

# **Understanding Government and environmental Non Government Organisations' perceptions and attitudes toward the South East Trawl Fishing Industry.**

*Dr K. Brooks*



**Australian Government**  

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**Fisheries Research and  
Development Corporation**

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This final report and other material related to the research may be downloaded from the website [www.setfia.org.au](http://www.setfia.org.au)

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Acknowledgement and sincere thanks go to the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation for their foresight and confidence to invest in this research. Often issues and blockages in industry development are seen to lie with the end user, without due recognition being given to the structural environment and influences within which the consumer and supplier operate. This research specifically looks at the attitudes, perceptions and understandings of the SESSF which contribute and underpin many of those structural factors influencing consumers and end users, and therefore the industry.

We would also like to thank the many government and non government organisation participants, without whose co-operation, research such as this and the positive outcomes that can arise from it, would simply not be possible.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AFMA	Australian Fisheries Management Authority
BRS	Bureau of Rural Sciences
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Australia.
DEWHA	Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts
FRDC	Fisheries Research and Development Corporation
GABIA	Great Australian Bight Fishing Industry Association
HSI	Humane Society International
MAC	Management Advisory Committee
MPAs	Marine Protected Areas
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
NGOs	Non Government Organisation(s)
SBT	Southern Bluefin Tuna
SEDs	Seal Exclusion Devices
SESSF	South Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery
SETF	South East Trawl Fishery
SETFIA	South East Trawl Fishing Industry Association
TAC(s)	Total Allowable Catch(es)
TCT	Tasmanian Conservation Trust
WDCS	Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society
WRL	Western Rock Lobster
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

## NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

2008/316	<b>Understanding Government and environmental Non Government Organisations' Perceptions and attitudes toward the South East Trawl Fishing Industry.</b>
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### OBJECTIVES:

- 1 To build on the 2004 BRS report of community attitudes and perceptions of commercial fisheries, by developing an understanding of stakeholder attitudes, perceptions towards trawling and the reasons for these.
- 2 Provide a draft communications strategy for the SEF industry and SFM to address negative attitudes and perceptions towards trawling in these bodies, and further support the work being undertaken by the SFM on consumer attitudes and perceptions.

### OUTCOMES ACHIEVED TO DATE

The South East Scalefish and Shark Fishery (SESSF) trawl industry has experienced enormous difficulty in stepping out from the shadow of perceived unsustainable and bad practices, which has been reflected in poor stakeholder and consumer perceptions. In 2004 a report was published by the Bureau of Rural Sciences, which identified stakeholder and consumer perceptions as resulting from government and non government organisation messages. That report did not, however, identify government and Non Government Organisations (NGOs) perceptions of the industry or reasons for them. Consequently, this project was aimed at gathering information on government and NGO beliefs and messages about the SESSF, to begin the process of addressing negative perceptions of the industry.

The research identified that both Government and NGOs perceptions' of the South East Trawl Fishing Industry left scope for improvement. While the industry is perceived as having been proactive in revising operations and improving the environmental and business credentials of the sector since 2003/04, there is still a long way to go. The findings and resultant suggested communications strategy have facilitated a focused review of SETFIA's communication messages and methods and internal education focuses, as it moves into the next phase of the industry's development.

Specifically, the areas the SESSF was seen to have opportunities to improve perceptions of its performance, fell into two areas: the first, the need to communicate and educate government and NGOs about the positive and proactive steps that the industry has taken to address environmental concerns and issues associated with the industry; and the second, the opportunity that exists for the industry to develop its organisational direction, and adopt a willingness to engage with external organisations.

In the first area - issues of incorrect assumptions or perceptions of the industry - the key points involved; changes the industry has undertaken in the last five years to address environmental protection; the high standards of environmental scrutiny the industry is subject and conforms to; awareness of the use of different gear types for specific purposes and to avoid non target species

interaction; by catch reduction activities; percentage of the ocean trawled and particularly the low percentage of ocean bottom that is trawled; industry voluntary closures and reasons for them; and promotion of the SETFIA Code of Practice and how this supports and enhances operations of SETFIA members. These issues were addressed in the proposed communications strategy (Phase Two of the Report) and were, in the main, issues that have been well addressed by the industry. These changes and actions have, however, not been effectively communicated to the government and NGOs, to effect a change in their perceptions of the industry.

The second area of opportunity for the industry relates to the culture and cohesiveness of the industry and its relationship with government and NGO bodies around issues of concern associated with the industry. It was found that, with the exception of a number of the executive in the industry, industry participants were perceived of as being wary of government and NGOs, and were felt to commonly adopt a 'defensive' and 'non engagement' attitude to these bodies. It was felt that the industry has the opportunity to develop a long term vision for the future of the industry, as none of the research participants felt that a future for the industry was an unreasonable expectation. An opportunity was also seen to exist for the industry, in engaging proactively with by catch and other reporting requests to build the credibility, and trust in the operational responsibility, of the industry.

From the opportunities identified in the research phase, a draft communications strategy was developed in collaboration with the SETFIA executive. Through a focus group with interview participants, the draft strategy was reviewed and feedback received. The focus group believed the communications strategy would address the existing misconceptions and begin to modify the negative perceptions of the industry. The main opportunity was seen in the movement of staff in many government and NGO groups that, if new information was provided, had the potential to develop positive ideas and impressions of the industry, rather than simply adopt those of co-workers who may have formed negative impressions from past industry conduct. Government and NGOs also felt there was an opportunity to improve communications between the industry and themselves through regular face to face liaison at a variety of levels (executive to fisher). In the same vein, DEWHA expressed a willingness to work with the industry on increasing fisher understandings of the EPBC Act, in that it is not as negative for fishers as they potentially believe.

The second phase of the research resulted in a recommended communications strategy, which included a general brochure and fact sheet that could be provided to new employees in government departments and agencies, and supplied to NGOs. It was scoped as provided updated information on how the industry operates, in what areas, to what depths, the equipment used and the measures taken to both comply with the EPBC Act and to minimise interaction with non target species. In addition to this, an updated vision statement with details of the Industry Code of Conduct (and details of how that is implemented) was identified as necessary. A newsletter was also recommended to regularly communicate with the government agencies and NGOs, with information on changes in the industry, issues the industry is working on managing, and achievements. These recommendations were also developing in line with the SFM marking campaign and could be used as a basis from which to explore potential marketing activities with the Sydney Fish Markets, and also redevelop the Industry Organisation's website, which, as of October 2009, is underway.

Copies of the final report have been received by the SETFIA executive, and copies of this report will be provided in soft copy to all participants in the research and relevant government agencies and NGOs.

**KEYWORDS:** South East Trawl; Attitudes; Perceptions; Communications; NGOs, Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery, Commonwealth Trawl Sector, SETFIA, fishing industry association.

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

From a global perspective, Demersal trawling is seen as an uncontrolled, non selective fishing methods, which destroys the benthic environment and is ecologically unsustainable. It is a different story in Australia's Sothern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery, where improvements in the management of trawling, through extensive fishery closures, Marine Protected Areas, limited entry, reduced fleet numbers, modified gear and strict Total Allowable Catches (TACs) have enabled the fishery to demonstrate its ecological sustainability. Despite this, the SESSF trawl industry still has enormous difficulty in stepping out from the shadow of perceived unsustainable and bad practices of international operators. This is reflected in poor stakeholder and consumer perceptions.

Research previously undertaken to investigate public perceptions and understandings of the fishing industry, its activities, sustainability and desirability, both in the short and long term, identified that the majority of perceptions come from media, government and environmental non government organisations (Aslin and Byron 2003). However, while this research identified that these bodies were significant influencers of stakeholder and community perceptions, the scope of it did not allow investigations into the understandings and perceptions that these agencies held of the South East Scalefish and Shark Fishery.

This research, designed as a two phase process, was proposed to build upon the work undertaken in 2003. The first phase comprised a primary data collection project, to build upon the 2003 work by developing an understanding of relevant government department, management agency and environmental non government organisation, attitudes and perceptions towards trawling and the reasons for these. The second phase of the project was, on the basis of the findings of phase one, to develop a draft communications strategy and then trial it with participants from phase one, to identify if it is believed to have the potential of positively altering existing attitudes and perceptions and therefore messages communicated to other stakeholders and the general community.

Two companies have been involved in undertaking this project. KAL Analysis (a social research and analysis company) has been responsible for the development of the project, its management and phase one execution. While Quantum Ideas Bureau (a communications and business enhancing company) undertook phase two - the development of the draft communications strategy.

The following details the outcomes from both Phases one and two of the project and final recommendations.

## PHASE ONE - Attitudes and Perception Analysis.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - PHASE ONE RESEARCH

**This work explores the perceptions, beliefs and knowledge of Government and NGO of the SETF.**

**The industry is seen to have a positive future, subject to the development of environmental stewardship, greater cohesion and vision of the fishery.**

**There are key areas in relationship building and the promotion of current industry activities that could benefit the industry.**

**Bycatch and mitigation methods are not well understood, nor is the scope of fishing in the South East. Equally, the Code of Practice is not visible.**

**The future of the industry is believed to rely on developing environmental stewardship, transparency of reporting and collaborative marketing.**

**The report identifies eight key communications messages and five areas for industry development.**

This study was undertaken to complete the research that was undertaken in 2005 to identify consumer attitudes to fishing. That project highlighted the government and NGOs as key influencers of consumers. There was, however, no knowledge as to how these two groups perceived the South East Trawl Fishery.

This research has found that both Government departments and NGOs believe the South East Trawl Fishery has a future in the commercial fishing industry. The industry restructure has produced a positive change in the behaviour and attitude of the fishers in the South East Trawl Fishery, but this has in general been achieved in spite of overt reluctance and the reactive nature of the fishers. In line with this, the Fishery does not compare well with other domestic fisheries such as the Northern Prawn Trawl, for their perceived lack of proactiveness, environmental stewardship, vision and cohesion.

It was believed that the industry readily uses political means to achieve its ends and that a collaborative approach would be more beneficial in both government and NGO domains. Both groups of stakeholders do however believe that there are positive aspects to the changes in the industry (gear changes and closures) in the past five years, that the industry could be promoting with a long term strategic vision, but isn't. Additionally, the high level of environmental scrutiny here in Australia is seen as an opportunity for the fishery to highlight positive aspects of their industry.

Bycatch is believed to be an issue that will remain on the agenda, and that the industry must be seen to continually work on minimising bycatch, in order to be perceived well by the community. There is, in the main, very little awareness of what mitigation measures are being used to reduce bycatch, and a feeling that fishers only do the minimum amount required to address any pressure placed upon them. Spatial and temporal closures are felt to have a positive impact on the environment as are MPAs but there is inadequate monitoring of these management tools. The SETF's Code of Practice is unknown in the majority of cases, and it was unanimously noted that the Code is not visible to government, NGOs or the public.

