



Establishment of a Professional Association of Australian Fisheries Managers

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We gratefully acknowledge the fisheries managers who completed the online survey at the commencement of this project. Our sincere gratitude is also extended to the fisheries managers and other key stakeholders who attended the strategic planning workshop in October 2018.

We acknowledge the support of the Australian Fisheries Management Forum (AFMF), which helped to get this project off the ground.

We also wish to acknowledge the current president of the Australian Society of Fish Biology, Stephen (Harry) Balcombe, and past president Chris Fulton, for their support and advice throughout the project.

Funding for this study was provided by the Australian Government through the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation.

Abbreviations

AFMA	Australian Fisheries Management Authority
AFMF	Australian Fisheries Management Forum
ASFB	Australian Society for Fish Biology
FRDC	Fisheries Research and Development Corporation

Executive Summary

Amongst Australian fisheries managers, a persistent challenge exists to facilitate regular and coordinated professional engagement and exchange between Commonwealth, Territory and State level fisheries managers working on common fisheries problems. There is also an absence of professional recognition of fisheries managers and acknowledgment of the quality work they produce, both from key fishery stakeholders and the wider community. The opportunities for fisheries management to be advanced in Australia and for staff development could be greatly enhanced by regular and coordinated professional exchange between fishery managers in State, Territory and Commonwealth fisheries organisations. This is largely because unlike fisheries scientists, who have access to long standing associations such as the Australian Marine Science Association (AMSA), fisheries managers working in Australia currently have no formal links or overarching body to facilitate such coordinated and regular professional exchange or communication.

Recent workshops on fisheries management and bio-economics have highlighted the use and value of increasing professional exchange and engagement between jurisdictions, to improve understanding and uptake of innovative solutions to fisheries management. At these workshops managers were given the opportunity to network and engage with each other, discuss their jurisdictions individual approach to key fisheries management challenges and to collectively consider possible solutions. At both these workshops there was convincing support from attendees for the formation of the professional association of Australian fisheries managers, a strong willingness to pay for membership and keen interest in the association organising and facilitating future workshops and meetings on key focus areas. The formation of an association has also been strongly supported by members of the Australian Fisheries Management Forum (AFMF), which supported the invitation of this project.

With seed funding from the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC), this project examined the establishment of a professional association of fisheries managers. The objectives of this project were:

1. To gauge interest among fisheries managers in the establishment of a professional association of fisheries managers
2. Should sufficient interest be evident, to establish a professional association of Australian Fisheries Managers that enables:
 - a. Improved accessibility and transparency of jurisdictional fisheries manager information (technical papers, policy and legislation) through hosting of a central website
 - b. Increased recognition of the profession of fisheries management within Australia and the current work undertaken by managers to ensure fisheries remain sustainable
 - c. Exposure of fisheries managers to innovations and developments in fisheries ecological, economic, social and political fields in Australia and overseas
 - d. Improved consistency and transparency in management approaches between jurisdictions through greater information sharing and liaison
 - e. Establishment of linkages between fisheries managers for future interactions and collaborative engagement
 - f. Improved public confidence in Australian fisheries management through greater stakeholder outreach and communication
 - g. Ensuring the Association has appropriate support (financial and logistical) to operate beyond the completion of the two-year project.

This project used a variety of approaches to determine:

- 1) the level of support amongst fisheries managers and executives for the establishment of an association,
- 2) what form an association should take, and
- 3) the governance and strategic direction of the association.

The first step of the project was to gauge the level of support for the formation of a professional association of fisheries managers. To achieve this, an online survey was developed and distributed to fisheries managers and fisheries executives. A total of 101 fisheries managers responded to the online survey, including 19 persons who identified as senior fisheries management (i.e. executive level), 80 fishery managers, and two undefined. The results indicated there was a high level of interest among respondents in the formation of an association and a general willingness to pay up to \$100 p.a. for membership. While there was an overall lack of confidence from fisheries executives in being able to provide direct funding to support the association financially into the future, there was genuine interest in being able to logistically support staff to attend and undertake association activities such as an annual fisheries management workshop. Respondents were also most interested in attending training courses/workshops and fisheries management conferences through the association and less interested in being able to contribute to association position statements and public recognition on the website of staff achievements. When discussing the role of the Australian Society for Fish Biology (ASFB) with respect to fisheries management and their potential as a host organisation it was evident that most respondents were not members and were not aware that fisheries management is a core objective of the ASFB. However, a majority of respondents indicated they would be interested in becoming members of the ASFB if there was a dedicated fisheries management committee under the ASFB structure.

The survey results led to the consideration of two options by the project team – (a) proceed with implementing a dedicated fisheries managers’ association or, (b) create a dedicated Fisheries Management Committee under the ASFB structure, similar to their Alien Fishes Committee, Education Committee and Threatened Fishers Committee.

In reviewing the above options, the project team noted there was a level of support from respondents in becoming ASFB members if there was dedicated fisheries managers’ committee and that the benefit of this strategy would be that the committee would be financially and logistically supported through the ASFB. The ASFB also considers fisheries management a part of their core objectives, despite it being ‘perceived’ by most fisheries managers to be a scientifically- or academically-focused society (due in part to their title or branding). In discussing the implementation of a dedicated, stand-alone fisheries managers’ association the project team noted that this strategy would ensure that fisheries management remained the core focus, but it would require significant financial and logistical support from jurisdictions, the source which was not necessarily evident in the survey results. Given this lack of dedicated financial support for a stand-alone fisheries management association, the project team agreed to pursue option (b) to create a Fisheries Management Committee within ASFB. This proposition was supported by the AFMF and subsequently by the ASFB.

In discussing option (b) it was noted that there would need to be linkages between the Australian Fisheries Management Forum (AFMF) sub-committee and executive council of the ASFB to establish a ‘Fisheries Management Committee’ (hereafter termed the Committee) under the ASFB structure and the need to ensure the convenor and committee members selected had the desire and enthusiasm to drive the fisheries management agenda within the ASFB. With support from the AFMF, a working group was established, incorporating fisheries managers from most Australian jurisdictions. Discussion with the ASFB executive indicated that in order to establish a committee under the ASFB, a preliminary committee executive needed to be in place, a preliminary Terms of Reference be developed, and that the Committee’s establishment needed to be ratified at the ASFB annual general meeting (AGM). It was decided that the jurisdictional members of the working group would form the interim executive. Members of the working group drafted a Terms of Reference and a short presentation to be given at the AGM.

In order for greater input from fisheries managers on the Terms of Reference and strategic direction of the proposed Fisheries Management Committee, a workshop was held in conjunction with the ASFB Annual Conference in October 2018 in Melbourne. The workshop took place on the 10th October 2018, and was

attended by 25 fisheries managers from all jurisdictions, as well as other key stakeholders (e.g. representatives of FRDC, ASFB Executive and AFMF). A key component of the workshop was a discussion on the strategic direction of the Committee, including participant's views on the Terms of Reference (Appendix 2), and in particular membership, means of attaining objectives, and their expectations of the Committee. Draft minutes and a snapshot of the discussion from the meeting are included as Appendix 3. Participants were generally in agreement with the proposed Terms of Reference, and a formal process was run to adopt the Terms of Reference.

Regarding membership of the Committee, participants suggested that they would be comfortable with paying ASFB membership fees to be a part of the Committee, and that membership of the Committee should be open (i.e. available to any member of the ASFB). Furthermore, participants felt that the Executive Committee members (of the Fisheries Management Committee) should constitute active fishery managers only, including one member from each jurisdiction.

Regarding the means of attaining objectives of the Committee, it was agreed by workshop participants that an application be made to FRDC by the interim executive to include some funding to support an annual national fisheries management workshop to address key national fisheries management priorities and, through this, bed down the future role of the Committee and cement its relevance to providing national fisheries management challenges. Participants also recommended the Committee should link very closely with AFMF, to ensure key national priorities outlined in the AFMF national statement of intent are being progressed. This linkage to the AFMF and its statement of intent will ensure the Committee has an enduring role and ongoing high-level support from fisheries agencies. Workshop participants also recommended that in-kind and on-going contributions should be sought from jurisdictions for Committee activities. Participants supported the nomination of the jurisdictional members of the working groups as the interim executive.

On Thursday 11th October 2018, the proposal to establish the Committee under the ASFB was presented at the ASFB AGM for ratification. There was overwhelming support for the establishment of the Committee under the ASFB and as such the Committee was formally ratified and the Terms of Reference were adopted.

