

### **PAPER No. 9: Administration principles for the management of Northern Territory Fisheries**

#### **Executive Summary**

All management arrangements and the administration of the Northern Territories Fisheries must be cost efficient and effective. Management controls should promote and encourage innovation, seek to place minimum costs and or restrictions on industry while ensuring we do not risk compromising the principles of ESD (see NTSC Policy Paper No. 1: Ecologically Sustainable Development).

#### **NTSC Policy Position:**

The NTSC believes that any administration or management arrangements used in commercial fisheries should:

- Provide for economic efficiency (see NTSC Policy Paper No. 4: Preferred Management Arrangements).
- Treat commercial fishers equally.
- Be simple, cost effective and transparent.
- Be effective having a specific goal and a documented explanation how the measure operates and be reviewed periodically.
- Be developed in conjunction with commercial fishers.
- Include an agreed consultation protocol.

#### **Issues**

##### **Economic efficiency**

Where possible management controls should avoid using measures which place additional costs on industry. With respect to controlling catch the council believes this is best achieved through the use of Individual Transferable Quota (ITQs) as outlined in NTSC Policy 4 Preferred Management Arrangements. Additional input controls will still be required in most fisheries to manage issues such as bycatch and environmental impacts. It is important that in these cases the economic impact of any measures is kept to a minimum.

Within agreed environmental boundaries industry should determine how they catch their fish. Encouraging innovation by avoiding input controls will ensure industry operates efficiently (see NTSC Policy Paper No. 4: Preferred Management Arrangements.).

There is an economic incentive for fishermen to improve their fishing operations and to adopt more efficient technology. Management plans, should aim to harness these incentives rather than restricting efficiency.

### **Equity in Management measures**

To ensure management measures promote efficiency and do not discriminate between operators it is important that any administration or management measures used treat fishers equally. The council supports the following equity principles for the management of commercial fisheries:

- Similar licenses treated equally on allocation (see policy paper 3 Commercial Access Allocation)
- Not discriminating on the type of ownership (owner – operator / company / corporation etc)
- Ensure that government fees/levies reflect the magnitude of commercial access but not otherwise discriminate between operators

### **Administrative simplicity and transparency**

The council believes that both administration and the implementation of any management measures should be as simple and well defined. This includes licensing and the maintenance of any quota registers as well as the implementation on any management measures. All aspects of fisheries administration, management, compliance, licensing etc should all be as simple and cost effective as possible.

### **Management effectiveness**

To ensure and review the effectiveness of management controls it is essential that any measure introduced has a clear statement of its object and a documented explanation of measure will meet its objective. It is also vital that measures are periodically reviewed to ensure they are being effective in meeting the desired objective.

Through time a fisheries regulations can become very convoluted and where possible historical measures should all be reviewed to ensure their ongoing applicability to the fishery.

### **Consultation**

Effective consultation between industry and government in relation to the management of fisheries is essential. No matter how appropriate the management controls may be, they will not be effective unless the industry understands them and also understands the reasons why they are necessary.

### **Rationale**

Cost efficient and effective management arrangements are essential to the administration of fisheries resources. By adhering to these simple administration principles, managers and stakeholders can ensure fisheries are not burdened with considerable unnecessary cost risking the industries viability.