



Australian Government



TSRA

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FISHERIES NEWSLETTER



Mr Yen Loban

Portfolio Member for Fisheries

Yen Loban is the newly appointed Portfolio Member for Fisheries.

In taking this portfolio, he would like to acknowledge the good work of the previous Fisheries Portfolio Member, Mr Jerry Stephen, in progressing key Fisheries activities over the last three years, including the agreement of the Tropical Rock Lobster Management Plan.

Mr Loban has a long history of engagement in the Maritime industry in the Torres Strait and is also the Deputy Mayor of the Torres Shire Council.

He currently leads the Fisheries Regional Ownership Framework Steering Committee, which is working to establish an independent commercial entity to hold and manage fishing assets in the Torres Strait.



Edition 10 – September 2019

In this edition, we will highlight key achievements that have been made over the past 12 months. We welcome the newly appointed PZJA Traditional Inhabitant Members for a new three-year term and provide updates on progress towards establishing a regional entity for community ownership and control of Torres Strait commercial fisheries assets.

TSRA Fisheries Programme outcomes

- A commercially viable fishing industry which is 100% owned and operated by Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people.
- Improved wealth of Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people of the region.
- Sustainable management of fisheries resources.

Fisheries Regional Ownership Framework Update



Fisheries Regional Ownership Framework Steering Committee meeting with Keogh Bay Consultants

The Fisheries Regional Ownership Framework is a project to deliver the aspiration of the Torres Strait to own and manage commercial fisheries access rights to Torres Strait fisheries.

TSRA has been progressing activities over the last five years to deliver a solution to transfer fisheries assets currently held by the TSRA to an independent commercial entity. This has included identifying and evaluating a range of options, investigating in some depth the experience of Maori over the last twenty years in the management of their fisheries ownership and consulting with Torres Strait communities.

A steering committee has been established to oversee this project. This Committee provides advice to the TSRA Board and is supported by the TSRA Fisheries Programme.

The committee is comprised of:

- Mr Napau Pedro Stephen, TSRA Chairperson.
- Mr Yen Loban, TSRA Member for Ngurapai and Muralag and Fisheries Portfolio Member.
- Mr Horace Baira, TSRA Member for Badu and Native Title Portfolio Member.
- Mr Maluwap Nona, Malu Lamar Chair.
- Two community representatives elected at the 2018 Fisheries Summit, Mr Frank Loban and Mr Kenneth Bedford.
- TSRA Chief Executive Officer.
- The project team is currently consulting with communities on the proposed model to seek their endorsement to undertake further detailed business planning and implementation.
- The target date for this project is for the entity to be established by July 2020. A second Fisheries Summit is proposed for early 2020 to progress this important initiative.

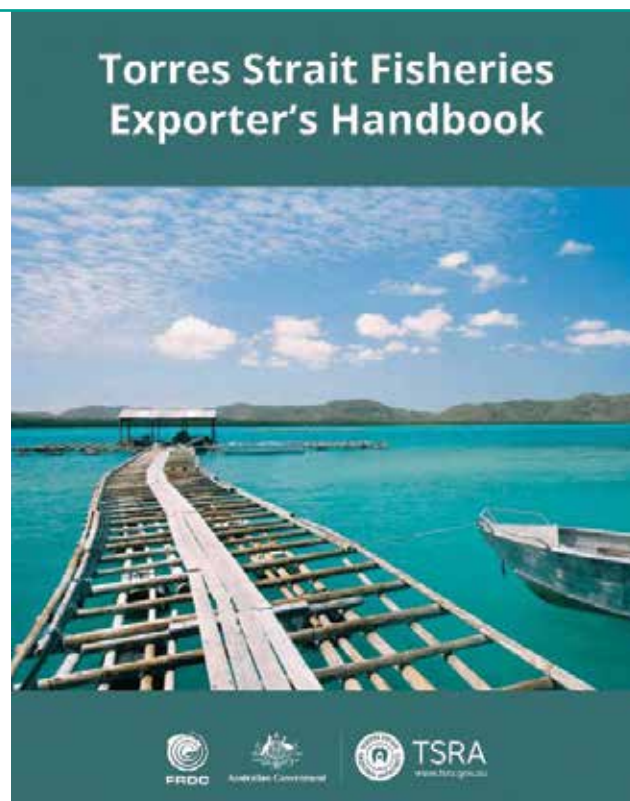
Torres Strait Seafood Export and Branding Project