While this project successfully met its objective of establishing a fisheries management-focused Committee, further effort will need to be made to ensure the long-term stability and effectiveness of the Committee for its members, including further funding support to bed down the role of the Committee and its activities (e.g. an annual fisheries management workshop) in progressing key fisheries management priorities. In the short term (i.e. the coming months), the following activities are recommended:

- Establish a presence on the ASFB website, including a dedicated webpage for the Committee;
- Establish and maintain a contact list of active fisheries managers, and contact them to ensure they are aware of the Committee and the benefits of membership of the ASFB;
- Advertise formation of the Committee through existing ASFB and AFMF channels (social media, newsletters) and via the aforementioned contact list;
- Include a dedicated Fisheries Management Committee section in each edition of the ASFB newsletter;
- Appoint an interim communications person from the executive to be responsible for communications; and
- Plan to present at / run a session on fisheries management at the 2019 ASFB annual conference to be held in Canberra, ACT.

Medium to long-term recommendations for the Committee include:

- Establish a presence on the ASFB website, including a dedicated webpage for the Committee;

- Establish and maintain a contact list of active fisheries managers, and contact them to ensure they are aware of the Committee;
- Advertise formation of the Committee through existing ASFB and AFMF channels (social media, newsletters) and via the aforementioned contact list;
- Plan to present at / run a session on fisheries management at the 2020 World Fisheries Congress (WFC) to be held in Adelaide, SA; and
- Develop a proposal to secure medium to long-term (i.e. 3–5 years) funding to support the Committee's activities, in particular:
 - Secondment opportunities for fisheries managers to work with managers in other jurisdictions;
 - Seed funding for up-and-coming students or junior level managers to attend training courses; and
 - Opportunities to hold Committee workshops and training courses, which should ideally be held in conjunction with the annual ASFB conference and AGM.

Keywords

Fisheries management, policy, professional association, ASFB, Committee.

Introduction

Recent workshops on small-scale fisheries management in Adelaide and the use of bio-economics in Queensland highlighted the use and value of increasing engagement between jurisdictions, to improve understanding and uptake of innovative solutions to fisheries management. At these workshops managers were given the opportunity to network and engage with each other, discuss their jurisdictions individual approach to key fisheries management challenges and consider possible solutions collectively. At both these workshops there was convincing support from attendees for the formation of a professional association of Australian fisheries managers, a strong willingness to pay for membership and keen interest in the association organising and facilitating future workshops and meetings on key focus areas. The formation of an association has also been supported by members of the Australian Fisheries Management Forum (AFMF).

The formation of a professional association of fisheries managers would enable significant cross-fertilisation of ideas, networking and information-sharing between managers from Australian jurisdictions. This organisation would be similar to other associations such as the Australian Marine Sciences Association (AMSA). Its aim would be to act as a central repository for technical fisheries management information, promote discussion and networking between managers from different jurisdictions through annual workshops and training events, while endeavouring to increase the standing and recognition of fisheries managers through promotion of the profession.

By facilitating information-sharing and collaborative engagement and providing opportunities for education and training this professional association would have the potential to increase the consistency and transparency of fisheries management decision-making across jurisdictions, ultimately increasing the efficiency of management decision-making and the profitability of the Australian seafood industry. This goal was considered consistent with one of the FRDC's strategic focus on "people development", with the aim to improve the knowledge and education (i.e. proficiency) of people involved in fisheries and aquaculture, which accordingly, will improve the sustainability and profitability of the Australian seafood industry.

Need

A persistent challenge exists to facilitate regular and coordinated professional engagement and exchange between Commonwealth, Territory and State level fisheries managers working on common fisheries problems across jurisdictions in the face of reductions in government funding for fisheries management and research.

There is a recognised need to increase cross-institutional engagement so line managers (as in those staff engaged in the development and implementation of fisheries management and policy) are made more cognisant of the work being undertaken across jurisdictions, thereby increasing their knowledge, skills and understanding of fisheries issues and solutions, with the aim of achieving management efficiencies. Due to budgetary constraints and increased workloads, Australian fisheries managers have very little time or opportunity to communicate and network with their colleagues within other jurisdictions. The establishment of a professional association of Australian fisheries managers would facilitate regular and coordinated professional exchange, collaboration and engagement by providing a forum for discussion/debate as well as acting as a repository for information and coordinator for future workshops and meetings on key focus areas. Qualified and experienced fisheries managers, despite their pivotal role in sustainable fisheries, are largely unrecognised by key fisheries stakeholders and the wider community as inter-disciplinary professionals in their own right. This is in contrast to fisheries biologists and economists. The formation of the association would provide a vehicle to achieve increased recognition of fisheries management as a profession. There would also be a value to industry through synergizing management approaches across jurisdictions, increasing efficiency and thereby reducing possible costs of management.

Objectives

The objectives of this project were:

1. To formally gauge the level of interest among fisheries managers in the establishment of a professional association of fisheries managers

2. Should sufficient interest be evident, to establish a professional association of Australian Fisheries Managers that enables:
 - a. Improved accessibility and transparency of jurisdictional fisheries manager information (technical papers, policy and legislation) through hosting of a central website
 - b. Increased recognition of the profession of fisheries management within Australia and the current work undertaken by managers to ensure fisheries remain sustainable
 - c. Exposure of fisheries managers to innovations and developments in fisheries ecological, economic, social and political fields in Australia and overseas
 - d. Improved consistency and transparency in management approaches between jurisdictions through greater information sharing and liaison
 - e. Establishment of linkages between fisheries managers for future interactions and collaborative engagement
 - f. Improved public confidence in Australian fisheries management through greater stakeholder outreach and communication
 - g. Ensuring the Association has appropriate support (financial and logistical) to operate beyond the completion of the two-year project.

Methods

This project used a variety of approaches to determine 1) the level of support among fisheries managers and executives for the establishment of an association, 2) what form an association should take, and 3) the governance and strategic direction of the association. The project was undertaken in two distinct phases, owing to a change in strategic direction for the association following initial results and the loss of the original principal investigator from the project team midway through the project.

Phase One: Determining the level of support for the formation of an Association of Fisheries Managers

Online surveys

The first stage of this project was to develop and distribute an online survey for both fisheries executives and managers to gauge their level of interest in the formation of an association of Australian fisheries managers (hereafter termed, the association). If the results of the survey indicated a lack of genuine interest and financial support for an association among both the managers and executives, then the project would be discontinued in December 2016 to prevent the wastage of FRDC funds. Other aims of the survey included identifying if fisheries executives and managers were interested in becoming full fee-paying members, what they would be willing to pay for membership, whether they would be interested in becoming involved in the administration of the association and what potential association activities would be of most interest.

The survey was developed using Survey Monkey and made available online from mid-October to mid-December 2016 to Australian fisheries managers and executives. The survey was conducted under the approval of the Tasmanian Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee (H0015921). The following questions were asked in the survey:

Q1. What level of importance do you attach to a professional association promoting the interests of and increasing opportunities for cross-institutional engagement among Australian fisheries managers?

- Very important
- Important
- Moderately important
- Slightly important
- Not important

Q2. Would you be interested in becoming a member of a professional association of Australian fisheries managers?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Q3. (if no for Q2) Can you advise the main reason why you are not interested in becoming a member of a professional association of Australian fisheries managers?

- I don't want to pay a membership fees
- I don't believe it's of relevance to my professional career
- I don't have time to be involved in the association
- Other (please specify)

Q4. (if yes for Q2) Would you consider volunteering to become a member of the executive council/committee of the association now or in the future, noting this would involve inter alia attending annual general meetings and undertaking administrative tasks throughout the year?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Q5. Should membership to an association of Australian fisheries managers be:

- Limited to individuals who are or have been engaged in fisheries management, compliance, policy and/or research in Australia
- Limited to individuals who are or have been engaged in fisheries management, compliance, policy and/or research in Australia and overseas
- Open to all interested persons in Australia
- Open to all interested persons in Australia and overseas

Q6. What is the maximum amount you would be willing to personally pay for an annual membership fee to the professional association of Australian fisheries managers?

- \$25
- \$50
- \$75
- \$100
- \$150
- \$200
- Other (please specify a \$ amount)

Q7. Are you employed at an executive (i.e. senior management) level within your fisheries jurisdiction?

- Yes
- No

Q8. Do you believe jurisdictional fisheries departments should provide regular funding to support the functioning of an association of Australian fisheries managers?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Q9. Do you believe your department could provide regular funding to support the functioning of an association of Australian fisheries managers?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Q10. What might be an acceptable level of annual funding your department could provide?

