



Senator the Hon. Richard Colbeck
Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources
Senator for Tasmania

M E D I A R E L E A S E

Torres Strait Tropical Rock Lobster Fishery Management Plan to be in place by 1 December 2018

The Protected Zone Joint Authority (PZJA) has reaffirmed its intention to have the Torres Strait Tropical Rock Lobster (TRL) Fishery Management Plan in place by 1 December this year.

The PZJA has also further considered implementing catch share splits between the Traditional Inhabitant Boat (TIB) sector and the Transferrable Vessel Holder (TVH) sector for the 2018-19 TRL fishing season.

The PZJA will consult with stakeholders on a draft Fisheries Management Instrument that gives effect to the sectoral catch shares for the coming season.

The PZJA is comprised of the Commonwealth Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, the Chair of the Torres Strait Regional Authority and the Queensland Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries.

The Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, and Chair of the PZJA, Senator the Hon. Richard Colbeck, welcomed the introduction of a quota management system into the TRL Fishery.

“A quota management system will better ensure the sustainability of TRL stocks and encourage greater business efficiency and profitability than the current management arrangements,” Senator Colbeck said.

“In late November, the PZJA will meet again to consider outcomes of consultation on the Fisheries Management Instrument with a view to putting in place both the TRL Management Plan and an agreed sectoral split.”

Chair of the Torres Strait Regional Authority, Pedro Stephen AM, said he was acutely aware that traditional commercial fishers have for some time wanted to fish their share of the TRL catch.

“A management plan is the best way to ensure this happens,” Mr Stephen said.

The Queensland Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries, Mark Furner MP, said he supported the views of his fellow PZJA members, noting that the east coast TRL Fishery was already managed by quota.

“Moving ahead with the Management Plan will provide certainty for future management of the TRL Fishery, which is so vital to the community of the Torres Strait.”

All PZJA members restated their support for the ownership aspiration of Torres Strait Islanders and Aboriginal people of Torres Strait to own 100 per cent of the TRL commercial fishing entitlements, and acknowledged that this was best pursued through a quota management plan.

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