

**Surveillance Remote Audit Report for  
The Australian Northern Prawn (Twin, triple and quad otter trawl)  
Fishery:**

**Brown tiger prawn (*Penaeus esculentus*)**

**Grooved tiger prawn (*P. semisulcatus*)**

**Blue endeavour prawn (*Metapenaeus endeavouri*)**

**Red endeavour prawn (*M. ensis*)**

**White banana prawn (*Fenneropenaeus merguensis*);**

**Red-legged banana prawn (*Fenneropenaeus indicus*)**

**Twin, triple and quad otter trawl**

**MRAG-MF-1492**



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16-17 October, 2014

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Document template tracking no.: MRAG-MSC-7e-v1

**MSC reference standards:**

MSC Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Fishing Version 1.1

MSC Certification Requirements Version 1.2

MSC Guidance to Certification Requirements Version 1.1

MSC Accreditation Manual Version 5

<b>General Information</b>	
<b>Fishery Name:</b>	Australian Northern Prawn Trawl (Twin, triple and quad otter trawl) Fishery.
<b>Unit(s) of Certification:</b>	Brown tiger prawn ( <i>Penaeus esculentus</i> ) Grooved tiger prawn ( <i>P. semisulcatus</i> ) Blue endeavour prawn ( <i>Metapenaeus endeavouri</i> ) Red endeavour prawn ( <i>M. ensis</i> ) White banana prawn ( <i>Fenneropenaeus merguensis</i> ); Red-legged banana prawn ( <i>F. indicus</i> )
<b>Geographical boundaries</b>	The Northern Prawn Fishery (NPF) occupies an area of 771,000 km <sup>2</sup> off Australia's northern coast. The Fishery extends from the low water mark to the outer edge of the Australian fishing zone (AFZ) along approximately 6,000 km of coastline between Cape York in Queensland 142° 09' 00" E and Cape Londonderry in Western Australia 126° 58' 00" E.
<b>Certification Date:</b>	November 2012
<b>Certification Expiry Date:</b>	November 2017
<b>Surveillance Assessment Team:</b>	Principle 1, Principle 2, Principle 3. Richard Banks
<b>Remote Audit Date:</b>	16-17 October 2013
<b>Surveillance Stage:</b>	Second surveillance audit
<b>Surveillance Frequency:</b>	Annual

Project Code:	US1492
Issue ref:	Second Surveillance Audit – Client Draft
Date of issue:	Xx
Prepared by:	Richard Banks
Checked/Approved by:	RJT

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## Summary

The conclusion of the audit is that the certificate for the Northern Prawn Trawl (Twin, triple and quad otter trawl) Fishery should be extended for another year. The audit found that the Client Action Plan is being implemented, and that three of the four milestones have been met before time, with the result that 3 out of the 4 conditions are now closed. Three of these conditions were set specifically for the Red legged banana prawn fishery.

### 1 Clarify if any new information warrants a review of the assessment scoring.

There is no information that would prompt a review of the assessment scoring.

## 2 Introduction

This report outlines the process and outcome of the second annual surveillance audit for the MSC certified Australian Northern Prawn Fishery (NPF). The NPF is located in the Australian EEZ, but also inside the boundaries of the States of Northern Territory, Queensland and Western Australia. The fishery uses twin, triple and quad otter trawl to target Brown tiger prawns (*Penaeus esculentus*), Grooved tiger prawns (*P. semisulcatus*), Blue endeavour prawns (*Metapenaeus endeavouri*), Red endeavour prawns (*M. ensis*), White banana prawns (*Fenneropenaeus merguensis*) and Red-legged banana prawns (*Fenneropenaeus indicus*).

The fishery is managed by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) in accordance with the *Fisheries Management Act 1991* (FMA) of, *Fisheries Management Regulations 1992*, *Fisheries Administration Act 1991* and *Fisheries (Administration) Regulations 1992*. Commonwealth-managed fisheries are also subject to aspects of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000*. In particular, fisheries are periodically assessed for compliance with the Guidelines for the Ecologically Sustainable Management of Fisheries.