- <\$500
- \$500 – \$1000
- \$1000 – \$2000
- \$2000 – \$3000
- >\$3000

Q11. Do you believe your department could allow staff members time during normal working hours to undertake volunteer work for the association and/or attend training courses, workshops, conferences organised by the association?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Q12. Do you believe your department could support staff in their travel costs to attend training courses, workshops, conferences organised by the association?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Q13–21. Please choose a number between 1 and 5 (1= not interested and 5 = very interested) based on your level of interest in a professional association of Australian fisheries managers providing:

- Links to workshops and formal training courses to increase individual’s knowledge of fisheries management issues and innovative solutions (Q13)
- Organisation of an annual fisheries management conference to promote information exchange and increase cross-institutional engagement (Q14)
- Organisation of a bi-annual fisheries management conference to promote information exchange and increase cross-institutional engagement (Q15)
- A central repository for fisheries technical information from different jurisdictions (e.g. management plans, policies) on the association’s website (Q16)
- Public recognition of individual staff achievements in fisheries management through the association’s website or other social media platforms (Q17)
- An electronic newsletter distributed to members detailing important activities and events as well noteworthy individual staff achievements in fisheries management (Q18)
- An online discussion forum on the association’s website where members can pose questions, provide answers and discuss general fisheries management issues (Q19)
- Public representation of the interests of members (i.e. advocacy) (Q20)
- The ability of members to contribute to official position statements and submissions on fisheries management and/or policy released by the independent association (Q21)

Q22. Are you currently a member of the Australian Society for Fish Biology (ASFB)?

- Yes
- No

Q23. What are the main reason(s) you are not a member of the ASFB? (Check all that apply)

- I was not aware that fisheries management was part of the core objectives of the ASFB
- I don’t want to pay a membership fee
- I don’t believe it’s of relevance to my professional career
- I don’t have time to be involved in the society
- I am unable to attend the conference and workshop each year due to the likelihood that organisational travel funding will not be available
- I am unable to attend the conference and workshops each year due to my workload
- Other (please specify)

Q23. Would you be more likely to renew or become a member of the ASFB if there was a dedicated “fisheries management and policy” committee within the ASFB to represent the interests of managers in organising workshops, symposiums, newsletter items and a dedicated webpage for fisheries management?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

The survey results (see below) led to the consideration of two options by the project team – (a) proceed with implementing a dedicated, stand-alone fisheries managers’ association or, (b) create a Fisheries Management Committee under the ASFB structure, similar to their Alien Fish Species Committee and Threatened Fishes Committee.

In reviewing the options, the project team noted there was a level of support from survey respondents for being ASFB members if there was dedicated fisheries management committee and that a benefit of this strategy would be that the committee would be financially and logistically supported through the ASFB. ASFB also considers fisheries management a part of their core objectives, despite it being ‘perceived’ by most managers to be a scientifically-focused society (due in part to their title or branding). It was also noted by the project team that the implementation of a dedicated, stand-alone fisheries managers’ association would require significant financial and logistical support from jurisdictions, which was not necessarily evident in the survey results. Given this lack of dedicated financial support for the association, the working

group members agreed to pursue option (b) – the formation of a fisheries management committee under ASFB. This approach was supported by both the AFMF and the executive of the ASFB.

Phase Two: Establishing the association as a Committee under the ASFB

In discussing option (b) it was noted that there would need to be linkages between the AFMF fisheries management sub-committee and executive council of the ASFB in the first instance to establish a fisheries management committee under the ASFB structure and the need to ensure the convenor and executive members of the Committee members had the desire and enthusiasm to drive the fisheries management agenda within the ASFB.

Discussion with the ASFB executive indicated that in order to establish a committee under the ASFB, a preliminary committee executive needed to be in place and that the Committee’s establishment needed to be ratified at the ASFB annual general meeting (AGM).

To support the formation of a fisheries management committee under the existing ASFB structure, a working group was established with support from the AFMF, incorporating fisheries managers from most Australian jurisdictions (**Error! Reference source not found.**). The working group was supported from time to time by Timothy Emery, ABARES (and former PI to this project) and Bryan McDonald (NT, AFMF). This group had multiple teleconferences in the lead up to the ASFB conference, planned a workshop to be held in conjunction with the ASFB annual conference and Annual General Meeting (AGM), liaised with members of the ASFB executive and drafted a Terms of Reference for the functioning of the Committee for discussion at the October workshop.

Table 1. Members of the ASFB Fisheries Management Committee working group.

Name	Jurisdiction
Keith Rowling	Primary Industries and Regions SA
Kate Simpson	Victorian Fisheries Authority, VIC
Frances Seaborn	Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, TAS
Tom Roberts	Fisheries Queensland, QLD
Will Bowman	Department of Primary Industry and Resources, NT
Patrick Cavalli / Rebecca Oliver	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, WA
George Day	Australian Fisheries Management Authority, Commonwealth
Bradley Moore	Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies, University of Tasmania

Stakeholder workshop

In October 2018, a stakeholder workshop was held during the ASFB annual conference. This workshop took place from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm on the 10th October 2018, at Rydges on Swanston in Melbourne (the venue for the ASFB conference and AGM). The objectives of this workshop were to:

- 1) agree and document the scope and strategic direction for the Committee,
- 2) share information across jurisdictions on key fisheries management issues, and
- 3) establish ongoing networks, communication and actions amongst fishery managers.

The workshop was facilitated by Ian Cartwright of Thalassa Consulting, and was conducted under the approval of the Tasmanian Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee (H0017683). The workshop was attended by approximately 25 fisheries managers from State and Commonwealth fisheries management jurisdictions. The workshop was also attended by the president of the ASFB, Stephen (Harry) Balcombe, Crispian Ashby on behalf of the FRDC, and Sean Sloan, Executive Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture in South Australia, on behalf of the Australian Fisheries Management Forum.

Workshop participants were asked a series of questions relating to the following themes:

- Name, scope, purpose and objectives of the Committee as described in the Terms of Reference (ToR; Appendix 3);
- The means by which the Committee should attain its objectives;
- Membership;
- How often the Committee should meet;
- How the Committee should be managed; and
- Governance and strategic direction of the Committee, including short-, medium- and long-term goals and focal areas.

Feedback received during the workshop is presented in the next section.

Results, Discussion and Conclusion

Phase One: Determining the level of support for the formation of an Association of Fisheries Managers

Level of interest

A total of 101 responses to the online survey were received, although not every respondent answered all questions. Responses came from 19 persons who identified as fisheries executives (i.e. senior level manager), 80 fishery managers, and two undefined respondents.

Results indicated there was a high level of interest among responders in the formation of an association, with 69% of respondents indicating that establishing a professional association for fisheries managers was very important or important (Figure 1) and 68% of survey respondents indicating that they would be interested in becoming a member of an association of Australian fisheries managers (Figure 2). Of those individuals who indicated they were not interested in becoming a member of an association of fisheries managers, the majority stated this was because they felt they did not have time to be involved (Figure 3). Of those individuals would indicated they would be interested in becoming a member of an association of fisheries managers, 35% indicated they would consider volunteering for the association, and 48% indicated they would maybe consider volunteering to become a member of the executive council/committee of the association now or in the future.

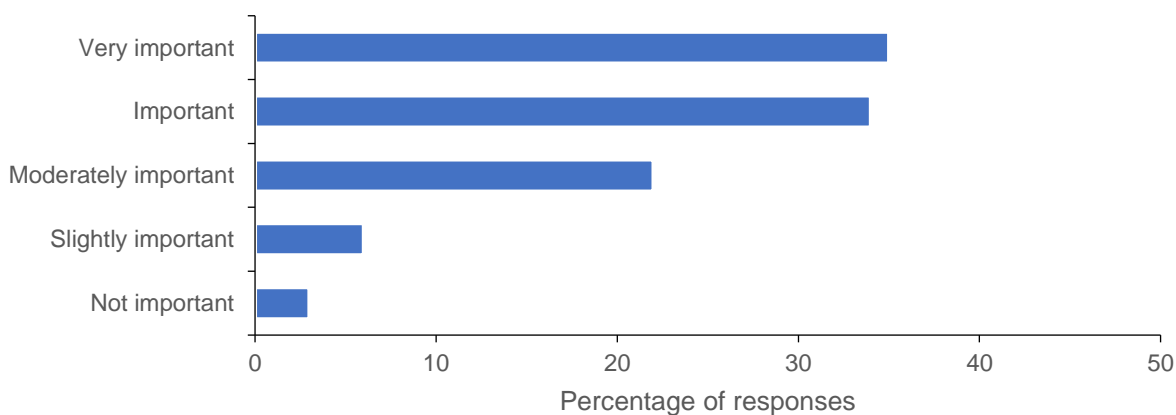


Figure 1. Responses to Question 1 “What level of importance do you attach to a professional association promoting the interests of and increasing opportunities for cross-institutional engagement among Australian fisheries managers?”.