The future for the industry is seen to rely on the adoption of greater environmental stewardship in the form of vision, transparency in reporting, savvy marketing and finding ways to address the rising cost of fuel. There is perceived to be an opportunity for the industry to step forward and initiate action on developing environmental issues and formulate its vision in this context. Notably, there were no divergent views from the key themes identified, in either of the stakeholder groups.

This initial stage of the project has identified eight subjects that are recommended as the basis for developing a communications strategy for government agencies and NGOs. It also recommended five areas that the industry may like to consider for further internal development.

## 1. METHODS

This first phase of the project was undertaken using semi structured interviews with individuals in federal government departments and green NGOs that the industry is in contact with or who affect their operations and the perceptions of the industry. The interviews were structured around sixteen subject areas to ascertain stakeholder perceptions, beliefs and reasons for them, of the South East Trawl industry. In consultation with the industry the semi structured interview questions (see Appendix one) were developed which focused on the subject areas of;

- their knowledge and impressions of the SETF;
- perceptions of differences between the SEF and other domestic and international fisheries in regard to both equipment and interaction with other operators/agencies;
- knowledge of gear type and restrictions, closures (temporal, spatial and voluntary) MPAs and their effectiveness;
- knowledge of bycatch issues and mitigation measures in the SEFT;
- knowledge of areas of the southern zone trawled and to what depths;
- Seal and other megafauna interactions; codes of practice; the future of the industry; the level of government action/interaction and any other pertinent issues raised.

The objective of the interviews was to identify the common themes amongst these stakeholders that framed attitudes and perceptions of government departments and green NGOs toward the South East Trawl Fishery. It was also to identify any 'outliers' in terms of individuals or groups that had particularly divergent views or perceptions and why.

The interviews were voice recorded where ever possible, however a number of interviews were conducted in cafes where noise levels precluded this, or by telephone, in which cases the interviewees comments were transcribed directly by the interviewer. All taped interviews were transcribed for ease of analysis. It was and is not the intent to explicitly document the specific respondent's views or perceptions, but rather identify the common themes that are useful to the development of a communications strategy.

Individuals were identified by the industry as those who have particular contact with and knowledge of the industry from both a practical point of view and also positive and negative press perspectives. A total of 20 interviews were undertaken with a total of 23 individuals from the following groups:

- Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture
- Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts
- Australian Fisheries Management Authority
- Commonwealth Scientific and Industry Organisation (CSIRO)
- Bureau of Rural Sciences
- Biosecurity Australia
- Food Standards Australia and New Zealand
- World Wildlife Fund
- Humane Society International

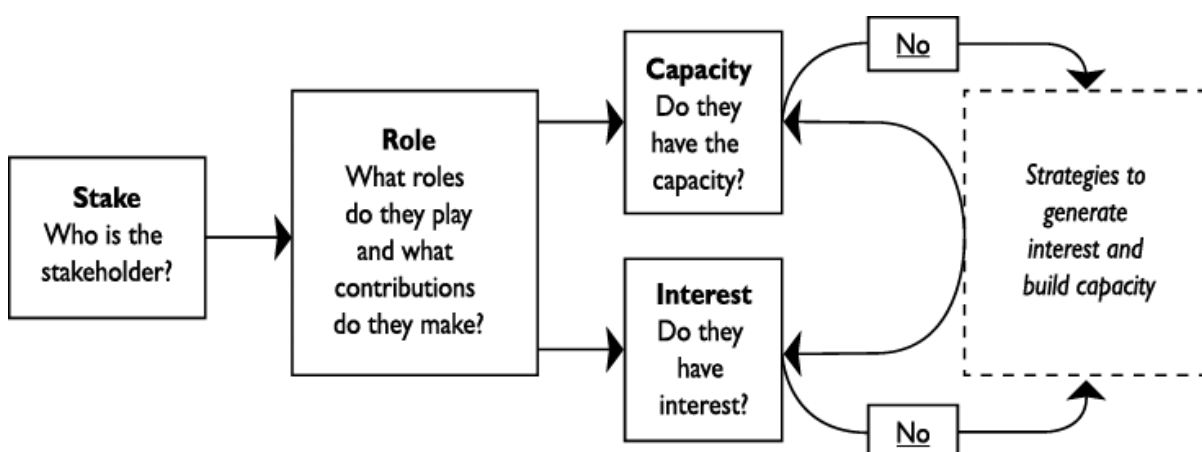
- Marine Stewardship Council
- Tasmanian Conservation Trust
- Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society (WDCS)
- Recfish Australia
- Independent NGO consultant(s)

Government departments had undergone a series of position changes in and around July and August, which meant a number of those identified by the industry had now moved on to other areas. In these cases, wherever possible, both the original person and their replacement were both interviewed. While there was a variety in both the recency and level of contact amongst these groups and individuals with the South East Trawl, a number of common themes emerged. These will be dealt with under the initial headings of Government and Non Government Organisations and then the sixteen different topic areas. The results were analysed using a Stakeholder analysis framework to identify the common themes, and their relative importance in the structure of influence.

## 2. STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

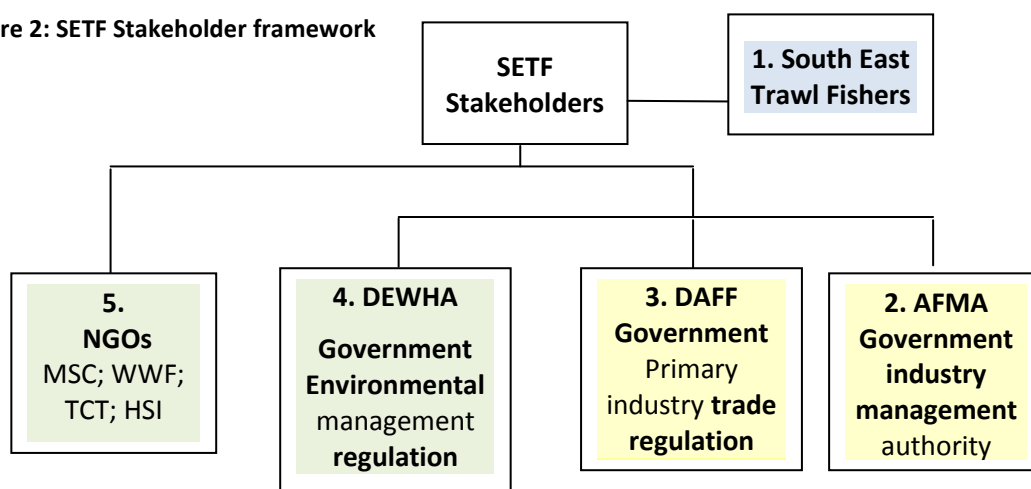
‘Stakeholder’ is a very broad term, commonly loosely used, with little understanding of the diversity of roles, contributions, capacity and interests they have in the issues that may be investigated in the course of analysing an issue in a project such as this.

Figure 1: Stakeholder Analysis Framework



The 23 stakeholders that were interviewed were fundamentally two categories, one of which could be broken down into a further two. This could be illustrated as follows.

Figure 2: SETF Stakeholder framework



There are unique and different drivers for each of these categories, and at times, they even vary within the category. In summary the characteristics of the stakeholders (i.e. their roles, contributions, interest and capacity) include the following features for each group.

1. **Fishers:** The fishers themselves have a long history with the fishery and feel they are the ones with the most intimate knowledge of the biophysical characteristics of the fishery and its capacity to sustain fishing and generate income. Between fishing and managing their businesses, they have limited capacity to engage with government and non government groups.

2. **Government – industry management:** AFMA has been set up to manage the Australian fisheries resource. The relationship with fishers prior to the last two years has been at times hostile, and AFMA has been perceived as overly regulatory with little regard for the day to day operating environment of the fishers. More recently this has softened, with greater collaboration being developed between AFMA and a range of different fisheries as the drive for co-management becomes stronger. AFMA is interested in focussing on increasing its and the fishing communities' capacity to engage in industry objectives to the benefit of both AFMA and the industry.

3. **Government – trade regulation:** The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF, which also incorporates the Bureau of Rural Sciences and Biosecurity Australia) is tasked with ensuring the economic viability of Australia's primary industries, with due consideration for environmental management and resource preservation. DAFF has a greater capacity to engage with the industry than is currently being utilised and certain sectors within the department have an interest in doing so, but have previously not been so inclined due to industry focus on communication at ministerial levels only.

4. **Government – Environmental management:** The Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) is tasked with taking care of the environment. The key parameter expressed by DEWHA representatives which shapes their actions, is to protect biodiversity according to the EPBC Act, which often places them directly between avid green NGOs and the industry. While DEWHA's activities are often perceived to be dominated by NGO's, the Department is cognisant of utilising its capacity in a balanced manner to engage with both NGOs and the industry.

5. **Green NGO's:** This group of organisations, while all being regarded as Non Government Organisations, varies widely in their interpretation of sustainability, their focus on suspending fishing activity and their capacity to engage with external groups. While the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) has a reasonably well established capacity to engage and interest due to the experience base of current staff; the Humane Society International (HSI) has no capacity to initiate, and little to undertake engagement. Similarly the Tasmanian Conservation Trust (TCT) has limited capacity, but utilises standing opportunities such as the Management Advisory Committee (MAC), as does WWF. The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) does not have the capacity to initiate engagement, nor is it appropriate given the necessity for them to maintain an independent status. The interest for these NGOs in engaging with the SETF is driven by what changes can be made that are of benefit to the environment – they are not interested in fishing per se.

Within each of these groups there are a mix of views and perspectives which identify their capacity and area of interest in interacting with fishers and their industry. However, given the limited capacity of the industry to undertake extensive interaction with each of these organisations, the analysis has been broken down into the key themes emerging

from those representing government trade and industry objectives (regulation and management), and those representing environmental concerns, which has been determined by the specifically different, charter, interest and capacity each of these groups have.

### 3. RESULTS

The following comments and summaries arise from the discussions in semi structured interviews with participants. They are not necessarily facts, but are the beliefs, perceptions, opinions and understandings of the participants. It must be noted that some participants had not had long in their positions, and in some cases were consequently very new to the fisheries sector and had very little knowledge, only perceptions, of the industry.

#### a. GOVERNMENT REGULATION AND MANAGEMENT

The following is synthesised from nine interviews with twelve participants, undertaken in the weeks of September 1st through 16th.

