIST**

Action 1 - Shannon Lagoon proposal – A meeting of IFS staff and AAT has been held with Hydro. A subsequent workshop was held with IFS and Hydro but parties were yet to agree on an approach and the assessment of options. Hydro agreed to work up options and assess environmental costs.

Action 2 - Translocation Policy – Mr. Diggle advised that the policy was not yet completed he discussed a range of translocation issues advising that whilst it was not yet documented a range of translocation issues were being addressed in day to day operations and the policy was still required. Deferred to December meeting.

Action 3 - Fisheries Habitat Improvement Fund A response had been received from Ross Hart Rae and Partners on the 3 October 2014 advising that the trustee association had been reincorporated and was now in a position to transfer to a new trustee. Mr. Wright advised that advice on the appointment of a new trustee was being sought from the Crown Solicitor who suggested that the Chair of the IFAC could hold the position of trustee and that the Director of Inland Fisheries could not as he had originally established the trust. Ms. Baker agreed to act as trustee and asked that this matter be finalized by December 2014.

Action 5 - Estuary Perch – Mr. Farrell had prepared a discussion paper considering the options for the development of a fishery in the future. The matter was discussed and the next steps in the assessment process were to consider two options for importation of fish

one from hatcheries in New South Wales or the transfer of fish from the Arthur River population. Both these options would require consideration of biosecurity issues in the first instance. IFAC commended Mr. Farrell for the paper.

Action 6 - Hall of Fame- Mr. France presented a report detailing activities to date since AAT had resumed responsibility for the fund. Sheryl Thompson had been appointed chair of the committee with Ray Achieson and Gary France as members. The first two inductees were scheduled for an induction to be held on 22 November 2014 at the Axemans Hall of Fame Latrobe.

Honor Board was checked and had not been updated for the 2009 inductions. Proposed that it be updated after the 22 November 2014 to include new inductees.

Action 7 - Policies Register- Completed.

Action 8 – MOU between MAST John met with CEO of MAST and it was considered that an MOU was not required. Matter completed.

Action 9 – Angling Licence Sales – Mr France reported that AAT and the STLAA were working on a junior angler program and he would be in a position to report back to the December 2014 meeting. Lake Paloona removed as a separate item for discussion.

Action 10 – Draft Business Plan – Completed.

Action 11 - Letter of resignation from Mr. Cooper – Completed

Action 12 – Arthurs Lake Trap Update – Chris Wisniewski will update at the next meeting in December regarding the operational side and issues of the working trap.

Action 13 – The Minister has not been available for a meeting.

**Action item. Ms. Baker/J Diggle to seek a meeting Ministerial advisor Ashley Bastock in early December 2014.**

Action 14 – IFS Financials – the promotional costings still to be updated. Completed.

Action 15 – Southern Fishing Water- To be discussed under the agenda item.

Action 16 – Risk Management Plan Risk Strategies Completed.

Action 17 – Government Policies IFS NW Compliance Officer Completed

Action 18 Discussed under the Agenda Completed.

## **5. MATTERS ARISING**

No matters arising that were not listed in the agenda.

## **7 REPORT FROM THE CHAIR**

There was no report from the Chair as there had not been an opportunity to discuss matters with the Minister. A meeting is to be arranged with Ministers advisor Ashley Bastock early in December 2014.

## **8 ADVISORY ROLE TO DIRECTOR IFS**

- i Southern Four Springs - Macquarie Franklin water engineers had been engaged to undertake a desk top study of prospective locations to establish a new fishery. Mr Jason Garret has provided input and identified some five additional options. The next step is to rank options and develop the preferred one. Macquarie Franklin had provided estimates of dam construction costs but these did not include land acquisition costs. A paper will be presented to IFAC at the December meeting detailing options and cost.

Mr Diggle advised that staff member Paul Middleton had been transferred from New Norfolk to Devonport in a full time role and was now based at Stoney Rise. An additional \$40,000 in grant funds had been allocated in the budget for the position and the carp technical officer position has not been filled. Compliance officers are now multi tasking and required to undertake a range of functions including carp and fisheries management. The Liawenee position had now been advertised and applications had been received from a strong field of candidates.

- ii. The matter of Redfin perch in the Mersey River and their impact was discussed. A note on Red Fin Perch by Rob Freeman was included in the meeting papers. Mr Diggle advised that the incidence of Red Fin was reported 12 to 18 months ago in low numbers with anglers catching redfin from time to time. IFS currently assess all new irrigation schemes and part of the assessment includes Red Fin control. Mr Diggle advised that IFS eradicated Red Fin where possible however a proactive approach to control instead of a reactive approach was the preferred course of action. Mr Diggle advised that the issue required communicating the impact of the species and the importance of their control was the first step.
- iii Mr Diggle advised the main issue with fish farms was that fees to fund compliance activities were based on water usage in the flow through systems rather than fish volumes. He advised that during December 2014 that he would be visiting all fish farms with the EPA to undertake an audit of licence terms and conditions. The visits will be primarily to assess what is happening on the farms.
- iv Mr Diggle advised that a meeting had been held with Bradley, Wayne and Shaun Finlayson to discuss the broader issues associated with the eel fishery and to try to bring consistency across licence conditions. The main objective of the review is to satisfy sustainability reporting for the EPBC.
- . At this stage Hydro and eel fishers restock were being satisfied with surplus elver to be sold to the Finlayson who now held the majority of operational eel licences in the State. A price had been negotiated that was discounted for future royalty payments. If there was any surplus from this additional supplies would be offered to the Finlayson's or sales could be made to other potential customers.
- vi Negotiations regarding future carp program funding had commenced. It had been highlighted with our Minister that there was a possible shortfall in Commonwealth funding. Minister Rockcliff had written to Greg Hunt who visited Lake Sorell. The Federal