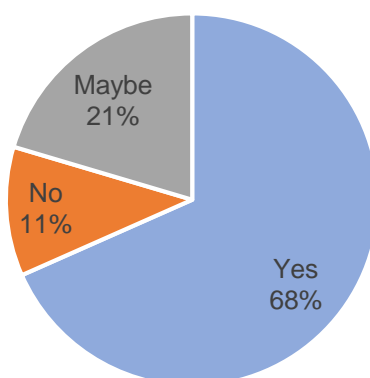


Figure 2. Responses to Question 2 “Would you be interested in becoming a member of an association of Australian fisheries managers?”.



Figure 3. Responses to Question 3 “Can you advise the main reason why you are not interested in becoming a member of an association of Australian fisheries managers?”.

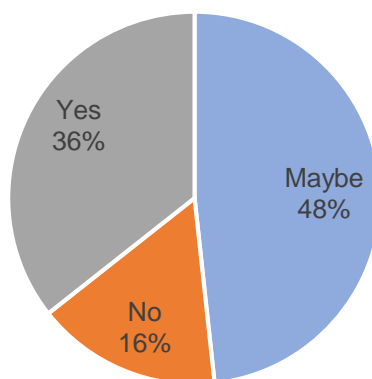


Figure 4. Responses to Question 4 “Would you consider volunteering to become a member of the executive council/committee of the association now or in the future, noting this would involve attending annual general meetings and undertaking administrative tasks throughout the year?”.

Structure

Regarding the structure of the association, the majority of respondents suggested that the association should not be limited to just fisheries managers from Australia, but include professionals who are or have been engaged in fisheries management, compliance, policy and/or research in Australia and overseas, and in particular New Zealand (Figure 5).

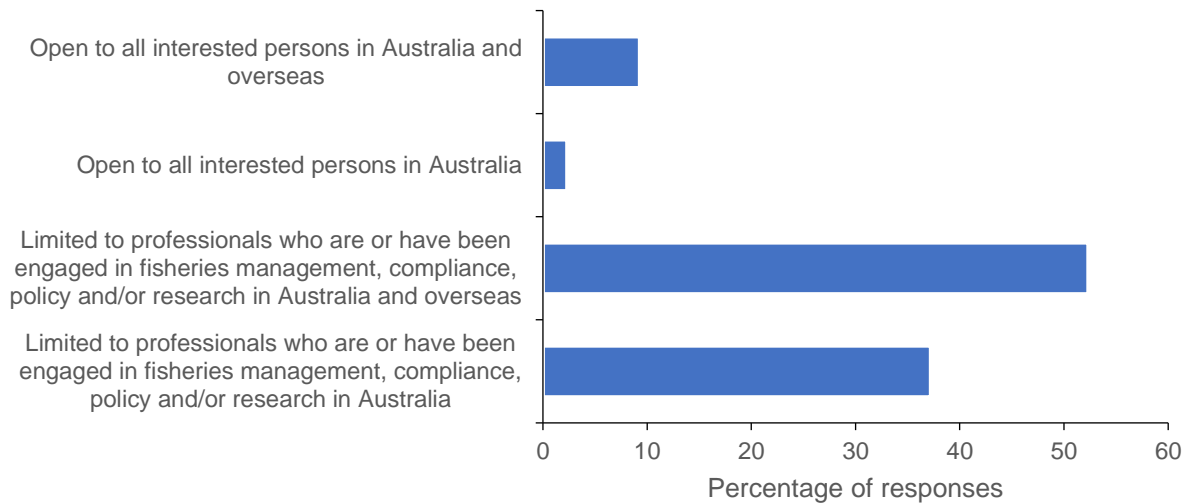


Figure 5. Responses to Question 5 “Should membership to an association of Australian fisheries managers be...?”.

Funding and departmental support

There was a general willingness amongst most survey respondents to pay up to \$100 p.a. for membership (Figure 6). While there was an overall lack of confidence from executives in being able to support the association financially into the future, there was genuine interest in being able to logistically support staff to attend and undertake association activities, with 42% of fisheries executives indicating that fisheries departments *should* provide regular funding to support the functioning of an association of Australian fisheries managers (Figure 7). However only 20% of respondents indicated fisheries departments *could* provide regular funding support (Figure 8). Those fisheries executives who answered the survey suggested an acceptable level of funding that departments could provide was from \$500 to more than \$3000 annually (Figure 9). Support to allow staff members time during normal working hours was high, with 74% of fisheries executives indicating they believed their department could allow staff members time during normal working hours to undertake volunteer work for the association and/or to attend training courses, workshops and conferences organised by the association (Figure 10). Fifty-three per-cent (53%) of fisheries executives indicating they believed their department could support travel costs of staff to attend training courses, workshops and conferences organised by the association (Figure 11).

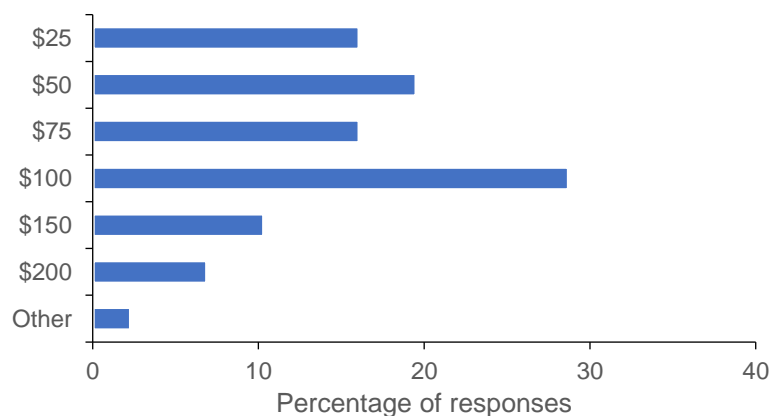


Figure 6. Responses to Question 6 “What is the maximum amount you would be willing to personally pay for an annual membership fee to an association of Australian fisheries managers?”.

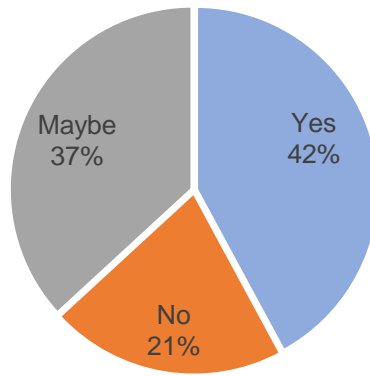


Figure 7. Responses to Question 8 “Do you believe jurisdictional fisheries departments should provide regular funding to support the functioning of an association of Australian fisheries managers?”.

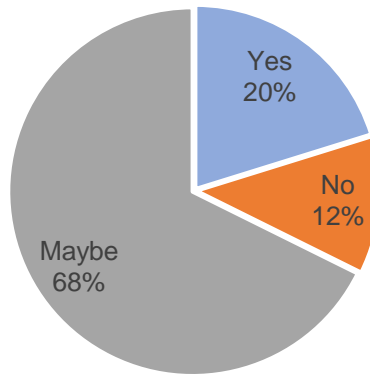


Figure 8. Responses to Question 9 “Do you believe your department could provide regular funding to support the functioning of an association of Australian fisheries managers?”

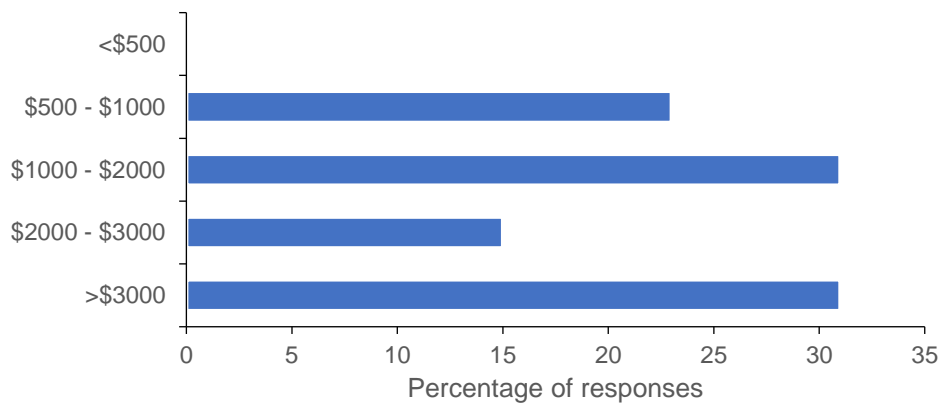


Figure 9. Responses to Question 10 “What might be an acceptable level of annual funding your department could provide”.

