



Resource Sharing in Australian Fisheries Workshop

Lessons Learned and Next Steps Towards a Harmonised Approach

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January 2020

FRDC Project No 2019-142

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ISBN 978-0-6487824-0-7

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2019-142

2020

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The Fisheries Research and Development Corporation plans, invests in and manages fisheries research and development throughout Australia. It is a statutory authority within the portfolio of the federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, jointly funded by the Australian Government and the fishing industry.

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In submitting this report, the researcher has agreed to FRDC publishing this material in its edited form.

Contents

Contents	iii
Acknowledgments	iii
Executive Summary	iv
Introduction.....	1
Objectives.....	1
Method	1
Results, Discussion & Conclusion	1
Implications	3
Recommendations	3
Further development.....	3
Extension and Adoption	3
Project coverage	3
Project materials developed	4
Appendices	5
FRDC FINAL REPORT CHECKLIST	

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank both Sevaly Sen and Sarah Jennings for their contribution to the workshop proceedings and the Australian Fisheries Management Authority for hosting the workshop.

Executive Summary

Resource sharing is a high priority for the Australian Fisheries Managers Forum (AFMF) with all Australian jurisdictions in the process of developing or having developed policies associated with this issue. Some have gone further and implemented resource sharing with limited success. It has been many years since fisheries managers collectively discussed the status of these policies and their experiences implementing them. As a first step towards a more harmonised approach for fishery resource sharing in Australia FRDC funded this workshop to develop a preferred pathway(s) to doing so. AFMF considered the workshop outcomes and has provided its advice on the next steps which will centre around a fisheries managers' toolkit that is developed in association with the AFMF Fisheries Management Committee using a development process like that of the National Harvest Strategy Guidelines and Co-Management Report. This will involve a further application for FRDC funding and engagement with key fishery stakeholders.

Keywords

Resources. Fisheries. Sharing. Workshop. Australia.

Introduction

Resource sharing is a sensitive subject for government and many other fishery stakeholders given it is seen as the primary means of distributing access to Australian fisheries which in turn links to the values each fishing sector assigns to that access. For commercial fishers it is related to the strength of security of fishing rights and for the traditional sector claims of sovereignty over the Australian coast and adjacent waters. Recreational fishers too claim the common-law right to fish for personal consumption, sport and enjoyment. Ultimately it is governments (on behalf of their constituents) and sometimes the courts that make the final decisions on resource sharing and the related issues of access and allocation. Against this backdrop FRDC agreed to fund a workshop that brought together those on the government front line of resource sharing, fishery managers, to share their experiences and find ways to improve resource sharing processes and outcomes.

Objectives

This project had two objectives:

1. To find common ground on resource sharing across Australian jurisdictions and consider the benefits of working towards a harmonised approach, and
2. If objective 1 is achieved, hold conversations with AFMF and leaders of various fishery stakeholder groups to determine next steps.

Method

A one-day workshop of fisheries managers involving all Australian jurisdictions (except the NT that was unable to attend) was held on 14 October 2019 (see Agenda at **Appendix 1**). A workshop was regarded as the most effective way of delivering on the first objective as it brought together those on the front line of resource sharing. This enabled rapid learning and an open exchange of ideas around which to propose next steps. Attending an AFMF meeting with the possibility of further stakeholder conversations was the means to deliver on the second objective.

Results, Discussion and Conclusion

The workshop had a presentation from Sevaly Sen on international resource sharing issues. Both SA and WA also gave presentations. The three presentations are at **Appendix 2**.

Both of the objectives were partially achieved with the main variances being; progress was made towards finding common ground at the 'principles' level but application of resource sharing had to be appropriate for the specific circumstances, and while the Australian Fisheries Managers Forum (AFMF) has been consulted and provided advice it was regarded as too early to go to stakeholders with objective one only partially complete and given the direction AFMF want to take (described below).

The workshop summary used as a basis for discussion by AFMF is at **Appendix 3** and provides the context, key observations and comments, and possible next steps. AFMF considered this issue at its meeting at SARDI on 23 October 2019. Dr Nick Rayns gave a presentation on the workshop outcomes. **Appendix 3**, along with the NOAA Reallocation Policy (at **Appendix 2**), were provided to AFMF for distribution to members.

AFMF considered the presentation and the proposed next steps. It agreed that further work to examine the NOAA Reallocation Policy and its possible adaptation for Australian use, the development of a fisheries managers' toolkit and worked examples for fisheries managers could all form key elements of the next steps to be taken noting that a new project proposal would be required to do so. AFMF also concluded that the process followed and the output from any future project should be like that for the National Harvest Strategy Guidelines (Sloan et al) and the Co-management Report (Neville et al). Both have been successfully used by various jurisdictions to improve their fishery management. Further, AFMF sought that its Fisheries Management Sub-Committee be a reference group for any new resource sharing project. Members also considered the need for a traditional/indigenous specific workshop regarding resource sharing but did not make any commitment at this time.