The Fisheries Programme has undertaken a project to research viable options for Torres Strait Islanders to have greater ownership of the export supply chains to international markets and develop a Torres Strait seafood brand. Currently, the majority of seafood products are exported through Cairns by a third party, reducing the value captured by the fisheries in the region.

The project was finalised in July 2019 and identified gaps in capability and infrastructure. A key barrier for fishers is the complexity of information surrounding the establishment and access to export markets.

To address this gap, the project has published the *Torres Strait Fisheries Exporter's Handbook*. The handbook is a step by step guide through the exporting process; covering research and planning; regulations and documentation; and marketing and communication.

The handbook can be downloaded from the TSRA website: www.tsra.gov.au/the-tsra/programmes/fisheries or to request a hardcopy contact TSRA Fisheries Programme.



Torres Strait Fisheries Exporter's Handbook

2018 Fisheries Summit



Opening of the 2018 Torres Strait Fisheries Summit

The TSRA Fisheries Programme hosted the three-day Torres Strait Fisheries Summit from 28-30 August 2018 on Thursday Island. The summit brought together approximately 100 key stakeholders with a focus and interest in the Torres Strait fishing industry.

The summit included a panel with the TSRA Fisheries Regional Ownership Framework Steering Committee, and over 15 presentations from Traditional Owners, legal and industry experts, the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA), the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA), CSIRO scientists and business consultants.

TSRA Chairperson Mr Napau Pedro Stephen AM, provided the keynote speech at the summit, outlining his 2020 vision and asked participants to establish and commit to clear steps for the year 2020, in order to progress toward 100 per cent ownership.

The summit was successful in developing momentum in progressing the Fisheries Regional Ownership Framework model, the TRL Management Plan and saw the nomination and election of 21 Protected Zone Joint Authority (PZJA) Traditional Inhabitant Members across the kair, prawn, finfish, and hand-collectable fisheries.

The next Torres Strait Fisheries Summit is planned for 2020.

Fisheries Association Grant Funding – Common Funding Round 2 open in September

The TSRA holds two Common Funding Rounds (CFR) each year. The next application round will open in early September, for projects to be undertaken from 1 January to 30 June the following year.

Fisheries grants available in the CFR are for Fisher's Associations in the Torres Strait region, including for the Northern Peninsula Area communities of Bamaga and Seisia, to improve their governance and operational capacity.

A full explanation of what activities are covered by this grant are listed in the grant guidelines available on the TSRA website: www.tsra.gov.au/opportunities/grant-funding/fisheries



Fisheries Infrastructure Programme

In 2018-19 the Fisheries Programme has progressed the upgrade and development of new fishing infrastructure facilities in Torres Strait communities.

A significant component of this activity in this period was to engage with communities to identify and survey appropriate sites and to progress the required land use agreements and facility lease agreements with local councils. The design of new facilities appropriate to the Torres Strait region also commenced.

The first facility to be refurbished under the infrastructure package was the community freezer facility based on Erub.

The TSRA Fisheries and Economic Development Programmes have now developed an associated package of support for associations, trainees and the creation of more jobs. This package will also ensure that the Torres Strait Maritime Pathways Project (TSMPP) will now align closely to infrastructure facilities.



Protected Zone Joint Authority (PZJA) News

Meet your newly elected PZJA Traditional Inhabitant Members

At the Fisheries Summit in August 2018, an election process was held to appoint 21 new PZJA Traditional Inhabitant Members for a three year term. Below is your community nominated representatives on each of the PZJA advisory committees.