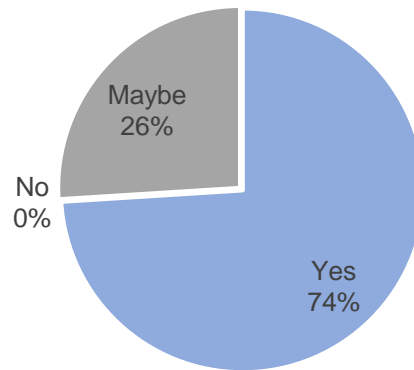


Figure 10. Responses to Question 11 “Do you believe your department could allow staff members time during normal working hours to undertake volunteer work for the association and/or attend training courses, workshops, conferences organised by the association?”.

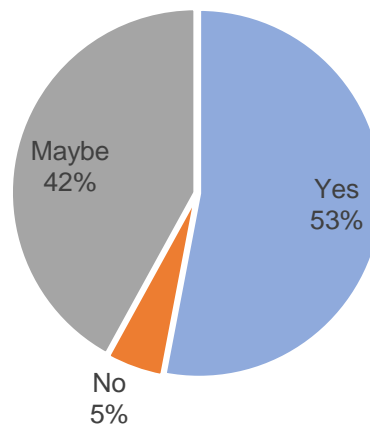


Figure 11. Responses to Question 12 “Do you believe your department could support staff in their travel costs to attend training courses, workshops, conferences organised by the association?”.

Administration and activities

Respondents were most interested in attending training courses/workshops and fisheries management conferences through the association and less interested in being able to contribute to association position statements, online discussion forums, and public recognition on the website of staff achievements (Figure 12–Figure 20). When discussing the Australian Society for Fish Biology (ASFB) as a potential ‘host’ association, it was clear that the overwhelming majority (95%) of respondents were not members (Figure 21). This was for a variety of reasons, but most commonly due to funding and time commitment issues, and that many considered the ASFB to be a research-focused organisation (Figure 22). However, the majority of respondents were interested in becoming members of the ASFB if there was a dedicated fisheries management committee under the ASFB structure (Figure 23).

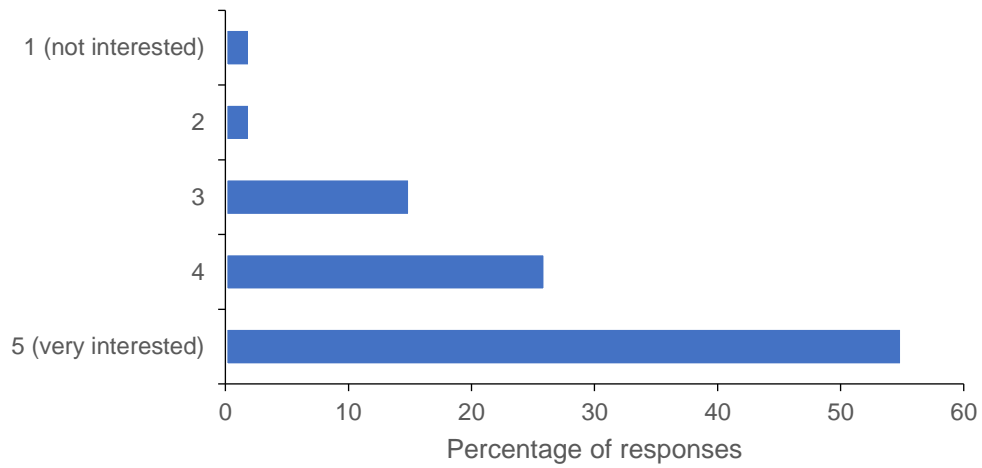


Figure 12. Responses to Question 13 – what interests you: Links to workshops and formal training courses to increase individual’s knowledge of fisheries management issues and innovative solutions.

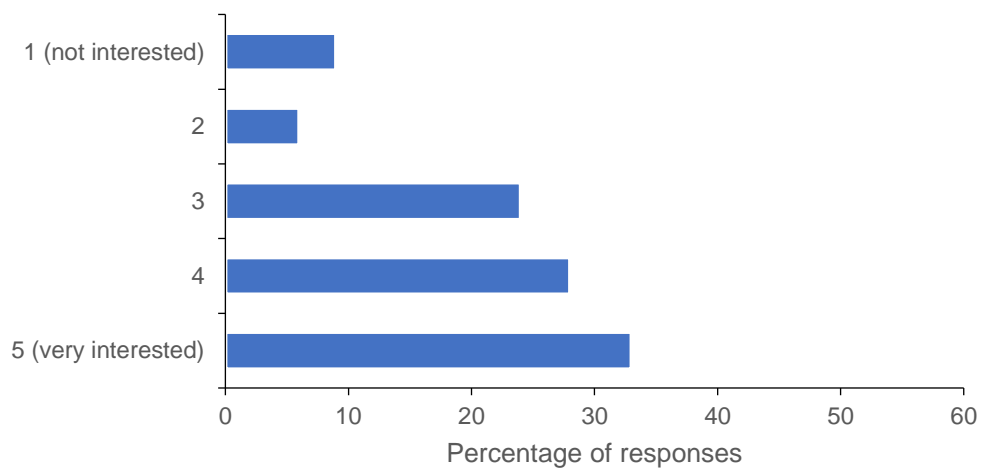


Figure 13. Responses to Question 14 – what interests you: Organisation of an annual fisheries management conference to promote information exchange and increase cross-institutional engagement.

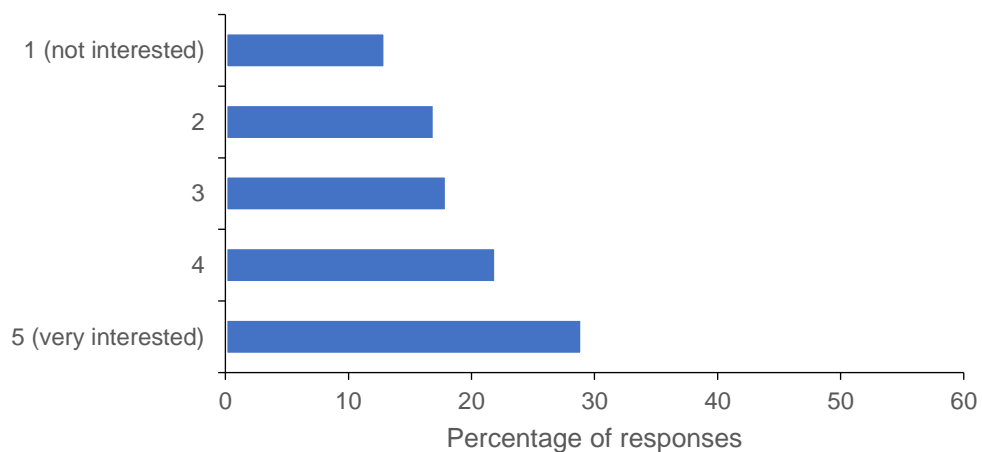


Figure 14. Responses to Question 15 – what interests you: Organisation of a bi-annual fisheries management conference to promote information exchange and increase cross-institutional engagement.

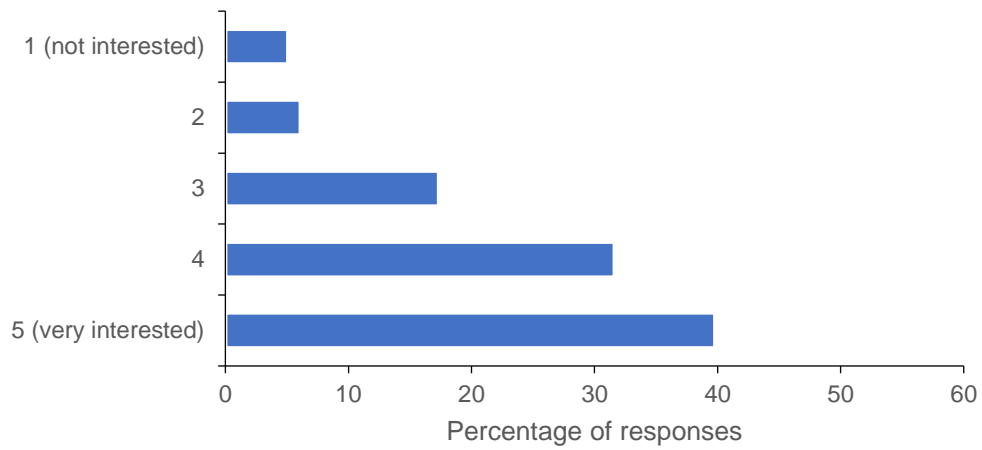


Figure 15. Responses to Question 16 – what interests you: A central repository for fisheries technical information from different jurisdictions (e.g. management plans, policies) on the association’s website.