Given the above, and considering any views from FRDC, Nick Rayns (FutureCatch) with support from Sevaly Sen (Oceanomics), Sarah Jennings (independent economist) and John Harrison (fisheries consultant/former WAFIC CEO) will prepare a project outline for consideration by FRDC and AFMF. Subject to any feedback a project proposal will then be prepared for consideration of relevant RACs, as required by the FRDC.

Alongside this proposal several jurisdictions, including the Commonwealth, are either developing or revising their resource sharing policies. This includes allocation and re-allocation policies. It will be important that any new project supports to the extent possible the endeavours of these jurisdictions, including the Commonwealth which is seeking to get support from other jurisdictions for a Resource Sharing Framework. For this reason, remaining engaged with fisheries managers in a new project will be important as will its timing.

While the matter was not considered at the workshop, there was information presented that harvest strategies were being used by some jurisdictions to achieve both sustainable catches and resource sharing, the latter either through the setting of target reference points that favoured one fishing sector over another or through management responses when harvest control rules were triggered which differentially impacted on fishing sectors. Given this, a review of the implementation of the National Harvest Strategy Guidelines may be useful to understand how jurisdictions have used the guidelines to improve fishery management. Time did not permit AFMF to have a significant discussion about this matter, but it could be incorporated in a new project proposal.

Overall the project has served its purpose of starting a conversation amongst Australian fisheries jurisdictions to find ways to improve fisheries resource sharing between fishing sectors and jurisdictions, and Directors of Fisheries, through AFMF, have agreed the next steps to be taken.

Implications

The workshop was the first time in many years that fishery managers from across Australia had met and discussed resource sharing, comparing policies, implementation issues and outcomes. It showed a diversity of developmental steps and approaches that supported the need for further dialogue towards a harmonised approach across Australia that accounted for specific jurisdictional requirements.

Recommendations

AFMF comprises the Directors of Fisheries (or their equivalent) for all Australian jurisdictions, along with New Zealand and Papua New Guinea. Given the major role of governments and their elected officials in policy making it is appropriate that Directors of Fisheries lead the agenda on resource sharing RD&E. Having considered the Resource Sharing Workshop Report AFMF has recommended the following:

- further work be undertaken to examine the NOAA Reallocation Policy and its possible adaptation for Australian use,
- that a fisheries managers' toolkit be developed,
- worked examples of resource sharing for fisheries managers be prepared
- that any future resource sharing project follow the process and output like that for the National Harvest Strategy Guidelines (Sloan et al) and the Co-management Report (Neville et al)
- the Fisheries Management Sub-Committee of AFMF be a reference group for any new resource sharing project.

Further development

AFMF supported the development of a new project proposal to progress the recommendations above.

Extension and Adoption

The users of the outputs of the project were those who attended the workshop and the aim is to maintain their engagement in any future project. An informal network of participants has continued to discuss the issue of resource sharing post the workshop and the PI will continue to encourage this.

Project coverage

There has been no media coverage of this project and none was intended.

Project materials developed

The workshop agenda, Sevaly Sen's presentation and this final report were developed as part of this project. Presentations from South Australia and Western Australia are also included. NSW was unable to give a presentation at the workshop due to other pressing commitments.

Appendix 1

Resource Sharing – Fisheries Managers Workshop – 14 October 2019

Venue: Australian Fisheries Management Authority

15 Lancaster Place, Majura Park, ACT

Start: 11am

Finish: 5pm

Chair: Nick Rayns

Independent Experts: Sevaly Sen & Sarah Jennings

Agenda

11am Introductions, chair's opening statement re objectives

11.15am Sevaly Sen to set the scene with the international experience and possible ways forward for Australia (incl Q&A)

11.45am 5 to 10 minute summary from each jurisdiction about their current policy/regulatory framework for resource sharing (building on Knuckey et al)

1pm Lunch

1.30pm Q&A about the jurisdictional summaries – what common threads are emerging?

2.00pm WA, SA & NSW jurisdictions to present one resource sharing case study each (20 mins) that has been completed (incl. process, issues & what would you differently next time?)

3.00pm Q&A about the case studies – what common threads are emerging?

- 3.30pm General discussion
- given what we know now, is a nationally consistent framework on resource sharing possible/desirable - why?
 - what might the next steps look like?
 - how should we engage with fishery stakeholders?
- 4pm Afternoon tea
- 4.15pm Continue general discussion including a final round-the-table
- 4.45pm Chair's summing up and next steps
- 5pm Participants depart & Organisers debrief – Nick, Sevaly, Sarah & note taker
- 5.30pm Meeting close

Appendix 2

Link to Sevaly Sen Presentation

<file:///C:/Users/seaqu/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/FVZNCZQV/Resource%20Sharing%20WorkshopSenPresentation.pdf>

Links to NOAA Re-allocation Policy

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/webdam/download/64669104> and <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/webdam/download/64669105>

Link to South Australian presentation

[file:///C:/Users/seaqu/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/FVZNCZQV/SA_King%20George%20Whiting%20Access%20\(002\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/seaqu/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/FVZNCZQV/SA_King%20George%20Whiting%20Access%20(002).pdf)

Link to Western Australia presentation



MAF allocation
Fisheries Managemen

Appendix 3

Fishery Managers Resource Sharing Workshop

Summary for the Australian Fisheries Management Forum (AFMF), 23 October 2019

The fisheries managers resource sharing workshop was held in response to an AFMF priority and was funded by the FRDC. All jurisdictions except the NT participated. Josh Fielding and Crispian Ashby from FRDC also attended.

