

*Towards sustainability
of data-limited
multi-sector fisheries
–an ASFB workshop*

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F I S H E R I E S
R E S E A R C H &
D E V E L O P M E N T
C O R P O R A T I O N



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NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY:

2001/306 **Towards sustainability of data-limited multi-sector fisheries –an ASFB workshop**

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Objectives

1. To explore alternative data sources for multi-sector fisheries
2. To report on innovative methods for ESD assessment of multi-sector fisheries.
3. To bring together Researchers, Managers and key stakeholders to focus on assessment and resource sharing for these fisheries.
4. Publication of the papers presented at the workshop as well as the subsequent discussion and comments.

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY:

FRDC and State agencies have generously supported an annual national workshop hosted by Australian Society for Fish Biology (ASFB) since the 1980's. At the workshop, Australian and overseas scientists have presented keynote addresses on the theme of the workshop, followed by panel debates. The papers presented, and subsequent discussion are published in a book of proceedings.

The topic for the 2001 workshop, "Towards sustainability of data-limited multi-sector fisheries" was topical in light of the requirement for ESD reporting on Australian fisheries for EA, many of which are data poor.

Two international scientists with a special interest in this area were invited to be keynote speakers: Dr Ana Palma, from Peitre Madro, in Argrentina and Dr Jim Ianelli from Seattle in USA.

Despite the collapse of Ansett, and travel bans by US government employees, 69 delegates attended. All papers were presented, albeit some not by the author, with the written papers and discussion published in July 2003. First drafts were reviewed by Stephen Newman, Daniel Gaughan, Gary Jackson, Micheal Mackie, Brett Maloney, and Jill St John from Department of Fisheries WA, final editing by Patricia Kailola, and print set up by Sandy Clarke

The proceedings citation is

Newman, S. J. Daniel Gaughan, D. J., Jackson, G., Mackie, M. C., Malony, B., St John, J. and Kailola, P. (Eds.) 2003. Towards sustainability of data-limited multi-sector fisheries. Australian Society for Fish Biology Proceedings, Bunbury, Western Australia 23-24 September 2001. Fisheries Occasional Publications No. 5, June 2003, Department of Fisheries, Perth, Western Australia, 186 pp.

The workshop proceedings were sent to all workshop delegates and ASFB members. Additional copies are available by contacting Steve Newman at snewman@fish.wa.gov.au

KEYWORDS: fisheries assessment, data limited, sustainable.

FINAL REPORT

Background

The Australian Society of Fish Biology has taken the lead in encouraging international scientific links in fisheries research and management in Australia. Through support of FRDC and both State and Territory Fisheries Agencies, ASFB has hosted an annual national workshop series since the early 1980s with eminent overseas and Australian scientists present keynote addresses on major themes of direct relevance to fisheries science. The numbers of overseas scientists and managers attending these workshops has increased as the reputation of their quality spread. The next in this series of workshops is to be held in WA and will be sponsored by Fisheries WA in conjunction with Murdoch University and Edith Cowen University.

The purposes of these workshops are generally.

- Promote the opportunity for national fisheries research expertise to focus on a subject of current national significance as identified by the society
- Support visiting fisheries scientists of acknowledged expertise in the workshop theme to offer a national or international perspective.
- Publish proceedings of the workshop that is a benchmark document of current knowledge in the workshop subject area
- Identify and define research questions of national fisheries significance.

In many fisheries throughout Australia, the management of coastal fisheries with significant commercial and recreational components needs to be supported by stock assessments, which incorporate recreational catches, non-target catches, environmental variation, and habitat information.

The 2001 workshop will focus on this key issue, which has been identified as one of the major challenges in relation to ESD reporting and assessment procedures for Australian fisheries.

The workshop will bring together scientists, managers, and other stakeholders with an interest assessment of the state of our aquatic resources.

Need

The current ESD case studies project has identified Multi-sector fisheries, often with limited data, as posing one of the most difficult areas for assessment of stock status. These fisheries are typically fished by a small number of commercial operators taking small catches of a diverse range of species. Comprehensive commercial databases are generally lacking, and recreational catches are poorly known. Such stocks are often significantly impacted by environmental variation both man made and natural.

There is an urgent need for researchers and managers responsible for future fisheries ESD reporting and assessment to examine techniques for data gathering (both catch/effort and biological) and assessment for these types of fisheries. The historical approach of dealing with the data and assessments of fisheries from a single sector perspective is no longer compatible with ESD requirements.

This ASFB workshop will bring scientists, managers, and other stakeholders together to investigate innovative ways of providing reliable assessments of the stocks and sustainable harvest levels for our coastal, estuarine, and inland fish resources.