The fishery is conducted by members of the Northern Prawn Fishery Industry (Pty) Ltd (NPF IPL). There are 52 vessels in the fishery.

The NPF comprises three distinct sub-fisheries: Tiger prawn multispecies sub-fishery (targeting brown tiger prawn (*Penaeus esculentus*), grooved tiger prawn (*P. semisulcatus*), blue endeavour prawn (*Metapenaeus endeavouri*), and red endeavour prawn (*M. ensis*); the Banana prawn (*Fenneropenaeus merguensis*) trawl sub-fishery; and the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf (JBG) Red-legged banana prawn (*Fenneropenaeus indicus*) sub-fishery. All sub-fisheries target prawns using twin, triple and quad otter trawls.

Prawn trawling is an active fishing method which involves towing a conical-shaped net spread open by two or four steel or timber otter boards over the seabed, commonly called otter trawling. Ground chains are also used on the nets to stimulate prawns into the trawl mouth. Vessels in the NPF may tow a range of nets in a variety of configurations. These are regulated by the *Northern Prawn Fishery Management Plan 1995* (the Management Plan) and relevant determinations. In addition to the main nets, a small “try-net” is used to test the potential catches for a given area. All trawl nets (other than try-nets) in the NPF are required to be fitted with approved Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) and Bycatch Reduction Devices (BRDs).

Most of the vessels in the NPF are purpose built steel boats and range in length from 17 m to 28 m. All NPF boats have modern, sophisticated catch handling, packing and freezing capabilities as well as wet (brine) holding facilities. All vessels use electronic aids such as colour echo sounders and Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and plotters. Satellite phones and fax equipment is used by most vessels and many have introduced on-board computing facilities, as well as electronic log books. All vessels are required by legislation to have an operational Vessel Monitoring System (VMS). Prawns account for >95% of the landed catch in the three fisheries combined. Landings of banana prawn (white *Fenneropenaeus merguensis* and red-legged *F. indicus*), totaled 3,050 in 2013, compared with 4,943 tonnes in 2012. The two tiger prawns (brown (*Penaeus esculentus*) and grooved (*P. semisulcatus*)) totaled 2,215 in 2013 compared with 1,203 tonnes in 2013, and endeavour prawns (blue (*Metapenaeus endeavouri*) and red (*M. ensis*)) totaled 487 tonnes in 2013 compared with 493 tonnes in 2012. The catch of red legged banana prawn from the JBG over the same period totaled 380 tonnes in 2013 compared to 195 tonnes (12.4% of the total banana prawn catch).

White banana prawns are caught mainly during the day in the Gulf of Carpentaria east of Arnhem Land and on isolated grounds along the Arnhem Land coast in < 20 m depth. The white banana prawns form dense aggregations (“boils”) that may be located by spotters in planes, who direct the trawlers to them. The highest catches are taken in areas offshore from the nursery areas based around the mangrove forests.

Tiger prawns are taken mainly at night in the southern and western Gulf of Carpentaria and along the Arnhem Land coast. The tiger prawn fishing grounds are often close to those of banana prawns, but the highest catches are in areas near the nursery coastal seagrass beds. A daylight trawl ban is in place during the second (tiger prawn) season.

Blue and red endeavour prawns are caught as retained species of the tiger prawn sub-fishery.

Red-legged banana prawns are caught in deeper waters of the JBG (45m – 85m). The sub-fishery takes place during neap tides, with fishing occurring for up to 14 days a month (on average). The sub-fishery was closed during the first fishing season (the white banana prawn season) from 2007 to 2010 inclusive. Catches are usually higher from August to November.

There are two closed seasons each year at which time there is no fishing throughout the area. These are: 1st December to 1st April, and 15th June to 1st August.

Principal support organisations include the Northern Prawn Fishing Industry Pty Ltd (NPFIDL) and AFMA. The principal research organization is the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO). Other stakeholders identified in the assessment included the NGOs, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the Australian Marine Conservation Society (AMCS).