##### i) IMPRESSIONS OF THE SEF

Interviewees reported noticing a distinct change in the nature of the fishery since the restructure of 2004, which has made it a more strategic fishery than it was, which engages with government and some issues affecting it. It is believed to have become a smaller, more profitable industry, whose fishers do not have to travel as far for their catches, are obtaining larger catches, and better prices for their landed catch. It is recognised that it has become a more professional fishery than in the past.

With these comments in mind, some constructive criticisms or observations were also made of the fishery. It was believed that due to the wide range of fishing activity types and geographic spread there was a very discernable fragmentation in the fishery, to which a short term focus and an inability for the industry to be proactive as a whole, was attributed. The separation from Lakes Entrance operators and others in the fishery was commented on, on repeated occasions. Those members of the fishery who do engage with the government are believed to be ostracised by other members of the fishery, if their activities are made common knowledge. Although the industry has a very active relationship with the management authority, it is perceived to be disinclined to build relationships with government departments at the middle level, and tends to be very political in its approaches, rather than problem solving, or seeking a win/win with government agencies. The industry's shift in behaviour in terms of monitoring and equipment is applauded, but in the context that, *"they have been brought to the table kicking and screaming"* and that many in the fishery are still distrustful of monitoring processes, and are disinclined or unco-operative in regard to reporting on catches, and monitoring species. Additionally, they are seen to be very heavily reliant on the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) for direction.

There is recognition that the government has not sold its fisheries management policies well, given that there has been a decline in public approval of the industry. Similarly, government departments and agencies believe that the industry does not have the ability, or is comfortable with, speaking out about its activities in a positive way, and although they do understand the history of this and the consequent aversion, they believe that the industry fails to promote its very positive moves in the last five years. In this vein, although these agencies understand that the fishery is very exposed to public

opinion given its geographical operation, there was also a belief expressed by one interviewee that trawl operations damage the benthic environment, in that trawlers can *“scrape the bottom and that is going to cause issues around biodiversity.”*

## **ii) DIFFERENCES TO OTHER FISHERIES**

It was commonly felt that the South East Trawl was in a good position, relatively speaking, to make headway on adapting the industry to the changing environment because of the relatively fewer number of fishers compared to other fisheries. It was also believed that generally speaking SETFIA is, comparatively speaking, well involved with the higher levels of government and ensures that the industry's perspectives are well known.

The majority of opinions did not make a favourable comparison with other fisheries, however, consistently commenting that the SETF is more reactive and resistant to change, and has a tendency to blame government agencies for circumstances without taking any responsibility, or adopting a proactive mentality of environmental stewardship. Further it was felt that there is little internal management of the various perspectives in the fishery, and that individuals often run with their own arguments using their own information, which detracts from the industry and its professional image. While it was believed that the fishery is the least mature of the Commonwealth fisheries, it was noted that a silent number do the right thing from an environmental perspective.

It was felt that fishers within the industry have not been able to understand the benefits of working and aligning themselves with science or *“having science on their side”* by being open to scrutiny and undertaking reporting and monitoring in a transparent manner. The SETF was commonly contrasted to the Southern Bluefin Tuna (SBT); Western Rock Lobster (WRL) and Northern Prawn Trawl Fisheries. The Northern Prawn Trawl fishery was raised on many occasions as a good example of a fishery that is proactive and has adopted a role of environmental stewardship in their planning and fishery management.

## **iii) COMPARISONS WITH INTERNATIONAL TRAWL OPERATIONS**

The perception was that overall, the South East Trawl fishery compares very well with international operations. It is believed that the SEFT has a resource that hasn't been devastated; is relatively close to shore and therefore more economical to fish, and has system of very secure access rights.

While the industry is believed to be *“head and shoulders above anyone else in the world”* it is recognised that it is the EPBC Act and public awareness that has driven this. It was noted that, unfortunately, the majority of public information that is out there on the trawl industry is based on that of the northern hemisphere, which is deemed to be environmentally damaging and not at all the same as Australian operations. While Australian fisheries and the South East Trawl do have one of the highest, if not the highest, levels of environmental scrutiny in the world this can be seen as not only an impost but also an opportunity, if the industry is willing to be transparent and accountable in its operations.

#### **iv) KNOWLEDGE OF TRAWL GEAR USED**

The majority of participants (seven interviewees) had no knowledge, did not “really” know about gear types or did not take an interest in it as it was not pertinent to their interaction with the industry. The remainder were well aware of different gear types and the changes in the use of different gear types over recent years, noting the need to keep coming up with new solutions to bycatch and megafauna interactions. Additionally, it was commented that the different gear types that were used (Otter board, Danish seine, Midwater, Prawn and Demersal trawl) may contribute to the fractured nature of the industry and be an obstacle to effective industry collaboration.

#### **v) GEAR RESTRICTIONS**

Again, the majority of participants were not aware of gear restrictions in the South East Trawl, or it was not of significance to their areas of expertise. Those who were aware of gear restrictions commented on the purpose of them being to reduce bycatch, and that the industry had been hesitant and resistant to change. This last point was countered, by a minority of participants, who noted that in fact fishers were only reticent to adopt new gear or restrict gear use, when the benefits of such an activity had not been proven. Additionally, from a management point of view it was seen as potentially beneficial that the industry felt able to question the relevance and benefit of directives that had an impost on their operations.

It was asserted that although there had been changes in the use and adoption of new and different gear types, because there was no benchmark data on bycatch levels, it was not possible to verify the benefits of this activity, decreasing the government agencies’ ability to support the industry. It was also believed that gear types need to keep evolving to address community concerns.

#### **vi) BYCATCH LEVELS**

The feedback on bycatch was, overall, that there was still too much: “*Hardly any bycatch is a relative thing.*” It was felt that the South East Trawl generally only meets the minimum requirements placed on it, compared to the proactive approach that fisheries such as GABIA have taken. It was noted however, that the government management authority may be able to assist the industry by working with them on how quotas are structured to minimise bycatch. Most dominant throughout all the interviews was the comment that the lack of reporting by the fishery makes it very difficult for government agencies to take a stance on changes in bycatch levels. This was noted as being due to the lack of perceived transparency in the industry’s actions in the current processes.

#### **vii) BYCATCH MITIGATION MEASURES**

Of the twelve individuals interviewed, six could not detail, or did not know of any mitigation measures or devices that the South East Trawl employs to minimise and mitigate bycatch.

For those who were aware of mitigation measures, it was felt that the uptake in the east was somewhat slow and could be improved, compared to Tasmania which has been good. It was also noted, that although some in the industry had increased the mesh size of their nets to reduce the level of juvenile catch, the industry is nervous and suspicious

of embracing new technology, and again, due to the lack of monitoring data and benchmarks, it is not possible to demonstrate the effectiveness of these measures.

Additionally, as the EPBC Act directs that all reasonable steps be taken to minimise by catch, the employment of mitigation measures must be a continual process embraced by the industry for them to be seen positively by the community in regard to this bycatch mitigation.

#### **viii) PERCENTAGE OF THE SOUTHERN ZONE TRAWLED**

The majority of those interviewed did not have any awareness, or felt they were not able to make any comment on the percentage of the Southern zone that is trawled. The remainder (three), said that they were aware that it is a percentage (not the entirety) but did not have the figures “*off the top of my head*”, or “*to hand*”, but could get hold of them if it were necessary.

#### **ix) PERCENTAGE OF ACTIVITY AT VARIOUS DEPTHS**

Three of the participants were aware that trawling occurred at different depths; however, none were aware of the percentage of activity at the various depths without reference to notes, or data that they did not have to hand. Again, the majority of participants did not know that trawling occurred at different depths, or felt that they were unable to comment.

#### **x) SPATIAL AND TEMPORAL CLOSURES**

The attitudes to temporal and spatial closures is perceived to have (despite the resistance of some fishers who appear to just not trust the process,) changed quite dramatically in the last eighteen months or so since the introduction of co-management. There has been some surprise at how well the voluntary closures have worked. It was believed that closures are a simple method that everyone (fishers, management, agencies and community) can understand easily, but that in order to be effective on all counts, the areas need to be assessed before and after to determine the effectiveness in relation to the objective of the closure. It was commented on that there needed to be more closures. In that vein, it was also queried as to why fishers didn't use closures more often to gain 'credit' for proactive behaviour in areas where they weren't fishing, or didn't feel it was appropriate to fish at a particular time. There was a number of respondents (four) who didn't feel they could make comment or weren't aware of the closures at all.

#### **xi) EFFECTIVENESS OF MPAs**

It was generally believed that Marine Protected Areas are a good thing, though the effectiveness of them is hard to prove due to the lack of monitoring in Australia. Mediterranean data was cited as strongly indicating that Marine Protected Areas are positive for fishing in terms of the regeneration of stocks. The belief was that the government has largely got them in balance at the moment, and to date there is no proof that the MPAs have impacted negatively on commercial fishing. The South East Trawl Fishing Industry's initial reaction to MPAs was regarded as being alarmist and as it has so far proven to be un-based, it has tended to erode their credibility. One comment did note that the position of MPAs could perhaps be improved, but that would require proactive collaboration by fishers with management authorities and the relevant

agencies. Three participants don't get involved with MPAs or didn't feel they were adequately informed to make a comment.

#### xii) INTERACTIONS WITH SEALS

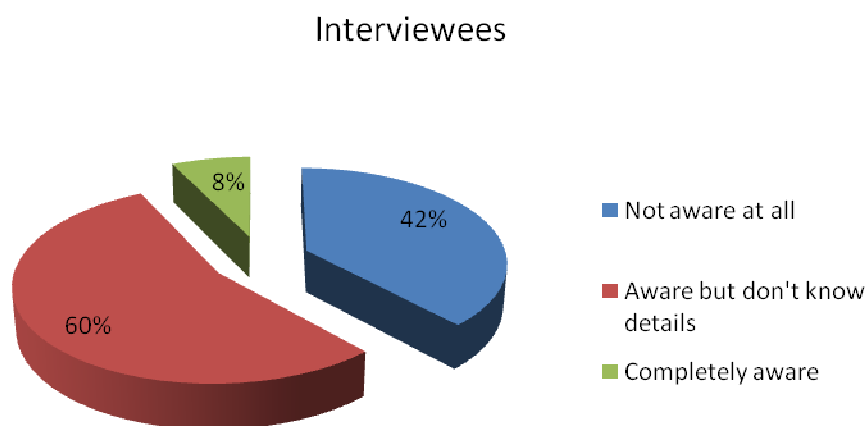
Seals are no longer perceived to be a major problem by the majority of interviewees, in that the SEDs that are available are basically effective, if fitted comprehensively across the industry. It is felt that there was early reluctance in the industry to fit SEDs but it was commonly noted that this has improved in the last one to two years, showing that there is work being done and the industry is prepared to do something about it.