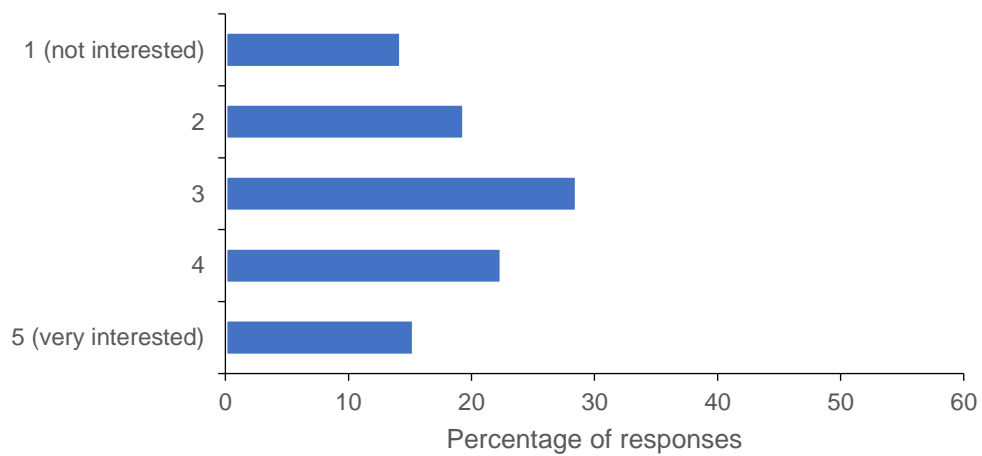


Figure 16. Responses to Question 17 – what interests you: Public recognition of individual staff achievements in fisheries management through the association’s website or other social media platforms.

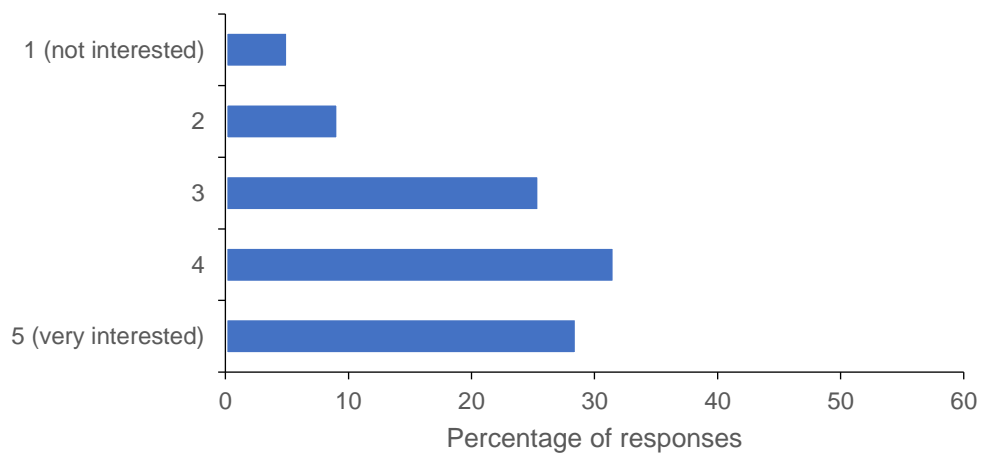


Figure 17. Responses to Question 18 – what interests you: An electronic newsletter distributed to members detailing important activities and events as well as noteworthy individual staff achievements in fisheries management.

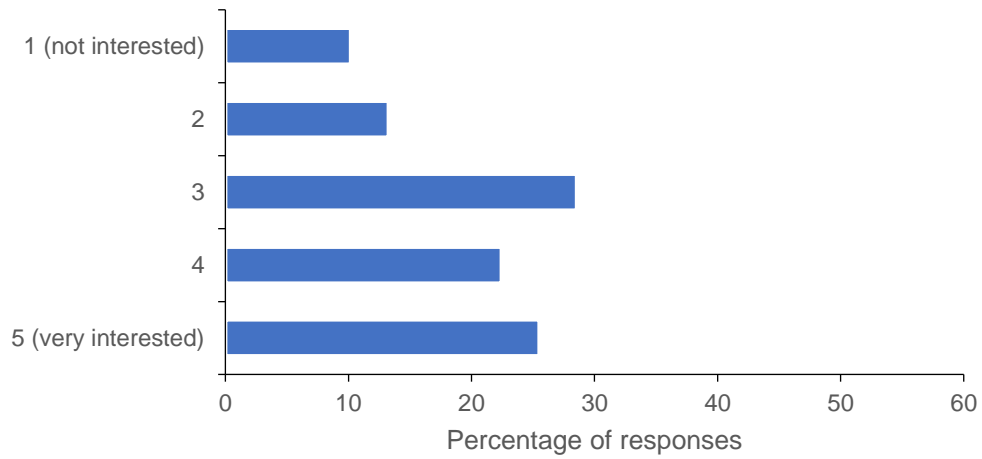


Figure 18. Responses to Question 19 – what interests you: An online discussion forum on the association’s website where members can pose questions, provide answers and discuss general fisheries management issues.

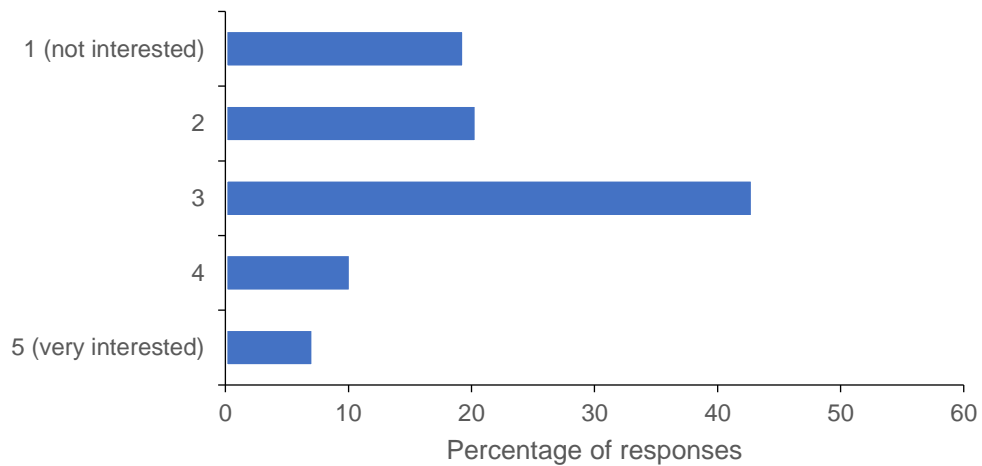


Figure 19. Responses to Question 20 – what interests you: Public representation of the interests of members (i.e. advocacy).

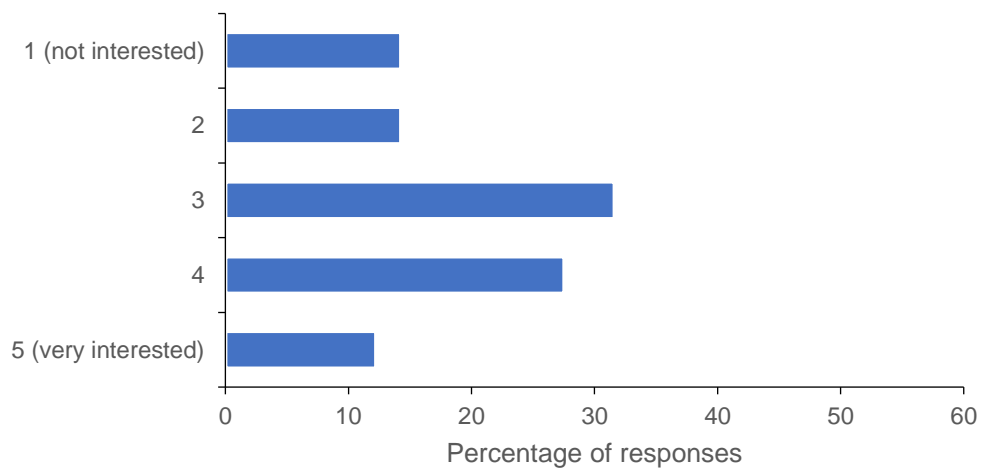


Figure 20. Responses to Question 21 – what interests you: The ability for members to contribute to official position statements and submissions on fisheries management and/or policy released by the independent association.