PZJA Committee	PZJA Traditional Inhabitant Member
Tropical Rock Lobster Resources Assessment Group (TRLRAG)	Harry Nona, James Ahmat, Aaron Tom, James Billy, Les Pitt
Tropical Rock Lobster Working Group (TRLWG)	Patrick Mills, James Ahmat, Aaron Tom, Mark David, Les Pitt
Finfish Working Group (FFWG)	Harry Nona, Frank Loban, Tenny Elisala, Hilda Mosby
Finfish Resource Assessment Group (FFRAG)	John Tabo, Tenny Elisala, Paul Lowatta, Kenneth Bedford, Rocky Stephen
Hand Collectables Working Group (HCWG)	Tony Salam, Frank Loban, Patrick Bonner, Michael Passi, Maluwap Nona
Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee (TSSAC)	Frank Loban, Gavin Mosby, Rocky Stephen, Patrick Mills, Maluwap Nona
Torres Strait Prawn Management Advisory Committee (TSPMAC)	Francis Pearson, Gavin Mosby, Mark David, William Stephen

PZJA Traditional Inhabitant Members will be working with their communities over the next three years to represent views and information at PZJA consultative forums, as well as travelling around their cluster communities to provide information about fisheries management discussions. The first of these meetings with communities is proposed for October-November 2019, and will be an opportunity for communities to speak directly to all PZJA Traditional Inhabitant Members representing their clusters.

The TSRA has focused on improving the support model provided to PZJA Traditional Inhabitant members, to ensure they are effectively prepared for meetings and are able to engage with their communities. With a continued focus on the capacity development of traditional inhabitant members, the TSRA held an induction workshop in February 2019 and a professional development workshop in May 2019.

TSRA Fisheries is looking forward to working with members and communities over the next three years to increase the effective engagement of Torres Strait in the management of the region's fisheries.



Community members at the 2018 Fisheries Summit with the previous TSRA Fisheries Portfolio Member, Mr Jerry Stephen

Back Row (left to right): Gavin Mosby, Ralph Pearson (non-PZJA member), Rocky Stephen, Mark David, William Stephen, Aaron Tom, Les Pitt, Tony Salam, Francis Pearson, John Tabo, Maluwap Nona, James Ahmat, Frank Loban
Front row (Left to right): Michael Passi, Harry Nona, TSRA Member for Ugar, Tenny Elisala

PZJA Induction Workshop



February – Induction workshop attendees

One Row (left to right): Hilda Mosby, Jon Tabo, Francis Pearson, Tenny Elisala, Selina Samai (TSRA Fisheries Programme), Professor Alistair Mcllgorm, Jerry Stephen, Les Pitt, Alona Holland (TSRA Fisheries Programme), Michael Passi, William Stephen, James Billy

This workshop was held on the 21-22 February on Horn Island with a focus on the PZJA framework for the management of Torres Strait Fisheries. Professor Alistair Mcllgorm from the Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security ran a two-day workshop that provided an overview of fisheries management, science, economics, and management tools.

The workshop also explored the role that Traditional Inhabitant Members play through engaging in PZJA advisory committee forums.

PZJA Traditional Inhabitant Members Professional Development Workshop

This workshop was held on Thursday Island from the 20-24 May with a focus on fisheries science expertise and leadership skills.

Fisheries science consultant Dr Ian Knuckey and National Seafood Industry Leadership Course convener Jill Briggs ran a three-day workshop focusing on fisheries science, management and data for effective representation and leadership.

Additional sessions were also held by other project teams to engage on:

- developing a new 2028 aquaculture strategy for northern Australia
- improving Indigenous engagement through better science communication
- improving methodologies for capturing Indigenous fishing data across Australia



*May Professional development workshop attendees
Back Row (left to right): Frank Loban, William Stephen, Daniel Saylor, James Ahmat, Jon Tabo, Patrick Bonner, Maluwap Nona
Front row (Left to right): James Billy, Les Pitt, Harry Nona, Michael Passi, Aaron Tom.*

Developmental Permits Policy

In April 2019 the PZJA agreed to review the use of Developmental Permits for training purposes in Torres Strait Fisheries and develop a new policy. The PZJA (led by the TSRA) is undertaking consultation to understand the high-level expectations and aspirations of industry to inform the drafting of the new Policy. It will inform the PZJA how to assess and grant future permits and to increase transparency about the process and decisions made. The PZJA has advised that no new Developmental Permits will be issued for training purposes until a policy is agreed.