Although it was noted that there are many seals, that was believed to be irrelevant as the legislation says that interaction has to be avoided or minimised. Additionally, the public looks favourably on seals and similar megafauna, so despite the fact they are not threatened at this time, 'common sense' says that the industry should avoid them, and this has to be an ongoing activity. While it was noted that many fishers asked "*when is enough, enough*", the reprisal was that there must be continuous endeavours to minimise interaction.

Rather than seals, it was repeatedly noted that albatross, sea birds and warp strikes were the emerging, if not already, big issue for the fishing industry. Additionally there is no data on the number of Albatross being killed each year, which again makes it difficult for government agencies to respond to NGOs on this subject. A number of 2000 Albatross per annum was what is currently 'believed' to be killed through fishing interaction, in the absence of firm data.

#### xiii) SETFIA CODE OF PRACTICE

Figure 1: Government Code of Practice Awareness



Five of the twelve interviewees were not aware that SETFIA had a Code of Practice, while a further 60% were aware of it but not in any detail at all. Only one interviewee was confidently aware of the code, as they had assisted in its development.

#### **xiv) FUTURE OF THE INDUSTRY**

The majority of interviewees saw a positive future for the South East Trawl Industry, and expressed a desire at a personal level that the industry should not be lost. It was believed that wild catch would continue as it is embedded in people's thinking and the Harvest Strategy was a positive step towards sustainability. It was felt that there is excessive optimism about the capacity of aquaculture to replace wild capture fish products. These predictions were qualified as being the case only if the industry kept developing as it had in recent years, and presented a cohesive front to government and the public. Further, it was suggested that the industry may do well to pursue greater collaboration with the retail sector, to identify what form consumers want their seafood in; such as pre-packaged ready-to-cook fish.

Sustainability of the industry was also felt to lie in the industry's ability to adapt to the fact that it is going to have its environmental footprint confined to what it now has or less, and that independent certification (MSC or similar) would make a big difference to marketing, consumer differentiation and support. In order to achieve that, it was also noted that the industry would have to engage more positively with reporting and government monitoring, in order to attain and maintain an image of sustainability, and reduce community pressure on them.

#### **xv) GOVERNMENT ACTIONS**

Two interviewees made comments about industry and government interaction which related to the need for the industry to have strong government support due to ongoing community scrutiny over environmental sustainability. To this end, it was also noted that a greater engagement with and understanding of government fisheries statistics, as it may help the industry to use those statistics more effectively to their advantage.

#### **xvi) OTHER**

Several other comments were noted in the general course of the interviews which included:

- That MSC certification would be a positive move in terms of independently establishing their sustainability;
- The general "*reluctance*" to undertake positive public relations should be addressed;
- That there is a need to increase the breadth of sector representation to decrease the impression/reality of fragmentation in the industry;
- The need to have a "*softer and less litigious front*" as although the industry has decreased its litigious threats, it still undertakes them, making government very wary and nervous in dealing with them – it decreased and eroded trust.
- The absence of verifiable data means that departments tend to assume the worst and over engineer solutions and/or regulations to address perceived problems.

## **b. Environmentally Focussed Non Government Organisations and Government Departments**

The following is synthesised from eleven interviews involving eleven participants, undertaken in the weeks of September 1<sup>st</sup> through to October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2008.

### **i) IMPRESSIONS OF THE SEF**

It was generally agreed that the SETF has come a long way in terms of its environmental responsibilities in the last five years, however it was always with the caveat that it has been *“reluctantly”* or *“kicking and screaming”*. It was also noted that fishers don't tell people in their own communities *“about the lengths that they go to in their methods [to avoid bycatch] and what they are doing”*.

It was felt that the industry over uses 'Commercial in Confidence' to suit them and avoid sharing information, creating the impression that they have issues that they want to keep hidden. This has the effect of supporting the public perception that *“they just dredge the bottom and that everything gets scooped up in the nets and nothing survives”*. A perception that is, unfortunately, supported and enhanced by fishers who still publicly express the opinion that it is also 'OK' to kill seals.

Overall, it was felt that although the industry has changed in the last five years, there is still no ownership of the problems in the fishery or environmental stewardship. These comments were often made in the context of the industry only doing what it has to and not showing leadership, or *“shying away from having a strategic vision.”* It was also noted that the support for change in the industry does vary between fishers and the belief was commonly expressed that the industry is very factionalised.

### **ii) DIFFERENCE TO OTHER FISHERIES**

One interviewee felt that commonwealth fisheries in general had need of a greater level of government transparency because of the imposts on them compared to State fisheries. This being said however, it was again noted that compared to other fisheries, the SETF did not display any vision and didn't have a horizon of more than a year in its planning and actions. Additionally it was felt that fishers in the SEF exhibit a greater level of 'ownership' over the fish in their fishery, regarding them as 'our fish' which inflames green NGOs and the community who see the fish as a common resource, or independent animal, of the ocean.

Interviewees also noted that the SETF has a high number of threatened or endangered species in their fishery, which concentrates attention on them, but they don't appear to be taking any initiatives to address stock levels of these species. As with the government interviewees, the Northern Prawn Trawl was commonly cited as an example of a fishery that was very good in terms of reduced effort and bycatch, and increased environmental stewardship, that the SEF could look to as an example.

### **iii) COMPARISONS WITH INTERNATIONAL TRAWL OPERATIONS**

Again, as with the government interviewees, those who could comment on international comparisons felt that the Australian trawl industry *“stacks up pretty well”* against international trawl operations, particularly the northern Europeans, though there are possibly lessons to be learnt from the Americans fishing in the North Pacific. It was also commented on that while the Australian industry appeared to take on scientific advice,

was it “*enough?*” The majority of the interviewees had either no experience of international operations or felt that the Australian circumstance and implementation of the EPBC legislation was their primary concern.

#### **iv) KNOWLEDGE OF GEAR**

Four of the interviewees (36%) felt that there was a genuine process in place to try and reduce bycatch, through the direction to use bigger mesh sizes. There was no reference to any gear use other than nets and the size of mesh. One interviewee believed that fishers did not necessarily have problems with changing gear, but rather with having the benefits of a gear changes proven before implementing it. Another interviewee felt that there was too much focus on gear type and use, and that focus should shift to area based management of the fishery.

#### **v) GEAR RESTRICTIONS**

Of the eleven interviewees, eight did not know of, or any details of gear restrictions, with one asserting that to their knowledge mesh sizes had not been increased at all since 2001. One interviewee was aware of the introduction of rotating mesh, but not of any increases in mesh size. Only one interviewee referred to being aware of mesh size increases and discussions of trialling seal exclusion devices (SEDs) but they were not aware of restrictions as such.

#### **vi) BYCATCH LEVELS**

Overall, the sentiment amongst interviewees was that bycatch levels of the fishery were still too high, with the comment made that “*they are being over fished already*”. It was unanimously believed that bycatch reduction effort had to be a continuous activity and that any asserted reductions in bycatch could not be reliably believed until they could be independently verified by government agencies. It was felt that bycatch concern and pressure in relation to particular species will remain until an upturn in stocks of threatened or endangered species can be independently demonstrated. It was noted that bycatch is a fact of life in fishing and that despite the best efforts it cannot be eliminated entirely, but that it was an ongoing effort to minimise bycatch.

A particular focus was also noted on the bycatch of juveniles of all species and that greater efforts had to be made to increase mesh size across the board to reduce levels of this bycatch. It was also believed that DAFF and AFMA had taken the wrong approach with the ‘basket of fish’ and had implemented inappropriate policies in relation to addressing bycatch issues adequately.

#### **vii) BYCATCH MITIGATION MEASURES**

It was believed that the short term focus of the industry prevented them for taking up many new ideas and technologies to minimise bycatch, which was related to the perceived lack of strategic thinking of the industry overall. Interviewees acknowledged that fishers do ask “*but how much is enough?*” in terms of undertaking mitigation measures.

*“There is sort of a perception of ‘well we have already got some bycatch mitigation measures in place’ (and this probably crosses over with seabirds as well) ‘you know, we’ve done our bit.’”*

This is perceived as demonstrating the reality of fisher attitudes' of doing only as much as they have to, and the industry's lack of environmental stewardship.

#### **viii) PERCENTAGE OF THE SOUTHERN ZONE TRAWLED**

The majority of those interviewed did not have any awareness, or felt they were not able to make any comment on the percentage of the Southern zone that is trawled. The remainder (two) said that they were aware that it is a percentage (not the entirety) but did not know the figures.

#### **ix) PERCENTAGE OF ACTIVITY AT VARIOUS DEPTHS**

One of the participants was aware that trawling occurred at different depths; however, they were not aware of the percentage of activity at the various depths. Again, the majority of participants did not know that trawling occurred at different depths, or felt unable to comment.

#### **x) SPATIAL AND TEMPORAL CLOSURES**

It was felt that closures did have a positive effect on reducing bycatch levels, but that the industry is not proactive in implementing them. Participants believed that the industry only implements voluntary closures when there was excessive pressure on them to do so and consequently are only a very reactive measure. It was suggested that the industry could have implemented a voluntary closure for eastern Gemfish, but to do so now would only be seen as a reactive move. Further, there was little faith in the compliance of fishers with closures as they are only reporting on themselves; there is no verifiable data on their activities. It was suggested that fishers have to become flexible enough in their fishing mindsets to allow them to stop fishing in certain areas as is required by changing stock levels. Additionally, where closures are put in place (voluntary or mandatory) it was felt important to be clear as to the objective of the closure so that its effectiveness could be adequately measured.

#### **xi) EFFECTIVENESS OF MPAs**

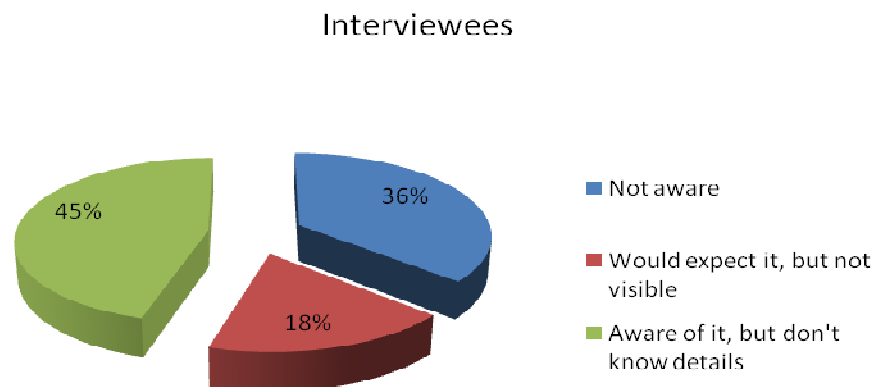
As with government interviewees it noted that it was difficult to assess the effectiveness of MPAs as they are not monitored, which is seen as a major government oversight. Despite this, it was believed that there has been inadequate time since the implementation of MPAs to realistically assess their effectiveness, and that they were a different tool to closures and meet different needs. However, two respondents, despite also making the above points, believed there were too few MPAs and they were too small, wishing to see more of them over a greater area.