In preparation for this surveillance audit, stakeholders were contacted by email on 4 September, 2013 and by notice on the MSC website, and invited to submit comments. The notification of the surveillance audit was also published on the MSC website on the 9 September, 2014. The audit was carried out remotely by the surveillance assessor, Richard Banks, commencing 9 October 2014. Two requests were made for variations based on the fact that material was available which would indicate progress, without the need for face to face meetings. No formal submissions have been made but the document was circulated to WWF and CSIRO for comment.

### 3 The Surveillance Process

The assessment processes followed the determination of the surveillance level based on Table C3 and C4 are below. MRAG is required to adopt the highest score for all units where the fishery has more than one unit of certification with different surveillance scores. Three of the six units of certification scored 2 or more on Table C4, resulting in annual on-site surveillance, while the other three scored 1.

Table C3. Criteria to determine surveillance score:

#### **Brown tiger prawn (*Penaeus esculentus*)**

Criteria	Surveillance score
Default Assessment Tree used	
Yes	0
No	2
Number of open conditions	
Zero conditions	0
Between 1-5 conditions	1
More than 5	2
Principle Level scores	
>=85	0
<85	2
Conditions on outcome PIs	
Yes	2
No	0

#### **Grooved tiger prawn (*P. semisulcatus*)**

Criteria	Surveillance score
Default Assessment Tree used	
Yes	0
No	2
Number of open conditions	
Zero conditions	0
Between 1-5 conditions	1
More than 5	2
Principle Level scores	
>=85	0
<85	2
Conditions on outcome PIs	
Yes	2
No	0

#### Blue endeavour prawn (*Metapenaeus endeavouri*)

Criteria	Surveillance score
Default Assessment Tree used	
Yes	0
No	2
Number of open conditions	
Zero conditions	0
Between 1-5 conditions	1
More than 5	2
Principle Level scores	
>=85	0
<85	2
Conditions on outcome PIs	
Yes	2
No	0

#### Red endeavour prawn (*M. ensis*)

Criteria	Surveillance score
Default Assessment Tree used	
Yes	0
No	2
Number of open conditions	
Zero conditions	0
Between 1-5 conditions	1
More than 5	2
Principle Level scores	
>=85	0
<85	2

Conditions on outcome PIs	
Yes	2
No	0

**Banana prawn (*Fenneropenaeus merguensis*)**

Criteria	Surveillance score
Default Assessment Tree used	
Yes	0
No	2
Number of open conditions	
Zero conditions	0
Between 1-5 conditions	1
More than 5	2
Principle Level scores	
>=85	0
<85	2
Conditions on outcome PIs	
Yes	2
No	0

**Red-legged banana prawn (*F. indicus*)**

Criteria	Surveillance score
Default Assessment Tree used	
Yes	0
No	2
Number of open conditions	
Zero conditions	0
Between 1-5 conditions	1
More than 5	2
Principle Level scores	
>=85	0
<85	2
Conditions on outcome PIs	
Yes	2
No	0

Table C4: Surveillance Level

Surveillance score from Table C3)	Surveillance Level	Years after certification or recertification			
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
2 or more	Normal surveillance	On-site	On-site	On-site	On-site

	audit		surveillance audit	surveillance audit	surveillance audit	surveillance audit & recertification site visit
1	Remote surveillance	Option 1	Off-site surveillance audit	On-site surveillance audit	Off-site surveillance audit	On-site surveillance audit & recertification site visit
		Option 2	Off-site surveillance audit	Off-site surveillance audit	On-site surveillance audit	
0	Reduced Surveillance		Review of new information	On-site surveillance audit	Review of new information	On-site surveillance audit & recertification site visit

The second annual surveillance audit was carried out remotely. No requests were received from stakeholders for verbal consultation. The assessor communicated with Annie Jarrett (Chief Executive Officer of the NPF Industry P/L); Brodie Macdonald, Manager, Northern Prawn, Torres Prawn & Western trawl fisheries, AFMA and Rik Buckworth, Mark Tonks and Rodrigo Bustamante (Research Scientists, CSIRO), Peter Trott and Cameron Dixon (WWF, Australia).