government had matched State funding in the past but this had been done on the basis of securing project funding. There was no ongoing agreement to do so. General discussion was held on the possibility of Green Army participation. At this stage we are awaiting advice from Greg Hunt.

- vii Jawahar Patil has been successful in obtaining approval for a project to assess the suitability of genetic techniques for the control of Gambusia. The project is a partnership initiative of the CRC and UTas with the IFS committing \$50,000 per annum for 3 years. Jawahar will provide a briefing on the project at the February 2015 meeting.

## **9. STRATEGIC MATTERS**

- i Succession Plan: Mr Diggle provided an analysis of risks and recommended actions in response to the succession plan. He considered that the most significant gap identified was in the area of Commercial Fisheries. IFAC recommended that the ability to understand commercial business functions and practices should be added as an essential criterion to the position description. Funding for this position was in the vicinity of \$100,000 and currently IFAC did not have sufficient recurrent funding to meet this cost. It was requested that the risk plan be cross linked to the succession plan.
- ii. Mr Diggle provided an updated Risk Management Plan including mitigation strategies/actions. It was considered that further work was required to assess how effective the actions were in mitigating the risks and what residual risk remained. The residual risk then needed to be ranked from high to low.
- iii The translocation policy had not progressed. Mr Diggle advised that there was minimal risk and whilst the policy may not be documented translocation risks are being managed in the day to day course of business. The redfin issue was a translocation issue that need a policy. It was suggested that the policy be segmented with individual sections being completed at a time. It was resolved that the clear guiding principles surrounding translocation issues needed to be developed first. These would be prepared for tabling at the next meeting.
- iv. Policies register – Draft was included in the meetings papers that covered the main internal policies. It was proposed that the gaps be assessed at a workshop to be conducted at the February 2015 meeting. In the interim if council members would submit suggestions of any policies they believed were missing.
- v. Hall of Fame - Reported under action item 6 matter now concluded.

## **10. FISHERIES MANAGEMENT**

- i Estuary Perch – a paper discussing the main issues relating to the options for a future estuary perch fishery had been prepared by Tim Farrell and included in the meeting papers. The Council commended Tim on the informative nature of the paper. The key matter arising was whether the fishery should be established from fish imported from the mainland or fish transferred from the Arthur River population. The biosecurity issues associated with either of these approaches need to be considered first.

- ii Arthurs Lake Trap update deferred to December 2014 meeting.
- iii Mr Morrow presented an update on the Boating Infrastructure Plan and discussed funding arrangements and the methodology behind project initiation. Mr Morrow will provide an update in April 2015 after the MAST project funding for the following year is announced.

## 11. INTERNAL CONTROL

- i Financial Reports to 30 September 2014 were discussed. Mr Wright advised that licence revenue in the statements had not been adjusted for five season licences and whilst revenue appeared down compared to the year before it was in fact comparable and up 3.98% after adjusting for this and last year's five season licences and CPI movement. Mr Wright will provide details of these calculations with the next financial report.  
The Auditor- Generals report to parliament was tabled at the meeting.
- i The Annual Report 2013-14 was also tabled at the meeting.

## 12 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE MINISTER

Next meeting will be held at IFS New Norfolk on Friday 12 December 2014 at 10.00am..

Confirmed:

Sue Baker

Chairperson

### ACTION LIST FROM TODAY'S MEETING

Issue	Action Required	Action Officer	Due date / status
FHIF	Finalise Appointment of new Trustee	Mr Wright	12/12/2014
Estuary perch	Assess biosecurity issues of importing or relocating stock.	Mr Farrell	February 2015
Fish Farms	Undertake licence conditions audit report	Mr Diggle	February 2015
Southern Fishing water	Paper detailing options and costs.	Mr Diggle	12/12/2014
Translocation Policy	Develop principles around translocation issues.	Mr Diggle	12/12/2014
Boating Infrastructure Fund	Report approved projects	Mr Diggle	April 2015
Financial	Provide reconciliation of	Mr Wright	12/12/2014

<b>Report</b>	<b>licence revenue with the report comparative to prior year with adjustments for five season licences and CPI as at 30 November 2014</b>		
<b>Ministerial Issues</b>	<b>Set up a meeting with the new Minister or Minister's Advisor early December 2014.</b>	<b>Ms Gillespie</b>	<b>Out of session</b>