#### **xii) INTERACTIONS WITH SEALS**

While one interviewee believed that there was approximately 700 seals killed through trawling in the last year, generally the SEDs available are recognised as being effective and, if these are used (which are believed to have been too slow in their adoption), interaction with seals is no longer seen as a major issue. Rather, sea birds, gulper sharks and rays were believed to be emerging as species at higher risk from negative interaction with the trawl industry.

### xiii) CODE OF PRACTICE

Figure 2: NGO Code of Practice Awareness



While thirty six percent of interviewees were not aware of it at all, the remaining sixty four percent who either expected it to be there, or were aware of it, held the belief that the code required transparent reporting in order to carry any weight. None of the interviewees were ware of any details of it. The current perception was that the industry does not want anyone checking on them, which tends to indicate the worst about their activities. While there is no reporting of it, the code becomes a *“bit of a motherhood statement, [and] unless the participants follow them religiously, the detractors have an easy target”*.

### xiv) INDUSTRY FUTURE

Overall, it was felt that the industry did have a future. There were however, a number of caveats to that belief. It was seen that wild catch would reduce, but that it would become a premium product reliant of savvy packaging and marketing and that the industry had to learn to talk positively about itself, showing the public the new technology that they are using where that is the case.

*“Unless they get some good strategic vision and implement new technology they are going to struggle to exist. But it is seriously easy to take it in the other direction, in which case it would be a bloody good little fishery, just not the same as it is now.”*

While bycatch will continue to be an increasing public focus, the Australian industry may benefit from the dubious environmental credentials of imported product. The trawl industry could also benefit from adopting a collaborative approach to issues with NGOs rather than a combatative one, and demonstrate a willingness to do something about the environment as *“that’s what really turns environmentalists on”*. The cost of fuel was seen to be a key factor in the economic sustainability of the fishery, rather than the environmental issues alone.

#### **xv) GOVERNMENT ACTIONS**

It was felt that the government could have done more to protect both Orange Roughie and the industry, as there are perceived to have set up a “*race to fish*” scenario, that led to the demise of the stock; though it was noted that management has improved since then. Even so, it was believed that AFMA hasn’t shown leadership or strategic vision and that the government is scared to upset the industry because of the potential of a political backlash.

Quite a number of comments were directed at government departments and agencies who were felt not to have acted early or assertively enough to lead industry down the path of the environmental practices dictated by their own legislation and policies.

#### **xvi) OTHER COMMENTS**

It was believed that the trawl industry could do a lot better job of selling themselves by talking about any gear or mesh changes, and the effect of these; or demonstrating in coastal areas how trawling works.

Several of the participants expressed an interest in getting more involved with the industry through attendance at meetings (though they did recognise the fear factor involved in such a move), or through the sharing of information and key people profiles in each others’ newsletters, to build awareness and trust.

The suggestion was also made that the industry initiate a meeting with each of the NGOs to establish common ground and understandings of actions and endeavours, which may at a time in the future result in a joint meeting of all concerned NGOs and the industry, which would be “*really powerful in the consumer’s eyes*”.

## 4. SUMMARY

Across both groups there was a common acknowledgement of the change in the behaviour and attitude of the fishers in the South East Trawl Fishery since the restructure but that this has, in general, been achieved in spite of the overt reluctance of fishers. To that end, the fishery was seen as fragmented and factionalised, unable to present a fully cohesive front to government, public or NGOs. The industry is also seen to over use 'Commercial in Confidence' to protect (or hide) information, which has not contributed to building trust or transparency. Further, The industry is seen as reactive and quick to adopt a political approach at Ministerial level to problems, rather than a collaborative one with departments, agencies and organisations, which is seen as decreasing options from a government department perspective. Both groups of stakeholders do however believe that there are positive aspects to the changes in the industry (gear changes and closures) that have occurred in the past five years, that the industry could be promoting to its benefit, which it isn't.

Generally, the SETF does not compare favourably with other fisheries, being perceived as more reactive and resistant to change. The Northern Prawn Trawl was repeatedly cited by both groups as a "good" fishery in comparison to the SETF. However, the SETF is still seen positively in comparison to international trawl operations. The high level of environmental scrutiny here in Australia was suggested as an opportunity to highlight the positive aspects of the Trawl industry.

While there was some knowledge of gear types and restrictions amongst government and NGO's, the majority across both groups had minimal or no knowledge, or did not understand the relevance of gear type to fishing activities. Gear type and restrictions generally elicited discussions of mesh size changes with the focus on bycatch reductions.

In regard to bycatch levels, it was unanimous that bycatch is still too high and will always require ongoing attention. While it was suggested that changes to management arrangements may help in the reduction of 'bycatch', both groups of stakeholders pointed to the requirement to minimise interaction with non target species and that this will remain a high profile if not increasing issue in the minds of the public. Further, it is perceived across both groups that the lack of reporting and monitoring co-operation by the industry means that any assertions of bycatch reductions can not be independently verified and therefore the industry is not benefiting from any bycatch mitigation measures they may be undertaking. There is, in the main, very little awareness of what specific mitigation measures are being used to reduce bycatch, and a belief exists that fishers will only do the minimum required to address any pressure or legal requirements placed upon them.

Knowledge about the percentage of the Southern Zone that is trawled and the various depths at which it is trawled was, in both cases, minimal to the point where they could not make any comment or did not know any details of these issues. Of the five (22%) who were aware that only a percentage of the zone is fished, only 17% of these were aware that fishing occurs at different depths, but none could provide any (even notional) figures without reference to data.

Spatial and temporal closures are felt to have a positive impact on bycatch and are an area where government representatives have noticed a change in the fishery's cooperation in the last eighteen months. It is felt across the board though, that the fishery is not using voluntary closures to their advantage, both to manage the fishery or

to gain positive press. With that in mind, it is also seen as important to be clear as to the objective in implementing a closure and having a means of monitoring the relative benefits of it.

Marine Protected Areas are largely felt to be a positive move in the logical sense, and it was pointed out by an NGO that they are non negotiable under the EPBC Act. It was also commonly noted however, that they are not monitored; they haven't been in place long enough to realistically establish the relative benefits of them, and they have not proven to be detrimental to the commercial fishing industry to date.

Seals are no longer perceived as a major by catch issue for the fishery by external agencies, though the lack of comprehensive adoption of SEDs is. In the place of seals, albatross/seabirds with warp cable strikes, gulper sharks and rays are seen as those species and issues that are of major concern to government agencies and NGOs. The perception of the fishery's environmental stewardship is damaged by fishers' public discussion of the killing of seals where they are in abundance and difficult for fishers to avoid.

The SETF's Code of Practice is unknown in the majority of cases, and was only known of in any detail by 4% of interviewees. It was unanimously noted that the Code is not visible to government, NGOs or the public. The necessity to ensure that a Code is enforceable in some way was however underscored as being essential to the value of any Code of Conduct or Practice.

All participants saw a potential future for the industry with the qualifications of, greater cohesion and vision of the industry, adopting an attitude of environmental stewardship through greater reporting and monitoring cooperation, savvy marketing and finding ways to address the rising cost of fuel. None of the interviewees expressed the opinion that it was reasonable to expect the industry to cease to operate.

Interestingly, the NGOs were generally more scathing of the management of the fishery by government and management agencies who failed to enforce environmental legislation, than of the fishery itself. This is an opportunity for the industry to take the initiative to act in the absence of government and management regulation, which would most likely relieve or at least reduce NGO pressure on the industry. To this end, NGOs were generally open to increasing their interaction with the fishery where they could see relevance to common issues, and the opportunity to create an environmental win.

In summary, it is very noteworthy that, despite the different roles and interest base of each of the stakeholder groups (management and regulation or environmental protection) the themes of the comments, perceptions, beliefs and recommendations were the same in both cases.

## 5. PHASE ONE RECOMMENDATIONS

While there are a number of communications opportunities identified in this research, there are also a number of areas that the industry could look to, to reassess its performance and how it might alter or improve activities to address the beliefs and perceptions in these agencies that affect community attitudes.

The following areas are those recommended for consideration in the next stage of the project, being the development of a communications strategy:

- 1) Changes undertaken in environmental protection activities in the past five years;
- 2) The high level of environmental scrutiny the industry is subject to by world standards;
- 3) Government and NGO awareness campaign of the different gear types, reasons for their use and percentage of use across the fishery;
- 4) Promotion of bycatch reduction activities;
- 5) Promotion of the percentage of the southern zone that is trawled and how little of it occurs on the bottom of the ocean;
- 6) Promotion of voluntary closures and their objectives;
- 7) Promotion of the reduction in the number of seals killed and steps being taken to avoid interaction with seabirds, gulper sharks and rays; and
- 8) Promotion of the Code of Practice and clarification of how it is enforced for members of SETFIA.

In regard to the areas that the Industry may wish to review for potential further development, these would include:

- 1) The formulation of a clear vision statement for the long term development of the industry;
- 2) Address assertions of lack of co-operation with, and resistance to, monitoring and reporting, to develop an acknowledged system of transparent reporting to government;
- 3) Identifying opportunities to develop mid level relationship networks with government departments, and also with NGO representatives.
- 4) A review of the fishery's position on bycatch and threatened species, with a view to developing a clear action plan, with industry consensus, as to how the fishery is going to deal with these issues into the future, incorporating the use of spatial and temporal closures.
- 5) Developing a marketing strategy in collaboration with major retailers, based on consumer feedback and purchasing decisions.

Some of the above five points may well have already been addressed by the industry, and simply need to be clarified to be put into a communications strategy. Advice in this regard, is sought prior to undertaking the next stage of this project – the draft communications strategy.

## PHASE TWO - Draft Communications Strategy

### 6. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

The Phase One report of the project was supplied to South East Trawl Fishing Industry Association and Fisheries Research and Development Corporation in October 2008. The following Phase Two report was submitted to both parties in January 2009.

The second phase of the project was, on the basis of the findings of phase one, to develop a draft communications strategy and then trial it with participants from phase one, to identify if it is believed to have the potential of positively altering existing attitudes and perceptions and therefore messages communicated to other stakeholders and the general community. The second phase of this project (being reported on here) uses the findings of phase one to develop a draft communications strategy for the SETF industry to address negative attitudes and perceptions towards trawling, further supporting the work being undertaken by the Sydney Fish Market on consumer attitudes and perceptions. The output from this phase of the research is a communications strategy that has been piloted, with recommendations for its rollout.