Discussions covered all issues as laid out in annex CG of the MSC Certification Requirements, including the principal changes occurring to the fishery within the second year of certification and the outcomes as outlined in the Client Action Plan (CAP) against the conditions set.

## 4 Information Sources

### 4.1 Major changes notified by the client since the full assessment

There were no major changes highlighted for the fishery, but it is pertinent to summarise the key points.

#### Stock status

The Tiger prawn stocks remain well above  $B_{MSY}$  (Buckworth (a) *et al*, 2013), with the fishery moving to a Target Reference Point of Maximum Economic Yield.

Blue endeavours remain significantly above MSY and well above the LRP (Buckworth (a) *et al*, 2013).

Red endeavours form part of the harvest strategy, but are not specifically targeted. This species is however still included as part of the tiger prawn catch triggers (Buckworth (a) *et al*, 2013);

Red legged banana prawns are above MEY in response to reduced levels of catch and effort (5 vessels), compared to the mid-1990s when effort levels may have been unsustainable (Buckworth (b) *et al*, 2013).

The Banana prawns stock is fluctuating around an average  $B_{MSY}$  (Buckworth *et al* 2013a). Trigger limits for this species have been set at sufficiently conservative levels, and some portion of the spawning stock is thought to be protected from fishing in unfished inshore areas.

### **Harvest strategy**

An MEY banana prawn catch trigger limit was introduced for the first time in the 2014 season. There were no other changes to the harvest strategy.

### **Bycatch information, status and management**

Since 2011, the Crew Member Observer (CMO) programme has met the minimum target of 2,350 trawls monitored across the NPF as a whole to detect a significant decline in ETP and 'at risk' bycatch species. JBG coverage increased significantly in 2013 to cover 611 trawls, and 551 sea days, comprising 155 Scientific Observer and 396 Crew Member Observers. These results are likely to provide a statistically significant estimate which will support the proposed SAFE assessment.

The assessors drew from referenced material (emails, notices, research submissions, published and draft documents and personal communications) to support the findings in the report.

## **5 MSC Certification validation requirements**

### **5.1 Public claims made by the client**

The client uses the MSC logo on its website (<http://npfindustry.com.au/>), and reference to MSC certified prawns has been used in specific product promotions and cooking programmes. The only claim by the client is that the fishery is MSC certified and is a sustainable fishery. No unsupported claims are made.

### **5.2 Review of any personnel changes in science, management or industry**

There have been no changes to the organisations managing the fishery, nor the main personnel involved in the respective organisations, NPF industry Pty Ltd, AFMA and CSIRO, NORMAC and the NPF Resource Assessment Group.

### 5.3 Review of any changes to the scientific base of information, including stock assessments

There were no major changes to the scientific base of information, including stock assessments.

