

FISHERIES MANAGEMENT ACT 1998

THE NATIONAL LOBSTER FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN

THE NATIONAL FISHERIES AUTHORITY, by virtue of the power conferred by Section 28 of the *Fisheries Management Act 1998* and all powers it enabling, hereunder provide the following fisheries management plan to supercede previous plan gazetted in 1998 on gazettal number G47 under the *Fisheries Act 1994*, to take effect on and from the date of approval by the Minister.

1. CITATIONS

This Management Plan shall be cited as 'The National Lobster Fishery Management Plan' (Management Plan).

2. INTERPRETATION

This management Plan, unless the contrary intention appears-

"Authority" means the National Fisheries Authority'

"berried female" means female lobster with eggs attached to the setae

"Board" means the National Fisheries Board;

"Convention" means the United Nation Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10th December 1982

"mm" means millimetre;

"minimum size limit" means the smallest size which may be captured legally;

"Minister" means the National Minister for Fisheries;

"non citizen company" means company other than owned by Papua New Guinea citizen with 100% equity;

"traditional resource owners" means families with fishermen or single fisherman who have traditionally fished for lobster in near-shore coastal waters and are recognised by their people as having traditional ownership rights to lobster resources within those waters.

3. SCOPE

The managing Plan shall-

- (a) Apply to all fisheries waters of Papua New Guinea where tropical lobsters are harvested for commercial purposes; and
- (b) Apply to all species of the family Palinuridae, and Scyllidae specifically the following:
 - (i) the double-spined lobster *Panulirus penicillatus*;
 - (ii) the painted lobster *Panulirus versicolor*;

- (iii) the long legged lobster *Panulirus longipes*;
 - (iv) the scalloped lobster *Panulirus homarus*;
 - (v) the ornate or tropical rock lobster *Panulirus ornatus*;
 - (vi) the slipper lobster or bugs *Thenus orientalis*.
- (c) Shall cover fishing for lobster by the following methods;
- (i) Free diving;
 - (ii) Hookah;
 - (iii) SCUBA;
 - (iv) Day or night (in light of a torch or any other sources of light) and catching by hand, scoop net and spear.

4. OBJECTIVES

The objective of this management plan is to-

- (a) Manage the fishery so that the stock sizes move annually towards that which will give maximum sustainable yield; and
- (b) provide sustainable economic benefit; and
- (c) promote sustainable fisheries development practices; and
- (d) manage the fishery with a precautionary approach.

5. PRECAUTIONARY APPROACHES TO FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

Consistent with regional and international agreements and arrangements including the Convention's management principles, precautionary approaches of management shall apply in the management of the species specified in this management plan in the following manner:

- (a) In the absence of adequate scientific data, the National Fisheries Authority shall take into account any uncertainties with respect to the size and productivity of the stock, of the management reference points such as maximum sustainable yield, the level and distribution of fishing mortality, and the impact of fishing activities on associated and dependent species, and including climatic, oceanic, environmental and socio-economic conditions.
- (b) The absence of adequate scientific information shall not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take measures to protect the target and non-target species in the lobster fishery.
- (c) The precautionary approach shall be, based on the best scientific information available, including all appropriate techniques and aimed at setting stock-specific minimum standards for conservation and management.
- (d) The recommended total allowable catch for each province specified are a precautionary measures to be based upon past records of

lobster catch and preliminary biological information on the stock for the specific province or fishery.

- (e) In managing the fishery, the Authority shall consider the associated ecosystems in specific provinces or fishery. The Authority shall develop data collection and research projects to assess the impact of fishing on non-target species and their environment, adopt plans as necessary to ensure the conservation of non-target species and consider the protection of habitats of special concern.

6. **MANAGEMENT MEASURES**

The following management measures shall be set for each province or fishery to realise the objectives in Section 5, and shall include the following:

- (a)
 - (i) Licences shall not be issued to non-citizen companies or individuals.
 - (ii) There shall be a maximum number of exporters and buyers licences set for each province
 - (iii) All licences shall be endorsed by the respective provincial authorities before submission to the Board for consideration and approval.
 - (iv) All licence holders however, shall have their licence automatically terminated if they breach licence conditions or breach Fisheries Regulations or breach the provisions of this Management Plan.
 - (v) All lobster collected in a particular province shall be exported from that province. No product shall be moved to another province for sale without clearance from the respective Provincial Fisheries Authorities.
- (b) **Size Limits**
 - (i) All species of spiny rock lobster with a minimum tail length of 100mm to total length (midsection between the eyes to tail) of 175mm shall not be harvested and exported.
 - (ii) Slipper lobster with minimum carapace length (midsection between the eyes to the base of the carapace cover) of 52mm shall not be harvested and exported.
 - (iii) All species of spiny rock lobster with a minimum of 169gram tail weight and 409 gram total weight shall not be harvested and exported.
- (c) **Restriction on Egg-bearing females**
 Berried (egg-bearing) female lobster shall not be taken at any time, to protect and increase the number of recruitment of lobster.

- (d) Gear restriction
Specific gear restriction may apply to specific provinces and fishery in accordance with specific fishery plans for the province or fishery and in accordance with restrictions already in existence under the fisheries Regulation.
- (e) Special Restrictions
There shall be restriction on the species of lobster caught in accordance with specific licence conditions.
- (f) Total Allowable catch
Total allowable catch (TAC) shall be set for each province or fishery based on the estimated maximum sustainable yield as qualified by relevant economic or environmental factors, fishing patterns and related factor. A notice notifying of the TAC for each fishery will be published in the *National Gazette* by the Minister upon the recommendation of the Authority.
- (g) Closed Season and Closed Areas
Whenever required, closed season and closed areas shall be set by the Minister upon the recommendation by the Authority.
- (h) Market Standards
Marketing standards shall be based on the standards established by the relevant authorities and marketing requirement.

7. MONITORING

Provision of fisheries data

- (i) In accordance with the Act, licensed buyers shall submit data on catch and effort, as well as marketing data, for the purpose of this management plan.
- (ii) Licensed lobster buyers shall be required to keep receipts for lobster (number of individuals and their total weight) and the area where the lobsters were caught, number of fishermen, date of receipt and price paid.
- (iii) Licensed lobster buyers shall send the completed receipt books and sales report to the Information Registry of the National Fisheries Authority on a monthly basis.

- (iv) The Authority and the Provincial Fisheries Divisions shall work towards the estimation of the sustainable harvest in each province or fishery.

8. RESEARCH PLAN

There shall be a research plan with research programmes jointly developed with provinces to monitor lobster fisheries and to make recommendations for any relevant changes for improvement of this Management Plan.

9. SPECIAL CONSIDERATION FOR TRADITIONAL RESOURCE OWNERS

- (I) Special consideration shall be given to the traditional resource owners in order to avoid adverse impact on traditional and small-scale fisheries. Where possible, traditional management measures shall be documented and submitted to the Authority for gazettal by the Minister after consultation with the traditional resource owners and the Provincial Government.

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Endorsed this day of,
1999

Chairman
National Fisheries Board

Approved this day of,
1999

Ron Ganarafo
Minister for Fisheries