### 7. METHODS

The findings and recommendations of the Phase One research were supplied to Quantum Ideas Bureau: the organisation undertaking the communication design component of the project. On this basis, Quantum developed a fundamental communications plan summary for discussion with SETFIA, FRDC and KAL Analysis at a meeting which was held in Canberra on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November 2008. The scope of that preliminary draft (see Appendix 1) was discussed and further refined at that meeting to provide a draft to supply to those who had participated in interviews in Phase One.

On the 27<sup>th</sup> of November all participants in Phase one of the project were invited to a focus group and feedback session on the 17<sup>th</sup> of December in Canberra. The date and the time (8.30am) were chosen as that which was most suitable to the majority of participants. In the following week a copy of Phase One Report for the project and a copy of the revised Draft Communications Strategy (see Appendix 3) were sent out to all project participants.

Of the twenty two interviews undertaken there were four attendees at the focus group representing:

- DAFF
- BRS
- AFMA
- DEWHA

Unfortunately the participants from non government organisations were unable to attend the focus group, and follow ups with them elicited one response which was:

“Many thanks for sending this. As I mentioned on the phone I am unable to get down there for this session but I think that the report provided food for thought. I would add that there are some very active, organised and proactive trawl groups overseas. As one example, I met some great folks in British Columbia several years ago and will try and dig out some contacts as I think it would be very valuable for SETFI members to talk with peers. It may even be worthwhile seeing whether FRDC would fund a small workshop and

bring out some of these guys and others. I'm not saying that people overseas do things better but there is always much to be gained from sharing experiences." (MSC)

The information and feedback from the focus group (which follows) was taken by Quantum Ideas Bureau and developed with reference to, and in the context of, the Sydney Fish Market's activities, into a final communications strategy, and submitted with a budget to SETFIA on the 24<sup>th</sup> of December 2008, for consideration and further action (see Appendix 3).

## 8. FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

The key points that were raised in response to the Phase One Report and proposed communications strategy were as follows:

- NGOs do not have the same issues as governments and these needs to be acknowledged [this comment was made in relation to dealing with NGOs and environmentally focused government departments in the same group.]
- EBFM and ESD provide complimentary opportunities to focus on all three areas (economic, environmental and social) between government agencies;
- The underlying messages from the government and non government organisations are the same as they have been in the past and, if anything, reflect a lack of action on behalf of the industry. This was acknowledged by the industry, with this current activity being seen as the first steps in addressing this;
- There was a recognition that the tone of language and the culture varies between agencies and this should be taken into account in the development of any communications material;
- It was suggested that there are synergies with other fisheries, that may useful to the industry to consider in possible group communications strategies with government departments and NGOs;
- The activities currently being undertaken by the Sydney Fish Market (see Appendix 3), while focused on the public consumers of fish, are aligned with the messages the SESSF needs to bear in mind in all communications material, despite the fact that the government department representatives were largely unfamiliar with it.
- **It was suggested that**
  - The proposed activities of the communications strategy were all positive developments;
  - That brochures developed by SETFIA should be used in government department induction kits;
  - Regular liaison (face to face at a variety of different levels wherever possible) is required by the industry with government departments and NGOs;
  - Government departments and NGO's would value being invited to site visits once a year, perhaps in conjunction with induction rounds - though this would need further discussion around concrete proposals in regard to locations and timing.
  - DEWHA (Claire Howlett) is willing and open to making presentations to the industry to increase understanding of the EPBC Act, and to initiate discussions as to how the department and industry can collaborate more effectively together to achieve positive outcomes for all parties; and
  - DEWHA (Claire Howlett) offered to provide 'lay person' words for the description and explanation of the EPBC Act that the industry could use in its internal communications.

## 9. PHASE TWO SUMMARY

The second phase of the project has resulted in a proposed communication strategy (see Appendix 4) to address the knowledge, attitudes and perceptions of both government departments dealing with the SESSF and environmentally focussed non-government organisations.

This second phase of the project entailed;

- A review of the Phase one findings as a basis to form a proposed communications options paper;
- Consultation with the CEO, Chair of SETFIA, Dr Ian Knuckey and the FRDC;
- Revision of the communications options and development of a draft communications strategy;
- Consultation with participants in phase one of the project regarding the draft communications strategy content and its likely effectiveness; and
- A second revision of the proposed communication strategy, with reference to the SFM current consumer communications activities, and the submission of a draft budget.

The above activities have resulted in a recommendation that the South East Trawl Industry Association fund a series of activities that could be used for communications with government and non government organisations as well as the general public and seafood consumers. ***The following activities are to be developed with key messages constructed from the recommendations in the Phase One report (p.23 points 1) - 8) and incorporate the outcomes of the areas for further development and consideration (1) - 5) also on p.23).***

A combination of a **general brochure and facts sheets** has been proposed to promote the industry through providing updated information on how the industry operates, in what areas, to what depths, the equipment used, and the measures taken to both comply with the EPBC Act and additionally minimise contact with threatened, endangered or non target species.

In addition, a **presentation folder/document wallet** is proposed as a fundamentally professional and contained means to present the general brochure, **code of conduct, industry Vision Statement**, fact sheets and any current newsletters. This provides an opportunity to synergise with the SFM promotions (see Appendix 4), by personalising the industry and connecting fishermen with the fish, in the images and format used.

A **newsletter** is also proposed, in a new and fresh format that provides SETFIA members, as well as government and NGOs with on-going information, with the aim of distributing this four times per year. This would also direct readers to the website for more extensive and detailed information, history, and industry developments.

In order to ensure that government, NGOs, the public and seafood consumers can access the latest up to date information, it is also imperative that the industry's **Website** be updated. It needs

to be updated in terms of content and also in terms of usability. Initially functioning as the best place for government and NGO stakeholders to go to glean vital information, dispelling the myths of the industry, it can also provide current updates of the improvements and changes to the industry and the association in real time.

The costs for the above actions have been quoted to SETFIA (see Appendix 3) which falls within the budget proposed at the outset of the project. There are a number of other actions that have been proposed to the Industry that could be undertaken to increase and improve communication both with government and NGO agencies, as well as consumers and the general public (included in initial communications options - Appendix 1), which were not deemed as high enough priorities at this time given the associated costs. It was proposed that the above actions will address the issues raised in Phase One of the Project, and are fundamental to underpin any more extensive or sophisticated media campaigns in the future.

## 10. REFERENCES

Aslin, Heather, and Ian Byron. (2003). "Community Perceptions of fishing: implications for industry image, marketing and sustainability." Pp. 114, edited by Bureau of Rural Sciences & Fisheries Research and Development Corporation. Canberra: Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

## 11. APPENDIX 1 - SETF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is your specific experience of the SETF or issues associated with it?
2. What knowledge do you have of the SETF – historically, operational parameters and objectives?
3. What is your impression of the SETF compared to other fisheries?
4. Are you aware of any differentiation between Australian domestic and international trawl fisheries?
5. Do you have any, and if so, what, knowledge about trawl gear used in the SETF?
6. Do you know anything of gear restrictions that are placed upon any trawl operators?
7. What do you know about the bycatch levels of the SETF ?
8. Do you know of any mitigation measures they currently, or may undertake to minimize bycatch?
9. What percentage of the South East fishing zone do you believe is trawled overall?
  - 9.a) What do you estimate to be the percentage of the SETF that is trawled at
    - 0 – 200 metres depth
    - 201 – 700 metres depth
    - 701 – 1200 depth
    - 1201 – out to the edge of the AFZ
10. What do you know about any spatial and /or temporal closures of fisheries in the SETF?
11. Do you know of any Marine Protected Areas within the SETF? What are your impressions as to how effective these are?
12. What do you know of, or what are your impressions, of the trawl industry's interactions with marine mammals?
13. Do you know of any codes of practice that have been adopted by the Trawl industry?
14. In your role, what are your expectations for the futures of the trawl industry? Do you believe it is a sustainable industry – why?
15. Again, in your role, what are the beliefs around the ability of the seafood wildcatch industry to be sustainable?
16. What do you think the future of Australian table seafood is going to be based upon?

## **12. APPENDIX 2- Draft Communications Strategy**

**A comprehensive identification of the keys and a strategy to  
changing the attitudes to the activities in the South East Trawl Fishery**

**Draft Communication Strategy  
for the SET Fishing Industry to address negative attitudes and perceptions  
towards the South East Fisheries Trawl Industry**

**Report to the  
South East Trawl Fishing Industry Association  
and the  
Fisheries Research Development Corporation**

**Phase 2 November 2008**

24 November 2008

**Prepared by  
Frank Arnold and Elissa Northrop  
Quantum Ideas**

**In association with  
Dr Kate Brooks  
Kal Analysis Pty Ltd**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

---

This Communications Strategy has been prepared in response to the Phase 1 Report 'The influences of those who buy' prepared by Dr Kate Brooks of KAL Analysis Pty Ltd.

The aim is to provide a Communications Strategy to enable the SEF industry to address negative attitudes and perceptions of the industry held by government and non-government organisations, media and the general public/consumer.

The intention is to conduct a pilot testing of this draft strategy prior to completion of the final report and subsequent recommendations for implementation.

## 2. CURRENT POSITION

---

The report prepared by Dr Kate Brooks presents a clear picture of the current position with regard

to government and non-government organisations, which can be summarised as follows:

- The industry is seen to have a positive future
- There are poor stakeholder and consumer perceptions towards the SETF industry
- There is a vast disparity of knowledge about the SETF industry held by government and non-government organisations
- There is scant knowledge of gear type and restrictions, closures (temporal, spatial and voluntary) and Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)
- There is little knowledge of bycatch issues and mitigation measures
- There is an overt reluctance to change held by the fishers although there has been a positive change in their behaviour
- The SETF industry has not been good at promoting the positive aspects of the industry, the positive advances and improvements made
- The SETFIA's own Code of Practice is largely unknown outside of its membership

### 3. OBJECTIVES

---

The communications goals are based on, but not restricted to, the recommendations contained in the Phase 1 report.

To put it simply, the principle goal is to vastly improve the perception of the South East Trawl Fishing Industry by government, non-government organisations and consequently, the general public/consumer.