## 6 Progress in implementing the client action plan

### Condition 1: Red-legged banana prawn (*F. indicus*): Bycatch Information

PI	2.2.3 Bycatch species: Information/Monitoring
Guidepost not met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information is adequate to support a partial strategy to manage main bycatch species</li> </ul>
Condition	<p><b>Condition 1:</b> Within three years of certification, AFMA and NPFI must be in a position to demonstrate that the second SG of SG 80 requirements are met:</p> <p>Information is sufficient to estimate outcome status with respect to biologically based limits.</p> <p>Milestones in achieving this end are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By the first surveillance audit, undertake an assessment of the feasibility of a monitoring programme using the results of the existing ERA to extend the observer programme to the JBG fishery;</li> <li>By the second surveillance audit, provide an analysis for the red-legged banana prawn fishery which demonstrates that the available information (logbook and observer) is sufficient to estimate outcome status for at-risk bycatch species with respect to biologically based limits.</li> <li>If the available information is insufficient, implement, by the third surveillance audit, measures to increase bycatch monitoring data gathering.</li> </ul>
Requirement by Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By the first surveillance audit, undertake an assessment of the feasibility of a monitoring programme using the results of the existing ERA to extend the observer programme to the JBG fishery;</li> </ul>
Requirement by year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By the second surveillance audit, provide an analysis for the red-legged banana prawn fishery which demonstrates that the available information (logbook and observer) is sufficient to estimate outcome status for at-risk bycatch species with respect to biologically based limits.</li> </ul>
Action Plan by Year 1	Prior to the first surveillance audit, AFMA and NPFI will initiate a desktop study to determine at risk species, drawing from the existing ERA, using information that may be relevant to the JBG fishery, and earlier work specific to the JBG.
Action Plan by Year 2	By the second surveillance audit, provide an analysis for the red-legged banana prawn fishery which demonstrates that the available information (logbook and observer) is sufficient to estimate outcome status for at-risk bycatch species with respect to biologically based limits.
Actions by NPFIPL and management organisation	Prior to the first audit, FRDC had provided funding (Jarret, 2013) to evaluate the appropriateness of the current data available and how this might be strengthened to support a risk assessment. Scientific and Crew Member Observer deployment was increased significantly to allow for the collection of substantive data to support the SAFE assessment, which is now to be carried out in 2015. This meets the third milestone set for year 3.
Evidence Provided	Given low encounter and retention rates, Jarrett et al (2013) concluded that it is unlikely that the fishery has significant impact on the species, nor would monitoring the catches for this species be likely to provide any information on the status of the species. Nevertheless, 611 trawl

	were observed, in 2013, including 215 trawls by scientific observers and 396 by Crew Member Observers over 551 fishing days.
Conclusion	<p>The assessor concluded that years 1, and 32 milestones had been met.</p> <p>A SAFE assessment, recommended for 2014 is underway but not complete. It is a stated output in the NPF Research Plan and is expected to be complete by Year 3.</p> <p>The assessor concludes that this condition will be met if the SAFE assessment demonstrates that there is sufficient information to support a scientifically robust analysis (P2.2.3 (b)). However, if the SAFE Identifies any at risk species, there will be a need to reassess required management action under P 2.2.1.</p>
Recommendation	To await the outcome of the SAFE assessment to determine if the data collected is sufficient to support a scientifically robust analysis.

### Condition 2: Red-legged banana prawn (*F. indicus*): Habitat Information

PI	2.4.3: Habitat: information/Monitoring
Guidepost not met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The nature, distribution and vulnerability of all main habitat types in the fishery area are known at a level of detail relevant to the scale and intensity of the fishery.</li> <li>Sufficient data are available to allow the nature of the impacts of the fishery on habitat types to be identified and there is reliable information on the spatial extent of interaction, and the timing and location of use of the fishing gear.</li> </ul>
Condition	<p><b>Condition 2:</b> Within four years of certification, AFMA must be in a position to demonstrate that the SG 80 requirements are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The nature, distribution and vulnerability of all main habitat types in the fishery area are known at a level of detail relevant to the scale and intensity of the fishery;</li> <li>Sufficient data are available to allow the nature of the impacts of the fishery on habitat types to be identified and there is reliable information on the spatial extent of interaction, and the timing and location of use of the fishing gear.</li> </ul> <p>Milestones in achieving this end are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By the first surveillance audit, review the current information available</li> <li>By the second surveillance audit provide a detailed plan to identify the nature, distribution and vulnerability of main habitat types in the JBP fishery,</li> </ul> <p>The results on benthic interactions should be available from the second annual review onwards (and used to assist the development of additional management mitigation measures, if deemed appropriate).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The adequacy of information will be evaluated by the third surveillance audit, and management actions, if required, implemented by the fourth surveillance audit.</li> </ul>
Requirement by Year 1	By the first surveillance audit, review the current information available
Action Plan by Year 1	By the time of the first surveillance audit, AFMA, NPFI and CSIRO will have reviewed the current available information for JBG to determine existing knowledge of the main habitat types, and to provide the basis for formulating a plan which encompasses the JBG into future habitat assessment work.
Actions Year 2-3	The condition was closed following the first annual surveillance audit. No further actions are required

Conclusion	This condition is now closed
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Condition 3: (*F. indicus*) Ecosystem: Information/monitoring