Nick Rayns facilitated the workshop which ran from 11am to 5pm on 14 October and was held at AFMA in Canberra in association with the ASFB conference.

Sevaly Sen and Sarah Jennings also participated with Sevaly giving an international perspective on resource sharing progress and pitfalls in North America and New Zealand.

Key observations and comments were:

1. This was the right time to have the workshop given several jurisdictions are considering what resource sharing policies they may need or are reviewing their existing policy
2. We are not starting with a blank slate as several jurisdictions have resource sharing policies (often also called resource allocation and/or reallocation policies) with WA and SA having put many elements into law and applied them. Some jurisdictions have also undertaken resource sharing without an apparent written policy
3. While commercial, charter, recreational and traditional sectors are usually considered for resource shares, consideration of shares for aquaculture (particularly brood stock) and non-extractive users were gaining traction
4. The common experience when allocating to the traditional sector was that it was challenging and there are new developments (e.g. Blue Mud Bay and Torres Strait Rock Lobster). Currently, notional set-aside shares (often described as allowances) are being used by some jurisdictions. *A workshop specifically on this sector was recommended to share experience and approaches*
5. There was a view that while some common objectives and principles (for allocation or the process) could be identified there was also a need for flexibility in policy application given the pathway dependence of where a resource sharing issue is starting from and what the desired endpoint may be
6. Opportunities were also recognised through increasing value within current allocations (or defacto allocations) that could be addressed through the reallocation process, e.g. enhancing the recreational fishing experience
7. Sevaly demonstrated the 4 or 5 different generic circumstances that could arise within and across both jurisdictions and sectors that re-enforced the complexity of resource sharing, the need for flexibility and an ability to include new users (e.g. marine space for windfarms)
8. Sevaly also showed *the new NOAA re-allocation framework which demonstrates the triggers that may activate it and the broad process to be followed which could be considered in Australia*

9. The SBT process was regarded as too expensive to replicate, so *a different solution to resource sharing for other species that better matched available data and fishery value with possible courses of action developed via a toolkit*
10. SA and WA gave good examples of the realities of resource sharing that fisheries managers often face, and that tonnes or percentage of catch were not the only solutions, e.g. spatial and temporal could also be used, noting the chosen approach should be tested against ESD principles
11. Implications of resource sharing are often poorly analysed, e.g. trading off commercial profits to enable expanding recreational catch which cannot be easily controlled, or the recreational sector not being made accountable for its share through cost-recovery, monitoring and enforcement
12. Objectives for resource sharing were often poorly specified (high level or vague) with no holistic understanding of trade-offs (ecosystem, economic & social across the fishing sectors) and a variable evidence-base due to lack of data, especially for recreational and traditional sectors
13. The link with the commercial sector's push, via SIA, for more secure fishing rights was touched on and the Commonwealth advised it intended (subject to resources being available) to update the work by George Kailis from 2013, noting the sensitivity of this issue
14. Recreational fishing surveys are improving in methodological consistency and the national survey coming up was noted, but many species of interest were still not being captured (lack of granularity) and confidence in the results was variable
15. Harvest strategies can play a key role in resource sharing through setting reference points that aim to achieve net benefit across different user groups, but *specifications of reference points, HCRs and management responses vary across jurisdictions – these could be harmonised to improve cross jurisdictional resource sharing*
16. Many of the variances observed between jurisdictions were a result of both differing frameworks (including Act objectives and government policies) and limited communication between jurisdictions on resource sharing
17. Fishery managers enthusiastically participated in the discussions and clearly wanted more time to follow up on many of the matters raised above
18. Several fishery managers, Sevaly, Sarah and I *concluded that it is too early to go to stakeholders since fishery managers needed more time to keep working on how feasible a harmonised set of principles which underpin a resource sharing framework is and what a common approach to allocation and reallocation might look like.*

Possible next steps

There was general view that some good conversations had been started and several key areas required further consideration including:

- A second workshop be held on resource sharing for fisheries managers that focusses on next steps for a harmonised resource sharing framework
- A resource sharing toolkit and trouble-shooting guide for fisheries managers is developed that draws on domestic and international experience
- A separate workshop be held that specifically considers traditional sector issues, challenges and how to integrate it into a broader resource sharing framework

- That within the next 12 months there is a review of the implementation of the National Harvest Strategy Guidelines.
-