To do this will require both external and internal communications focusing on the following:

- a. Promotion of changes (both enforced and voluntary) undertaken in environmental protection activities in the past 5 years.
- b. Promotion of the high level of environmental scrutiny the industry is subject to by global standards.
- c. Creation of an awareness campaign to government and non-government organisations of the different gear types, new technology and gear restrictions employed and the reasons for their use and the percentage of their use across the industry.
- d. Promotion of bycatch reduction activities.
- e. Promotion of the percentage of the southern zone that is trawled and how little of it occurs on the bottom of the ocean.
- f. Promotion of voluntary closures and their objectives.
- g. Promotion of the reduction in the number of seals killed and steps being taken to avoid interaction with seabirds, gulper sharks and rays.
- h. Promotion of the Code of Practice and clarification of how it is enforced for members of SEFTIA.
- i. Formulate and promote a clear Vision Statement for the long term development and sustainability of the industry.
- j. Develop an acknowledged system of transparent reporting to government to address concerns of lack of cooperation and resistance to monitoring.
- k. Develop mid-level relationships (networks) with government departments and non-government organisations.
- l. Develop a clear action plan for how the fishery is going to deal with the issues of bycatch and threatened species and communicate it to all stakeholders.
- m. Develop and implement a strategy for external and internal marketing of the value and current sustainability of the SETF industry.
- n. Develop and implement a strategy for internal training of SEFTIA membership to handle approaches and queries from other stakeholders (government, non-government organisations, media).

Whilst some of the objectives are not part of the original brief (those in **bold**), it is important to acknowledge their need as part of an overall strategy. In many ways, they work to underpin the other objectives by opening doorways, providing 'feel good' topics and positive milestones and by minimising risk of disadvantageous events.

#### 4. STAKEHOLDERS/AUDIENCES

---

The following stakeholders were identified in the original report:

- South Eastern Trawl Fishing Industry Association (SETFIA)
- Fisheries Research and Development Corporation
- South East Trawl Fishers
- Government
  - Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF)
  - Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA)
  - Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA)
  - Commonwealth Scientific and Industry Organisation (CSIRO)
  - Bureau of Rural Sciences
  - Biosecurity Australia
  - Food Standards Australia and New Zealand
- Non-government
  - World Wildlife fund (WWF)
  - Humane Society International
  - Marine Stewardship Council
  - Tasmanian Conservation Trust
  - Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society (WDCS)
  - Recfish Australia
  - Independent NGO consultant(s)

We should also include the following useful stakeholders/targets for the communication strategy:

- Seafood retailers and purveyors
- Food industry (restaurants, cafes, takeaways)
- Media (print and electronic)
- General public/consumers

## 5. MESSAGES

---

Strategic targeting and consistency of message, implementation and application, are the key to maximising the efficiency of a communication plan.

With the variance in the proposed budget allocation for implementation (\$20k to \$100k) it is difficult to pin down a clear strategy outline i.e. I don't know how many first strike aircraft I can afford to help me capture the mountain!

Perhaps the best way to approach this is to prioritise the key messages and then to prioritise the way these messages are disseminated.

### KEY MESSAGES

To be discussed in greater detail with SEFTIA

The SEF Trawl industry is a viable and long term sustainable industry which has adopted new advances and initiatives to minimise negative impact on the environment.

The SEF Trawl industry has a clear vision for its future, as self regulating Code of Practice, which enforces strict industry standards on the operations of all South East Trawl fishers.

The SEF Trawl industry, through SETFIA, will adopt a system of transparent reporting and will work with the government and with non-government organisations to continually improve best practice in the trawl industry.

## 6. STRATEGIES (INTERNAL/EXTERNAL)

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Need to expand in discussion with KAL Analysis and SETFIA.

## 7. RESOURCES (TOOLS, ACTIVITIES, MEDIA VEHICLES)

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### 7.1 AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

Develop materials, or a suite of materials to report the following:

- Positive achievements
- Ongoing advances
- New initiatives
- New technologies
- Success stories
- MPAs - how much and how effective
- What next
- Level of environmental scrutiny

### 7.2 EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

Develop a kit of more specific and more technical data of the SET Trawl industry and region.

- Temporal, spatial and voluntary closures
- Extent and locations of MPAs
- Gear use and restrictions
- Percentage of bycatch (tracking changes)
- Code of Practice

### 7.3 PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN

Develop a set of poster, flyers or brochure, presenting the SEF industry, it's people and it's catch

in a good light/as a good thing. These would be distributed through:

- Seafood retail outlets and coops
- Fish & chip shops and seafood cafes
- Regional information centres
- Selected educational Institutions
- Government departments (the willing ones)

### 7.4 MEDIA CAMPAIGN, PRESS/MAGAZINE

Produce a small set (say 3) of press and magazine advertisements presenting simple positive facts

about the SEF Trawl industry. These would be placed in the following:

- Regional newspapers
- Industry magazines
- Fishing magazines
- Food and cooking magazines
- Agriculture magazines
- Inflight magazines

If the budget allowed, we could consider popular consumer magazines and Metropolitan press.

## 7.5 MEDIA CAMPAIGN, TELEVISION

Produce a simple (but stunning visually) 30-60 second TVC for airing on regional television stations.

## 7.6 PUBLIC RELATIONS

### **a) Famils**

Conduct a series of industry/stakeholder 'famils' inviting members of government and non-government organisations and media to experience first hand how the SEF Trawl industry operates.

- Take them out trawling (pick a nice day!)
- Show them the gear
- Explain exclusion zones
- Let them see the catch
- Let them see how hard it is
- Give them a seafood barbecue at the end of it!

### **b) Articles**

Commission a set of professionally written articles, accompanied by professional photographs, for submission to industry and affiliated magazines.

These could also be self published as fact sheets, or could be included in an industry newsletter.

### **c) Media stories**

Investigate ways of encouraging a positive media story/coverage of the SEF Trawl industry.

This may involve a level of media networking and lobbying and may require the volunteering of local resources to enable it, but the benefits could easily repay the effort.

- Free to Air TV - Landline and Stateline are obvious targets
- Pay TV -

### **d) Documentary**

Depending on budget, the commissioning of a 20 minute documentary can provide an effective tool for any awareness or education campaign and for media kits.

### **e) Quarterly Newsletter**

The production and distribution of a simple (A3 folding to A4) quarterly newsletter can be a great tool for maintaining positive contact with the stakeholders. This does not have to be an expensive production exercise and with new digital printing, short runs are very affordable.

## **13. APPENDIX 3 - Communications Strategy**

**A comprehensive identification of the keys and a strategy to  
changing the attitudes to the activities in the South East Trawl Fishery**

**COMMUNICATION STRATEGY  
FOR THE SOUTH EAST TRAWL INDUSTRY TO ADDRESS NEGATIVE ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS  
TOWARDS THE SOUTH EAST TRAWL INDUSTRY**

**REPORT TO THE  
SOUTH EAST TRAWL FISHING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION  
AND THE  
FISHERIES RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

**PHASE 2 NOVEMBER 2008  
24 NOVEMBER 2008**

**PREPARED BY  
Frank Arnold and Elissa Northrop  
Quantum Ideas**

**IN ASSOCIATION WITH  
Dr Kate Brooks  
KAL Analysis Pty Ltd**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

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This Communications Strategy has been prepared in response to the Phase 1 Report 'The influencers of those who buy' prepared by Dr Kate Brooks of KAL Analysis Pty Ltd.

The aim is to provide a Communications Strategy to enable the SETF industry to address negative attitudes and perceptions of the industry held by government and non-government organisations, and in the future, media and the general public/consumer.

The intention is to conduct a pilot testing of this draft strategy prior to completion of the final report and subsequent recommendations for implementation.

## 2. CURRENT POSITION

---

The report prepared by Dr Kate Brooks presents a clear picture of the current position with regard to government and non-government organisations, which can be summarised as follows:

- The industry is seen to have a positive future
- There are poor stakeholder and consumer perceptions towards the SETF industry
- There is a vast disparity of knowledge about the SETF industry held by government and non-government organisations
- There is scant knowledge of gear type and restrictions, closures (temporal, spatial and voluntary) and Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)
- There is little knowledge of by catch issues and mitigation measures
- There is an overt reluctance to change held by the fishers although there has been a positive change in their behaviour
- The SETF industry has not been good at promoting the positive aspects of the industry, the positive advances and improvements made
- The SETF's own Code of Practice is largely unknown outside of its membership

### 3. OBJECTIVES

---

The communications goals are based on, but not restricted to, the recommendations contained in the Phase 1 report.

To put it simply, the principle goal is to vastly improve the perception of the South East Trawl Fishing Industry by government and non-government organisations. Media and general public/consumer perceptions should be addressed in the future.

To do this will require both external and internal communications focusing on the following:

#### INTERNAL

- a. Education of trawl fisherman about the perception of their industry, what causes this and what to do about it.
- b. Develop and implement a strategy for internal training of SETFIA membership to handle approaches and queries from other stakeholders (government, non-government organisations, media).
- c. Formulation and promotion of the Vision Statement in conjunction with the Code of Practice and clarification of how it is to be adopted and practised.

#### EXTERNAL

- o. Promotion of changes (both enforced and voluntary) undertaken in environmental protection activities in the past 5 years.
- p. Promotion of the high level of environmental scrutiny the industry is subject to by global standards.
- q. Creation of an awareness campaign to government and non-government organisations of the different gear types, new technology and gear restrictions employed and the reasons for their use and the percentage of their use across the industry.
- r. Promotion of by catch reduction activities.
- s. Promotion of the percentage of the total fishery area (and depth regions) that is trawled and the significant that are not trawled.
- t. Promotion of voluntary closures and their objectives.
- u. Promotion of the steps being taken to avoid interaction with seals, sea birds, gulper sharks and rays.
- v. Promotion of the Code of Practice and clarification of how it is enforced for members of SETFIA.
- w. Formulate and promote a clear Vision Statement for the long term development and sustainability of the industry.**
- x. Develop an acknowledged system of transparent reporting to government to address concerns of lack of cooperation and resistance to monitoring.**
- y. Develop mid-level relationships (networks) with government departments and non-government organisations.**
- z. Develop a clear action plan for how the fishery is going to deal with the issues of by catch**

**and threatened species and communicate it to all stakeholders.**

**aa. Develop and implement a strategy for external and internal marketing of the value and current sustainability of the SETF industry.**

Whilst some of the objectives are not part of the original brief (those in **bold**), it is important to acknowledge their need as part of an overall strategy. In many ways, they work to underpin the other objectives by opening doorways, providing 'feel good' topics and positive milestones and by minimising risk of disadvantageous events.

#### 4. STAKEHOLDERS/AUDIENCES

---

The following stakeholders were identified in the original report:

- South East Trawl Fishing Industry Association (SETFIA)
- Fisheries Research and Development Corporation
- South East Trawl Fishers
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  - Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA)
  - Commonwealth Scientific and Industry Organisation (CSIRO)
  - Bureau of Rural Sciences
  - Biosecurity Australia
  - Food Standards Australia and New Zealand
- Non-government
  - World Wildlife fund (WWF)
  - Humane Society International
  - Marine Stewardship Council
  - Tasmanian Conservation Trust
  - Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society (WDCS)
  - Recfish Australia
  - Independent NGO consultant(s)

The following useful stakeholders/targets for the communication strategy should also be addressed in the future and as incidental to this strategy.