The TSRA is working towards having a draft policy out for community comment in September 2019. If you would like to discuss or provide any feedback please contact the TSRA Fisheries Team.



TSRA Maritime Pathways to Increase Economic Development

The Maritime industry is the leading industry in the region and has been identified by the TSRA Board as the focal industry to increase employment. The Economic Development Programme funds various Maritime pathway projects to provide training and employment opportunities to achieve this.

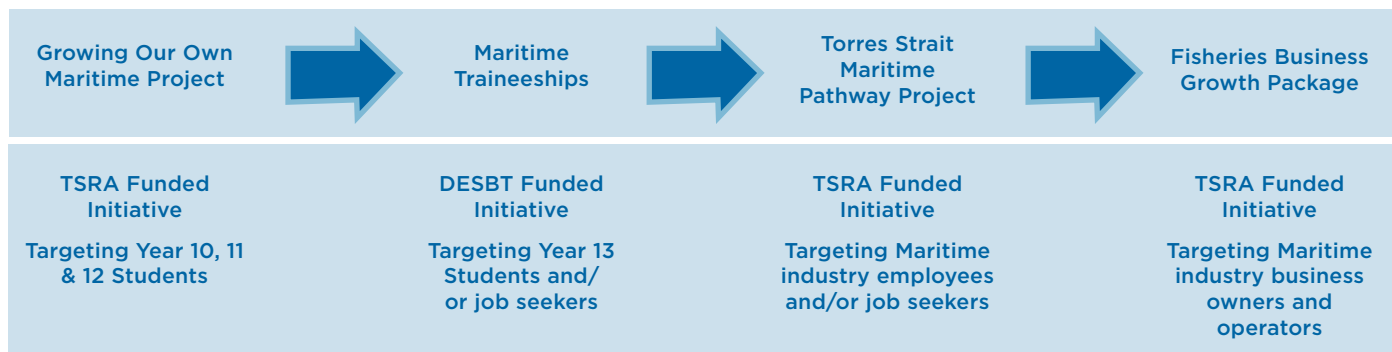


Figure 1. Maritime Pathway projects in the Torres Strait

Growing Our Own (Tagai Transitions) Maritime Project

The project is funded by the TSRA and delivered in partnership with the Tagai State College, TAFE, Queensland Government and My Pathway. The project provides students with industry certifications and has resulted in over 20 student's transition from school to work in the Maritime Industry. Students complete task books and obtain the required sea-time to gain the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) issued Coxswain and Marine Engine Driver III qualifications as part of this initiative.

Maritime Traineeships

While the Maritime Traineeships are not funded by the TSRA, it is used as a pathway to employment and further training for the Growing Our Own graduates. Since 2017, this initiative has seen over 25 Trainees transition into employment in the Maritime industry.

Torres Strait Maritime Pathway Project (TSMPP)

The TSMPP aims to enhance the maritime skills and capability of Indigenous people and create career pathways in related industries. The 2018/19 financial year has seen the TSMPP focus on providing Coxswain training to TIB license holders, in response the imminent expiration of the AMSA exemption to hold this by 30 June 2020. So far the TSMPP has provided over 250 coxswain licenses, with 81 of these issued in the last financial year.

Fisheries Business Growth Package

This package of support is designed to grow commercially-viable Maritime businesses that are owned and operated by Indigenous people in the region. It supports mature businesses and proposals with a well-developed business case.

More information about these projects can be found at: www.tsra.gov.au/the-tsra/programmes/economic-development



Participants of Growing Our Own – Tagai Transitions Maritime Project 2019



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