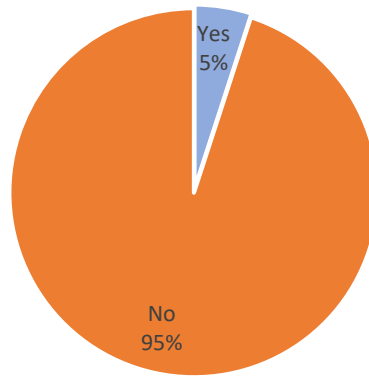


Figure 21. Responses to Question 22 “Are you currently a member of the Australian Society for ASFB?”.

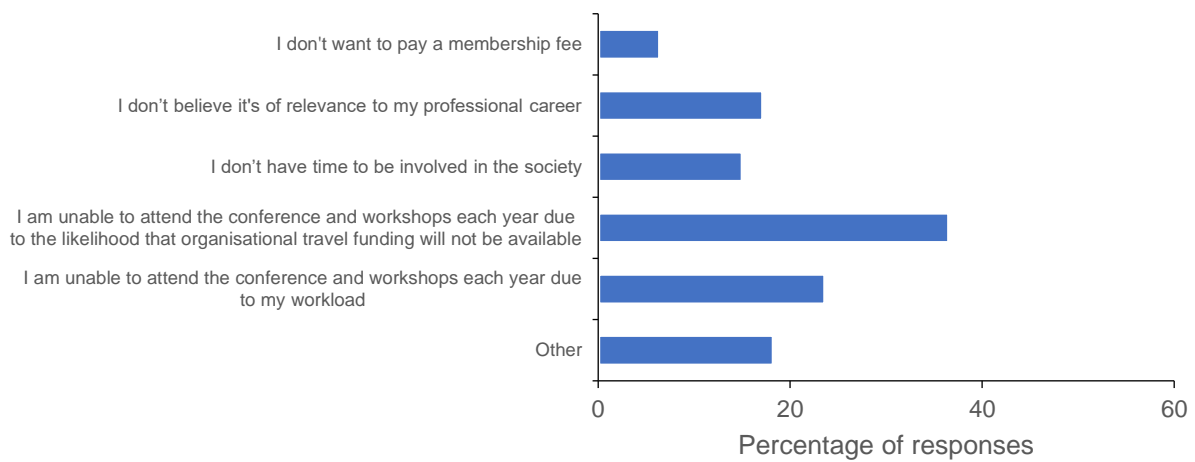


Figure 22. Responses to Question 23 “What are the main reason(s) you are not a member of the ASFB? (check all that apply)”.

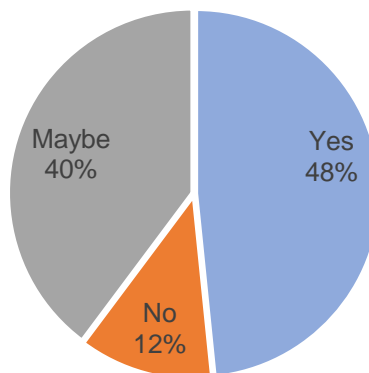


Figure 23. Responses to Question 24 “Would you be more likely to renew or become a member of the ASFB if there was a dedicated “fisheries management and policy” committee within the ASFB to represent the interests of managers in organising workshops, symposiums, newsletter items and a dedicated webpage for fisheries management”.

Phase Two: Establishing the association as a Committee under the ASFB

Discussions with the ASFB Executive indicated that they were open to the idea of creating a separate committee for “fisheries management and policy”, similar to their existing Alien Fishes Committee, Education Committee and Threatened Fishes Committee, which each have their own executive members that oversee the functioning of the Committee within the ASFB structure. Under the ASFB structure the Committee would receive its own space in the ASFB newsletter, web space and will assist with suggesting and organising workshops and symposiums for the annual ASFB conferences. The advantage here is that the committee is supported financially through the ASFB and that managers will have a direct communication with a diverse group of stakeholders interested in fish and fisheries issues.

The ASFB advised on the high costs in running a professional society, requiring suitable support from fisheries jurisdictions, not just financially but also logistically in allowing staff who are members, adequate leave time to undertake volunteer work for the association. If there is not support for staff members to work on association administrative tasks then people would need to be paid directly, further increasing the total operating cost. The ASFB also advised that they were keen to grow their membership of fisheries managers (currently 16% of members consider themselves managers), and increase their focus on fisheries management and policy issues at annual conferences or workshops, but noted this required jurisdictions to provide logistical and financial support to staff members to attend conferences and participate in organising symposiums, which in the past has been challenging.

Stakeholder workshop – key outcomes

Terms of Reference (name, scope, purpose and objectives)

Participants were generally in agreement with the proposed Terms of Reference (ToR), and these were formally adopted at the workshop (a copy of the ToR is provided as Appendix 3). Participants were happy with the name suggested for the Committee – the ASFB Fisheries Management Committee – and acknowledged the importance of maintaining consistency with other ASFB committee names. Participants suggested that the scope of the proposed ASFB Fisheries Management Committee should include wild fisheries (including both commercial, indigenous and recreational sectors, and compliance officers, who were strongly encouraged to participate) only but not explicitly exclude aquaculture. Participants were content with the existing scope and purpose statement of the ToR and the objectives of the Committee as specified.

Means of obtaining objectives

Workshop participants were generally content with the objectives outlined in the ToR, though stressed the importance of the Committee encompassing commercial, indigenous and recreational fisheries management.

Membership

Regarding membership, participants indicated they were happy with paying for ASFB membership to be part of the Committee, which resonated with the online survey results. Participants suggested that membership should be open to all ASFB members, but that executive committee members must be active jurisdictional fishery managers, and that the executive should include one representative from each jurisdiction.

Meetings, management of the Committee and voting matters

Regarding meetings, management of the Committee and voting matters:

- Participants were in strong agreement that the interim executive should constitute one member from each jurisdiction, and that the executive be led by one Chair and one Deputy Chair;
- Participants recommended that the jurisdictional members of the working group form the interim executive of the Committee for a 12-month basis;
- Participants recommended that the Committee’s Chair and Deputy Chair be elected by the executive committee only, by consensus where possible, and not the broader membership; and
- On the recommendation of the working group, Doug Ferrell was accepted as the NSW representative on the interim executive.

Communication and Information sharing

Regarding how the Committee should achieve/maintain effective communication, both with its members and with the broader ASFB, the following approaches were suggested:

- That someone on the executive drives communication, possibility via a dedicated communications position within the executive;
- That maintaining an up-to-date contact list is key;
- That forum-like websites (e.g. Trello, Slack) be used to structure discussions on-line; and
- That the existing ASFB channels, including newsletters, Twitter and Facebook pages be utilised.

Strategic Direction and Planning

Regarding the strategic direction and planning of activities under the Committee, participants at the workshops suggested the following activities should be explored by the interim and future executives:

- That a contact list for communications be created (and maintained);
- That some form of closed membership forum/online discussion board (e.g. Trello) be established for managers to share ideas;
- That a fisheries management section be included in the ASFB newsletter;
- That a dedicated person from within the executive be assigned to handle communications, noting that this post could be passed between jurisdictions from year to year;
- That the executive explore short-, medium- and long-term funding options for Committee activities, including both external (e.g. FRDC) and in-kind support, and particularly for professional development, secondment opportunities and attendance at conferences and workshops;
- Obtain and manage seed funding for up-and-coming students or junior level fisheries management staff, identifying research priorities and incentivise writing of manuscripts, technical reports etc.
- Plan to present/run a session at the next World Fisheries Congress (WFC; to be held in Adelaide, SA, in October 2020); and
- That the Committee identify approximately six common/key priority areas across jurisdictions, and look to have a meeting for each of these between now and the WFC.

Discussion with the ASFB executive indicated that in order to establish a committee under the ASFB, a preliminary committee executive needed to be in place and the committee's establishment needed to be approved at the ASFB annual general meeting (AGM). It was decided that the jurisdictional members of the working group would form the interim executive of the Committee.

Ratification of the Committee

On Thursday 11th October 2018, Keith Rowling, nominated interim Chair of the Committee, presented the proposed Fisheries Management Committee at the ASFB AGM. There was overwhelming support for the established of the Committee under the ASFB and as such the 'Australian Society for Fish Biology Fisheries Management Committee' was formally adopted along with the ToR.

The interim executive for the Committee is as follows:

- Keith Rowling (SA) – Chair
- Kate Simpson (Vic) – Deputy Chair
- Frances Seaborn (Tas)
- Rebecca Oliver (WA)
- Tom Roberts (QLD)
- Will Bowman (NT)
- George Day (AFMA)
- Doug Ferrell (NSW)

Implications

The key broadscale implication of this project is that Australia now has an established professional organisation for regular and coordinated exchange between fisheries managers around Australia to address common fisheries management challenges and national priorities.

