

OCTOPUS FISHERY

1288. Hon DARREN WEST to the Minister for Fisheries:

This question is not about sharks! I refer to the octopus fishery and in particular the move to an interim managed fishery.

- (1) Why was only one year used as a selection period to generate allocations for the interim managed fishery?
- (2) Which stakeholders were engaged in the consultations towards the interim managed fishery?
- (3) What is regarded as a sustainable number of trigger traps for the fishery?
- (4) What work has been done to assess the sustainability of the fishery?
- (5) What time frames have been used to generate allocations in other fisheries moving to an interim management fishery?

Hon KEN BASTON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) The use of the 2012 calendar year was recommended by an independent access and allocation panel. The year 2012 represented the year in which the majority of industry was operating using the same type of gear. Approximately 95 per cent of fishing was conducted using trigger traps.
- (2) External stakeholders that have been consulted throughout the process so far include: Western Australian Fishing Industry Council; Recfishwest; and industry, including six exemption holders in the existing developmental fishery and two additional operators permitted to fish for octopus under a licence condition. The interim management plan for the fishery is still under development. As such, formal consultation on a draft plan is yet to be undertaken.
- (3) The maximum number of trigger traps will be determined by dividing the final approved sustainable catch in each zone by the final approved annualised catch rate of a trap.
- (4) The department's research division has researched the sustainability of the developing octopus fishery, including a three-year Fisheries Research and Development Corporation-funded study.
- (5) There are no set criteria for the number of years that should be used to generate allocations in a particular fishery. In the case of the developing octopus fishery, an independent access and allocation panel recommended fishing days in 2012 as the most appropriate criteria. This was subsequently supported by me.