PI	2.5.3: Habitat information
Guidepost not met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information is adequate to broadly understand the key elements of the ecosystem.</li> <li>The main functions of the Components (i.e. target, Bycatch, Retained and ETP species and Habitats) in the ecosystem are known.</li> <li>Sufficient data continue to be collected to detect any increase in risk level (e.g. due to changes in the outcome indicator scores or the operation of the fishery or the effectiveness of the measures).</li> </ul>
Condition	<p><b>Condition 3:</b> Within four years of certification, AFMA must be in a position to demonstrate that the SG 80 requirements are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information is adequate to broadly understand the key elements of the ecosystem.</li> <li>The main functions of the components (i.e. target, Bycatch, Retained and ETP species and Habitats) in the ecosystem are known.</li> <li>Sufficient data continue to be collected to detect any increase in risk level (e.g. due to changes in the outcome indicator scores or the operation of the fishery the effectiveness of the measures).</li> </ul> <p>Milestones in achieving this end are:</p> <p>By the first surveillance audit, confirm that information is adequate to assess species interactions in the JBG sub fishery.</p> <p>By the second surveillance audit, provide details of the main functions of the components, drawing upon other ecosystem research conducted for the NPF as appropriate. If extrapolation from other studies proves infeasible, develop and implement a research plan to address data gaps regarding key ecosystem elements and main functions in the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf.</p> <p>By the third surveillance audit, provide an assessment of how ongoing data collection programmes can provide indicators of adverse ecosystem consequences and assure through monitoring that such consequences will be identified or If ongoing data collection programmes are insufficient, develop and implement a plan to expand monitoring to include ecosystem functions by the time of fourth surveillance audit.</p>
Requirement by Year 1	By the first surveillance audit, confirm that information is adequate to assess species Interactions in the JBG sub fishery.
Action Plan by Year 1	By the first surveillance audit, NPFI and AFMA will have initiated a desk top study to evaluate what information is available to support assessment of the JBG ecosystem. This will include drawing from information available on target, retained, bycatch (Condition 1) and Habitat (Condition 2) interactions.
Actions Year 2-3	The condition was closed following the first annual surveillance audit. No further actions are required
Actions by NPFIPL and management organisation	Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) provided funding support to CSIRO and NPF Industry Pty Ltd (Jarrett <i>et al.</i> , 2013).
Conclusion	This condition is now closed
Recommendation	The previous recommendation to continually assess whether ongoing data collection programmes are sufficient to meet (at a minimum) the SG 80 requirements of P2.5.3, or if not, to expand the monitoring to include ecosystem functions is removed since there are low encounter and

retention rates in this fishery, Jarrett et al (2013).

Condition 4: Research Plan (Brown tiger prawn (*Penaeus esculentus*), Grooved tiger prawn (*P. semisulcatus*), Blue endeavour prawn (*Metapenaeus endeavouri*), Red endeavour prawn (*M. ensis*), White banana prawn (*Fenneropenaeus merguianensis*); Red-legged banana prawn (*F. indicus*).