The establishment of the ASFB Fisheries Management Committee provides a forum for regular and coordinated professional exchange between fishery managers in State, Territory and Commonwealth fisheries organisations, as well as acting as a repository for information and a coordinating group for future workshops and meetings on shared fisheries management challenges among jurisdictions. It also allows fisheries managers access to the benefits of ASFB membership, including discounted registration for ASFB conferences and workshops, access to the society's bi-annual newsletters, access to a range of awards, as well as research and travel grants, and the right to run for the ASFB executive council. Taken together, the Committee provides an opportunity for fisheries managers to increase their skills, knowledge and understanding through to facilitated regular and coordinated professional engagement and exchange between Commonwealth, Territory and State level fisheries managers working on common fisheries problems, with the added benefit of improving consistency and transparency in management approaches across jurisdictions.

Recommendations and further development

While this project successfully met its objective of establishing a fisheries management-focused Committee, further effort will need to be made to ensure the long-term stability and effectiveness of the Committee for its members, including further funding support to bed down the role of the Committee and its activities (e.g. an annual fisheries management workshop) in progressing key fisheries management priorities. In the short term (i.e. the coming months), the following activities are recommended:

- Establish a presence on the ASFB website, including a dedicated webpage for the Committee;
- Establish and maintain a contact list of active fisheries managers, and contact them to ensure they are aware of the Committee and the benefits of membership of the ASFB;
- Advertise formation of the Committee through existing ASFB and AFMF channels (social media, newsletters) and via the aforementioned contact list;
- Include a dedicated Fisheries Management Committee section in each edition of the ASFB newsletter;
- Instate an interim communications person from the executive to be responsible for communications; and
- Plan to present at / run a session on fisheries management at the 2019 ASFB annual conference to be held in Canberra, ACT.

Medium to long-term recommendations for the Committee include:

- Establish a presence on the ASFB website, including a dedicated webpage for the Committee;
- Establish and maintain a contact list of active fisheries managers, and contact them to ensure they are aware of the Committee;
- Advertise formation of the Committee through existing ASFB and AFMF channels (social media, newsletters) and via the aforementioned contact list;
- Plan to present at / run a session on fisheries management at the 2020 World Fisheries Congress (WFC) to be held in Adelaide, SA.
- That the interim executive leads the development of a proposal to secure medium to long-term (i.e. 3–5 years) funding to support the Committee's activities, in particular:
 - Secondment opportunities for fisheries managers to work with managers in other jurisdictions;
 - Seed funding for up-and-coming students or junior level managers to attend training courses; and
 - Opportunities to hold Committee workshops and training courses, which should ideally be held in conjunction with the annual ASFB conference and AGM.

Extension and Adoption

The current project has been disseminated to fisheries managers and stakeholders in the following ways:

- An update on the project was presented to AFMF in July 2016;
- An out-of-session agenda paper on the project was provided to AFMF fisheries management sub-committee members in September 2016;
- Preliminary results of the online surveys were presented to AFMF in November 2016;
- Results from the online surveys were presented to the FRDC as a site meeting in December 2016;
- The proposal to form the Committee, including the Committee's proposed objectives and governance, was presented to the ASFB AGM on 11th October 2018; and
- Successful formation of the Committee was advertised on the ASFB's twitter page in October 2018 (<https://twitter.com/AustSocFishBiol/status/1050219897714663424>).

Appendix 1: Project staff

Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies

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Members of the Fisheries Management Committee working group provided invaluable assistance to the project:

Keith Rowling (Primary Industries and Regions SA – PIRSA, SA)

Kate Simpson (Victorian Fisheries Authority, VIC)

Frances Seaborn (Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, TAS)

Tom Roberts (Fisheries Queensland, QLD)

Will Bowman (Department of Primary Industry and Resources, NT)

Patrick Cavalli (Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, WA)

Rebecca Oliver (Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, WA)

George Day (Australian Fisheries Management Authority, Canberra, ACT)

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Appendix 2: Intellectual Property

The research relating to this project is for the public domain and the report and any resulting publications are intended for broad dissemination and promotion.

Appendix 3: Terms of Reference, Australian Society for Fish Biology (ASFB) Fisheries Management Committee

1. NAME

The name of the Committee shall be the Australian Society for Fish Biology Fisheries Management Committee.

2. SCOPE

The scope of the Australian Society for Fish Biology (ASFB) Fisheries Management Committee (hereafter 'the Committee') is fisheries management and policy within the Australian continent and offshore dependencies, including within State and Commonwealth waters.

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Committee is to provide an ongoing forum for emerging and existing professionals in fisheries management and policy development who are members of ASFB.

4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Committee shall be to *inter alia*:

- (a) maintain a dedicated forum for fisheries managers and policy makers to network and engage with each other to discuss approaches to commercial and recreational fisheries management and policy challenges and consider possible solutions, through the collaboration of ideas, networking and information-sharing;
- (b) bridge the gap between science and management by creating and increasing opportunities for fishery managers, policy makers and scientists to collaborate and share information across multiple jurisdictions in Australia to enhance effective management of Australia's aquatic resources;
- (c) provide tangible benefits to the development of fisheries managers and policy makers through this collaboration and information sharing and through the identification and promotion of specific workshop, training and development opportunities;
- (d) provide advice, support and guidance to persons interested in a career path in fisheries management and policy;
- (e) improve consistency, accessibility and transparency in fisheries management and policy decisions and legislation between jurisdictions through greater information-sharing and liaison;
- (f) encourage interest in and promote fisheries management and policy in Australia, and;

- (g) increase the standing and recognition of fisheries managers and policy makers through promotion of the profession.

5. MEANS OF ATTAINING OBJECTIVES

The following means may be used to attain the objectives of the Committee:

- (a) The holding of an annual meeting, which will coincide with the annual meeting of the ASFB;
- (b) The holding of other meetings and workshops as appropriate;
- (c) The production of newsletter articles and email / website (e.g. the ASFB Facebook page) updates to publicise recent knowledge or activities relevant to fisheries management and policy, including:
 - i. recent changes to management and policy;
 - ii. career, training and development opportunities;
 - iii. conferences and workshops;
 - iv. updates to ASFB members on the activities of the Committee and on current issues relating to fisheries management and policy;
- (d) The provision of information on fisheries management and policy for the ASFB website; and
- (e) Consider and discuss issues within the Committee's scope to Commonwealth, State or Local governments or other interested parties.

6. MEMBERSHIP

- (a) The membership of the Committee shall be open to all members of the Australian Society of Fish Biology.
- (b) The Committee shall be governed by an Executive. The members of the Executive shall be:
 - i. One Chair and one Deputy Chair from any jurisdiction who shall coordinate the Committee's activities;
 - ii. Chair and Deputy Chair are to be determined/elected by Executive members of the Committee;
 - iii. One member or their nominated proxy from each jurisdiction as jurisdictional representatives. The Chair and Deputy Chair may also act as the jurisdictional representatives;
 - iv. Changes to a jurisdictional representative are to be nominated by the outgoing representative, with the nominated person accepted as a member of the Committee upon the nomination being seconded by any existing member of the Committee.

7. ANNUAL COMMITTEE MEETING

The Committee shall hold an annual meeting to coincide with the Australian Society for Fish Biology's annual conference. The Committee meeting shall be open to all members of the ASFBI, but only Committee members are eligible to vote on Committee matters.

Any additional non-jurisdictional persons or non-ASFBI members with specialist skills may also be invited to attend the Committee's annual meeting as an observer.

8. VOTING

The Chair, Deputy Chair and State, Territory and Federal Government representatives shall be entitled to one vote or shall have the right to appoint a delegate who shall be entitled to one proxy vote, for voting on Committee matters. Committee members may submit votes *in absentia* via the Chair prior to the annual meeting.

9. MANAGEMENT

The Committee shall implement the Committee's general business, and a simple majority shall decide all questions at Committee meetings. If voting is equal, a motion is lost. A defeated motion can be re-presented at subsequent meetings. A quorum at Committee meetings shall be four, representing at least three jurisdictions.

The position of Chair should generally be vacated every two years, (but may be extended at the Committee's discretion, but should not exceed four years). If the Chair wishes to seek re-election he/she may, as may the Deputy Chair. If the Chair wishes to stand down, the position shall pass to the Deputy Chair, and a new Deputy Chair should be elected. The past Chair may stay as a member of the Committee.