- Seafood retailers and purveyors
- Food industry (restaurants, cafes, takeaways)
- Media (print and electronic)
- General public/consumers

The Sydney Fish Market is currently addressing these in its current campaign.

## 5. MESSAGES

---

Strategic targeting and consistency of message, implementation and application, are the key to maximising the efficiency of a communication plan.

With the proposed budget allocation for implementation in the order of \$20,000, it is necessary to pin down a clear targeted strategy outline.

The best way to approach this is to prioritise the key messages and prioritise the way these messages are disseminated to the primary target audience.

### **KEY MESSAGES**

#### **NOTE: Order and 'Message' to be clarified and confirmed in discussion with SETFIA**

The SETF industry is a viable and long term sustainable industry which has adopted new advances and initiatives to minimise negative impact on the environment.

The SETF industry has a clear vision for its future and a self regulating Code of Practice, which enforces strict industry standards on the operations of all South East Trawl fishers.

The SETF industry, through SETFIA, will adopt a system of transparent reporting and will work with the government and with non-government organisations to continually improve best practice in the trawl industry.

## 6. RESOURCES (TOOLS, ACTIVITIES, MEDIA VEHICLES)

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The following proposal has been tailored to suit the available budget with the view to reaching to primary target market:

### 6.1 AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

Develop materials, or a suite of materials to report the following:

- Positive achievements
- Ongoing advances
- New initiatives
- New technologies
- Success stories
- MPAs - how much and how effective
- What next
- Level of environmental scrutiny

### 6.2 EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

Develop a kit of more specific and more technical data of the SET Trawl industry and region.

- Temporal, spatial and voluntary closures
- Extent and locations of MPAs
- Gear use and restrictions
- Percentage of by catch (tracking changes)
- Code of Practice

### 6.3 PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN

Develop a set of poster, flyers or brochure, presenting the SETF industry, its people and its catch in a good light/as a good thing. These would be distributed through:

- Appropriate Government departments
- Selected educational Institutions
- Seafood retail outlets and coops
- Fish & chip shops and seafood cafes
- Regional information centres

### 6.4 PUBLIC RELATIONS

#### a) Famils

Conduct a series of industry/stakeholder 'famils' inviting members of government and non-government organisations and media to experience firsthand how the SETF industry operates.

- Take them out trawling (pick a nice day!)
- Show them the gear

- Explain exclusion zones
- Let them see the catch
- Let them see how hard it is
- Give them a seafood barbecue at the end of it!

#### b) Articles

Commission a set of professionally written articles, accompanied by professional photographs, for submission to industry and affiliated magazines.

These could also be self published as fact sheets, or could be included in an industry newsletter.

#### c) Media stories

Investigate ways of encouraging a positive media story/coverage of the SETF industry.

This may involve a level of media networking and lobbying and may require the volunteering of local resources to enable it, but the benefits could easily repay the effort.

- Free to Air TV - Landline and Stateline are obvious targets
- Pay TV

#### d) Quarterly Newsletter

The production and distribution of a simple (A3 folding to A4) quarterly newsletter can be a great tool for maintaining positive contact with the stakeholders. This does not have to be an expensive production exercise and with new digital printing, short runs are very affordable.

### FUTURE INITIATIVES

In the future the SETF industry will need to consider broadening the scope of its communication campaign to include wider media and vehicle opportunities.

#### 6.4 MEDIA CAMPAIGN, PRESS/MAGAZINE

Produce a small set (say 3) of press and magazine advertisements presenting simple positive facts about the SETF industry. These would be placed in the following:

- Regional newspapers
- Industry magazines
- Fishing magazines
- Food and cooking magazines
- Agriculture magazines

If the budget allowed, we should consider popular consumer magazines and Metropolitan press.

## 6.5 MEDIA CAMPAIGN, TELEVISION

Produce a simple (but stunning visually) 30-60 second TVC for airing on regional television stations.

### a) Documentary

Depending on budget, the commissioning of a 20 minute documentary can provide an effective tool for any awareness or education campaign and for media kits.

## 7. ADDITIONAL – RESOURCES AVAILABLE

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### 7.1 WEBSITE

Whilst the existing SETFIA website contains a lot of interesting and pertinent information, it appears overly wordy and does not seem to properly or fully address the negative perceptions of the industry.

It is not our intention in this strategy to evaluate this website but to recommend an assessment of its content and presentation to work as a unified tool in the overall communications strategy.

### 7.2 INDUSTRY LIAISON OFFICER RESOURCES

The appointment of an ILO (even as a part-time position) provides an excellent opportunity for the forging of relationships and for the face-to-face dissemination of material and information. The important factor in the equation is to provide the ILO with the material and information that they need.

### 7.3 WEBSITE LINKS

Existing industry/stakeholder websites provide great opportunities to promote access to your own website via dedicated links.

## 8. TIMESCALES

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This section is subject to consultation with SETFIA.

It would not be unrealistic for the initial recommendations of the Communication Strategy to be in place within 3 months of the authorisation to proceed. It is also fair to suggest that the entire scope of the Communications Strategy could be delivered within 12 months.

## 9. EVALUATION

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Evaluation and restructuring of initiatives generated as part of the Communications Strategy must be an ongoing process. This should be conducted through:

- ILO feedback
- CEO feedback
- Stakeholder feedback
- Industry feedback

Evaluation can also be measured through:

- Monitoring of positive/negative reports
- Website action (up or down)
- Membership confidence
- Industry earnings

## **14. APPENDIX 4 - Action plan for South East Trawl Fishery Industry Association**

Following feedback from various government departments and agencies plus discussions with Dr Kate Brooks and key SETFIA members, we propose that the following items should be of high priority for SETFIA.

### **General brochure**

To promote the South East Trawl Fishery Industry in general. A positive overview that should outline the fishing area, the sustainable management focus and the value of this small but positive industry. The brochure would be included in an induction kit for new government employees and would also be appropriate for circulation to NGOs.

The format for the brochure would be an A4 8 page self cover booklet.

### **Fact sheets**

We would suggest an initial range of three fact sheets to compliment the general brochure. These fact sheets could outline the improvements and recent changes in gear, comparisons between trawl and long line fishing, the Vision Statement, the Code of Practice and ultimately an environmental management strategy. These fact sheets would also form part of an induction kit for government employees.

The format for the fact sheets would be double sided A4 flyers.

### **Presentation folder/document wallet**

It is imperative to provide the general brochure and the fact sheets in a professional and contained manner. We suggest a presentation folder or document wallet be developed to achieve this. The wallet could also be supplied to members containing the Vision Statement, Code of Conduct and perhaps the initial newsletter.

The format for this item would be to fit several A4 documents.

### **Newsletter**

A new fresh and friendly newsletter should be developed to provide SETFIA members with ongoing information. This could be sent out 4 times per year.

The format would be A3 folded to A4, 4pp newsletter.

### **Website**

The website needs to not only be updated in terms of content but also in terms of usability. It needs to initially function as the best place for government and NGO stakeholders to go to glean vital information. The website needs to dispel the myths of the industry and provide current updates of the improvements and changes to the industry and the association.

## **15. APPENDIX 5 - Sydney Fish Market: Public Consumer Communications Strategy**

### **BACKGROUND**

Sydney Fish Market (SFM) has received funding under the Fishing Community Assistance (FCA) Program with the chief aim of raising the profile and appreciation of our commercial fishermen.

Joining us as program sponsors are Department of Agriculture, Fisheries (DAFF) and Forestry, NSW Department of Primary Industry (NSW DPI) and Seafood Experience Australia (SEA).

Communication initiatives under the FCA program have been brought together under the campaign theme “Brought to You by Our Fishermen”.

### **THE CAMPAIGN THEME**

Notes the common disconnect between “fishermen” and “fish”

While consumers “love their fish” they are frequently indifferent and often unappreciative of the fishermen who bring their fish.

The theme “Brought to You by Our Fishermen” aims to increase the appreciation of our fishers by more closely linking fishermen with the benefits of their much-loved catch, i.e. love your fish...love the fishermen who bring it to you!

### **MESSAGES BROUGHT BY OUR FISHERMEN**

Under the campaign theme, and core communication tactics, “Brought to You by Our Fishermen” will see our fishermen bring:

Contribution to community and the economy - education on fishermen and their unique contribution to their local communities, employment, culture and cuisine

Understanding of the heritage – and interest in the future – of the Australian fishing industry.

Appreciation of fresh, local seafood – how the best seafood in the world is being landed locally.

Sustainability – how fishermen are working with government and environmental groups to introduce practices that ensure the future supply of fresh local seafood.

### **CORE TACTICS**

The “Brought to You by Our Fishermen” campaign is the most comprehensive marketing communications program ever undertaken on behalf of our commercial fishermen. Key tactics include:

### **INDUSTRY & MEDIA LAUNCH**

Media, industry, government leaders together with seafood wholesalers and retailers gathered for a celebrity gala celebration at Sydney Fish Market’s Main Wharf on Friday, August 29 2008.

Key components of the celebration included four celebrity chefs joining our four fishermen spokespeople to prepare the finest, locally caught seafood – on the spot!

Federal Minister DAFF Tony Burke was the special guest. The Minister addressed the gathering, as did representatives of the campaign's fellow partners SFM, NSW DPI and SEA.

The campaign's key communication tactics were unveiled including mainstream advertising executions and campaign banners.

The campaign was highly praised by both the seafood industry and food media.

### **Tactics Supporting the Launch**

Campaign website: [www.aussiese seafood.com.au](http://www.aussiese seafood.com.au)

Information brochures featuring our fishermen spokespeople and supporting the campaign's core messages

Mainstream print advertising in the Good Living supplement of the Sydney Morning Herald which commenced on Tuesday, 9 September 2008.

Series of Special Reports in Good Living profiling our fishermen, their way of life, the challenges they face and their unique contribution to our community, culture and cuisine.

*Get Fresh with Fish* (GFWF) events in Sydney and regional NSW. GFWF is designed to bring a fresh appreciation of our fishermen as well as introduce the consumer to easy, delicious and affordable ways of preparing seafood.

State-wide media relations campaigns highlighting both GFWF events as well as year 'round promotion of fishermen and fishing communities.

Recognition of our fishermen, and a presentation on the "Brought to You by Our Fishermen" campaign as a feature of the Sydney Fish Market Seafood Excellence Awards 2009.