PI	3.2.4: Research Plan
Guidepost not met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A research plan provides the management system with a strategic approach to research and reliable and timely information sufficient to achieve the objectives consistent with MSC's Principles 1 and 2.</li> </ul>
Condition	<p>Condition 4: Within 2 years, the development of a research plan that provides for a more strategic approach to the NPF issues showing an appropriate balance of activities between stock assessment and ecosystem research across all three sub fisheries. The research plan will provide the management system with a strategic approach to research and reliable and timely information sufficient to achieve the objectives consistent with MSC's Principles 1 and 2.</p> <p>The following milestones are expected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research Plan draft by the first surveillance audit</li> <li>Research Plan finalised by the second annual audit</li> <li>Research Plan implemented by the third annual audit.</li> </ul>
Requirement by Year 1	Research Plan draft by the first surveillance audit
Requirement by Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research Plan finalised by the second annual audit</li> </ul>
Action Plan by Year 1	NORMAC and the NPRAG have formulated a Research Plan for year 1 (2013/204).
Action Plan by year 2	Publication of a 5 year Research Plan
Actions by NPFIPL and management organisation	<p>A five year Research Plan (2014-2018) has been published (NPFIPL, 2014) and was implemented from the start of 2014. Key research priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect information to inform annual RAG assessment to set the Total Allowable Effort (TAE) for tiger, common and red-legged banana prawns in accordance with NPF harvest strategies</li> <li>Provide key data used to set TAE through at-sea monitoring projects (ie recruitment and spawning surveys)</li> <li>Undertake annual analysis of CMO and Scientific Observer data to confirm it meets criteria for use in monitoring populations of Endangered, Threatened, and Protected (ETP) and at-risk species</li> <li>Undertake a Sustainability Assessment of Fishing Effects (SAFE) assessment for the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf sub-fishery.</li> </ul> <p>The research priorities for the NPF are reviewed annually by the Research Advisory Group (NPRAG) and the Management Advisory Committee (NORMAC) and included in an Annual Research Statement. These priorities are then pursued by research providers, often in partnership with industry and/or fisheries managers with the help of the below research advisory bodies: The AFMA Research Committee (ARC) which considers essential stock assessment type research for funding by AFMA in the following financial year; and the Commonwealth Fisheries Research Advisory Body (ComFRAB) which considers Commonwealth fisheries research priorities for potential Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) funding two years hence) - the FRDC research cycle is an 18 months' cycle compared to the ARC which is a 12 months' cycle.</p>

Evidence Provided	NPF Annual Research Plan, 2014-2018, <a href="http://www.afma.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/NPF_Five_Year_Strategic_Research_Plan_FINAL1.pdf">http://www.afma.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/NPF_Five_Year_Strategic_Research_Plan_FINAL1.pdf</a>
Conclusion	The Condition has now been met with the second and third milestones implemented. The Research Plan satisfies the first and second scoring guidepost of SG100
Recommendation	No recommendation The recommendation is to close the condition and rescore the fishery at 100

## 7 Conclusions and Recommendations

### 7.1 Progress relative to milestones

The annual assessment for 2013 found that all the milestones for Conditions 2 and 3 for the Red legged banana fishery had been met. There now remains one outstanding P2 (bycatch condition (Condition 1) for this fishery. Condition 4, which covers all four fisheries has also been met.

### 7.2 Closed-out conditions

With the three closed out conditions, the annual audit confirms that most P1 and P2 scores for the six UoCs are > 85. However, three of the UoCs - red endeavours, white banana prawns and red legged banana prawns - achieve Principle scores of < 85. These are:

Red endeavour, Principle 1, Target species (80.6)  
Banana prawns, Principle 1, Target species (81.9)  
Red legged banana, Principle 2, Ecosystem (83.7)

The P3 score for all five UoCs is at 100 with the completion of Condition 4

### 7.3 Surveillance

Based on the guidelines as set out in Annex CG 27.22 (Table C3), the Surveillance score is 2 or more. Table C4 indicates that the Year 3 annual surveillance audit should be normal and on site. However, The 3<sup>rd</sup> and subsequent surveillance audits for this fishery will be undertaken under the MSC CR version 2.0 process requirements, which call for a “surveillance plan,” taking into consideration factors that may warrant a reduction from the default four on-site surveillance audits. This plan will be developed closer to the time of the third audit and may result in a determination that this audit should take place off site.

### 7.4 Certification Decision

The MRAG Americas Certification Committee concurs that the certification of the Northern Prawn Trawl fishery against the MSC Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Fishing be continued for a further year.

## 7.5 Recommendations

There are no further recommendations contained in this annual audit.

## References

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Buckworth (b), R.C., Plagányi, E.E., Upston, J., Deng, R.A., Miller, M., and T. Hutton (2014). Assessment of the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf Red-legged Banana Prawn (*Penaeus indicus*) Fishery to 2013, with TAE Recommendations for 2014. Unpublished report to the Northern Prawn Resource Assessment Group, Australian Fisheries Management Authority, August 2014. Australian Fisheries Management Authority Research Project 2013/0005, Northern Prawn Fishery RAG Assessments 2013-15. CSIRO. Brisbane. 33 p.

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