Planned outcomes

Improved scientific advice on the state of our aquatic resources.

Knowledge of latest techniques for broadening the scope of our assessments to ensure our marine resources are used in an ecologically sustainable manner.

Developing contacts with national and international experts in the area of the workshop theme.

Full proceedings of the workshop, including papers presented and resulting discussion, to be printed in a book and sent to all delegates and ASFB members.

METHODS

The 2001 ASFB workshop was held in Bunbury, Western Australia. The Workshop and Conference followed the standard format with a workshop on "Towards sustainability of data-limited multi-sector fisheries" to be held on Sunday September 23 and Monday September 24, a lay day on Tuesday September 25, and the Annual Conference on Wednesday September 26 and Thursday September 27. All sessions were held in the John Forrest Hotel in Bunbury.

The two-day workshop was introduced by Peter Rogers, Executive Director of Department of Fisheries WA. This was followed by four sessions.

1. Keynote address by Ana Parma followed by the session "Ecologically sustainable Development."
2. Multi-sector resource status..
3. Stock Assessment.
4. Data issues

As in previous years, the Chairs of each session will select a number of panelists covering a wide range of topics within each session theme. There will be considerable time allocated to general discussion, which will be recorded by rapporteurs. The workshop discussions will be an important component of the workshop publication. The workshop proceedings will provide a record of the latest techniques to deal with issues related to data-limited fishery management in Australia and overseas.

Results.

The workshop had several last minute problems with the collapse of Ansett causing many delegates to cancel at short notice. These delegates were given full refunds.

The keynote speakers invited to the workshop, were Ana Palma from Argentina and Jim Ianelli from USA. The September 11 event in New York resulted in a travel ban which prevented Dr Ianella attending the workshop. No refund was available on his airplane ticket. Ana Palma did attend with considerable difficulty due to disruption of mail services and difficulty in travelling through USA on her way to Perth.

The workshop was attended by 69 delegates.

A welcome function was held at the John Forest Hotel September 22, followed by two days of workshop theme presentations (Workshop program attached). In most cases where the paper presenter could not attend, the paper presented by another delegate. Despite these impediments, the workshop was an outstanding success

The workshop proceedings contain the papers given by each speaker as well as a record of discussion following each session. The proceedings were sent to all delegates and all ASFB members. Additional copies can be obtained from Steve Newman at snewman@fish.wa.gov.au

Issues for the future.

It was considered important to try and keep the discussion time as long as possible together with allowing speakers sufficient time to make their point. The format agreed to for this workshop was Keynote speakers 40 mins + 5 mins questions, speakers 15 mins + 5 mins questions, panel discussion 20 minutes.

The problem of getting abstracts from speakers in a timely manner remains a problem. It was generally agreed that written papers should be handed to editors at the time of presentation, but this is difficult to achieve.

This workshop relied heavily on the support of Department of Fisheries WA due in part to the level of funding from FRDC being less than half that granted in previous years. The Department of Fisheries WA generously paid a 6-month salary for the conference co-ordinator, allowed the publishing officer to prepare the proceedings, and agreed to research staff acting as editors of the proceedings.

In the future, the workshop committee will need to attract increased financial support if the workshop proceedings are to be recorded in hard copies.

Benefits

ASFB continues to be an Australian leader in bringing together national and international fisheries scientists. This is only possible with the support of state agencies, FRDC, and other sponsors.

The workshop allowed Australian researchers and managers to be exposed to the most up to date methodologies in improving advice on stock assessment using different data sources. This will promote the implementation of the latest methods in the assessments of fisheries and thus help reduce uncertainty in stock assessments.

The proceedings provide a record of the most up-to-date information and methodologies on the theme of the workshop.

Acknowledgements

The principal sponsors of the 2001 ASFB workshop were FRDC, Department of Fisheries WA Co-sponsors were: Edith Cowen University, Northwest Marine Technology, Inc., Floy Tag and Mfg. Inc, Austral Fisheries Pty Ltd, Hallprint Tags, Perth Convention Bureau, Tenix, and The Aquarium of WA,

The tireless efforts of conference co-ordinator, Danelle McCoy are appreciated. Marie Tassone assisted during the workshop and conference. The session chairs, Rick Fletcher, Rod Lenanton, Malcolm Haddon, and Sandy Morrison are thanked for their assistance

The organising committee, responsible for the workshop and conference being such a success were: Suzy Ayvazzian, Daniel Gaughan, Glen Hyndes, Gary Jackson, Mervi Kangas, Rod Lenanton, Micheal Mackie, Brett Malony, Gabrielle Nowara, Jill St John, Peter Stephenson, and Glen Young.

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