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SEYCHELLES SPANNER CRAB

The Spanner Crab Harvest Strategy



Stakeholder engagement • Savoy Hotel & Spa • Wednesday 30th September 2026

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Today at a glance

Today is about sharing for your feedback

- What is a Harvest Strategy and its objectives
- Current licensing conditions
- Data collection and assessment
- Harvest control rule
- Specific questions we are asking you today
- What happens next



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Introductions & Ice Breaker:

What is your Favourite Spanner Crab Recipe?



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The Draft Harvest Strategy

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What is a harvest strategy, and why have one?

- ❑ Formal, pre-agreed framework for stock and fishery management.
- ❑ Predictable planning, transparent decisions, and fewer last-minute changes
- ❑ Government policy 2023



- **A fishery that lasts**
- **A stock that's genuinely healthy**
- **Ready to adapt as the climate changes**
- **A living you can count on**
- **A clear rule, not a closed-door decision**
- **It is bottom up approached.**

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Harvest strategy timeline



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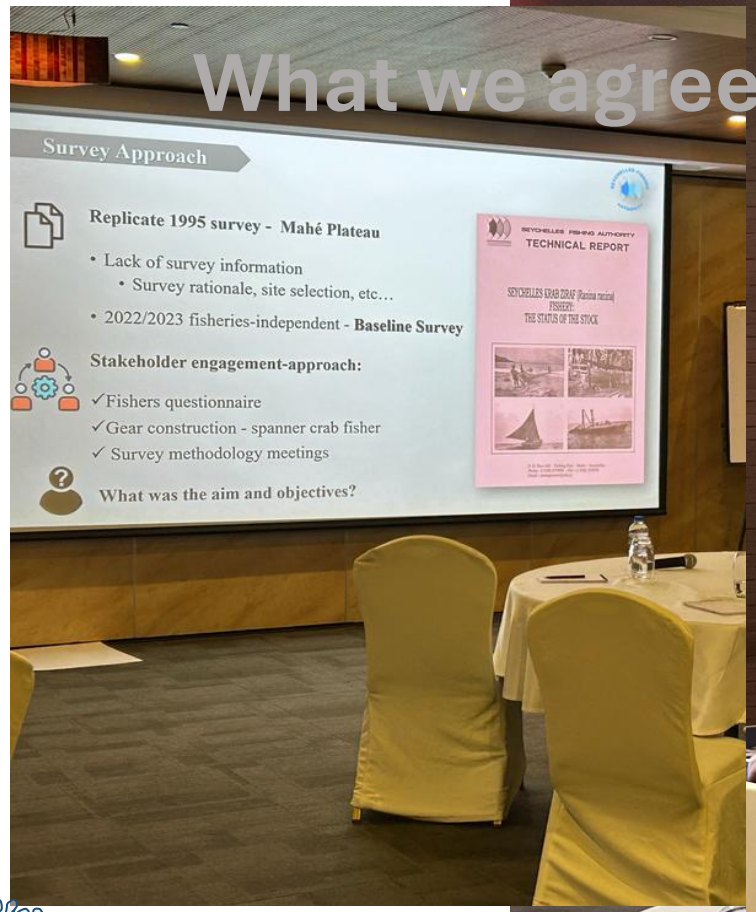
What we agreed at the 2023 workshop







Objectives

- Sustainable fisheries
- A healthy and economically viable stock
- Transparent proactive and rule-based decision making
- Climate resilient management over the long term



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What we agreed at the 2023 workshop

Spanner crab stakeholder workshop | 3 August 2023

Limited entry

10 commercial licenses

Minimum size

8 cm carapace length (CL)

Protect breeding females

No take of berried females

Trap limit and license fee

Up to 150 traps: SCR 3,500 | 151–350 traps: SCR 5,000

Fishing season

Fishing permitted year round initially; no seasonal closure



Dynamic management measure

Adjustable Season length

Monitoring

Fishers' logbooks and SFA catch sampling; identify mandatory and voluntary logbook fields

Areas and other rules

No closed areas at this stage

How do harvest strategies work and why are they important?

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NSW GOVERNMENT

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What Can Happen if there is No Harvest Strategy?









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The review cycle



THE FIRST HALF

The rules do not bend

We do not change the rule because an outcome is unwelcome. That is the whole point of agreeing it in advance.



THE SECOND HALF

But the strategy is not fixed

It sits inside adaptive management, reviewed on an agreed timetable to check it is working, to correct it where it is not, and to take in new information.

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How the fishery and the strategy connect

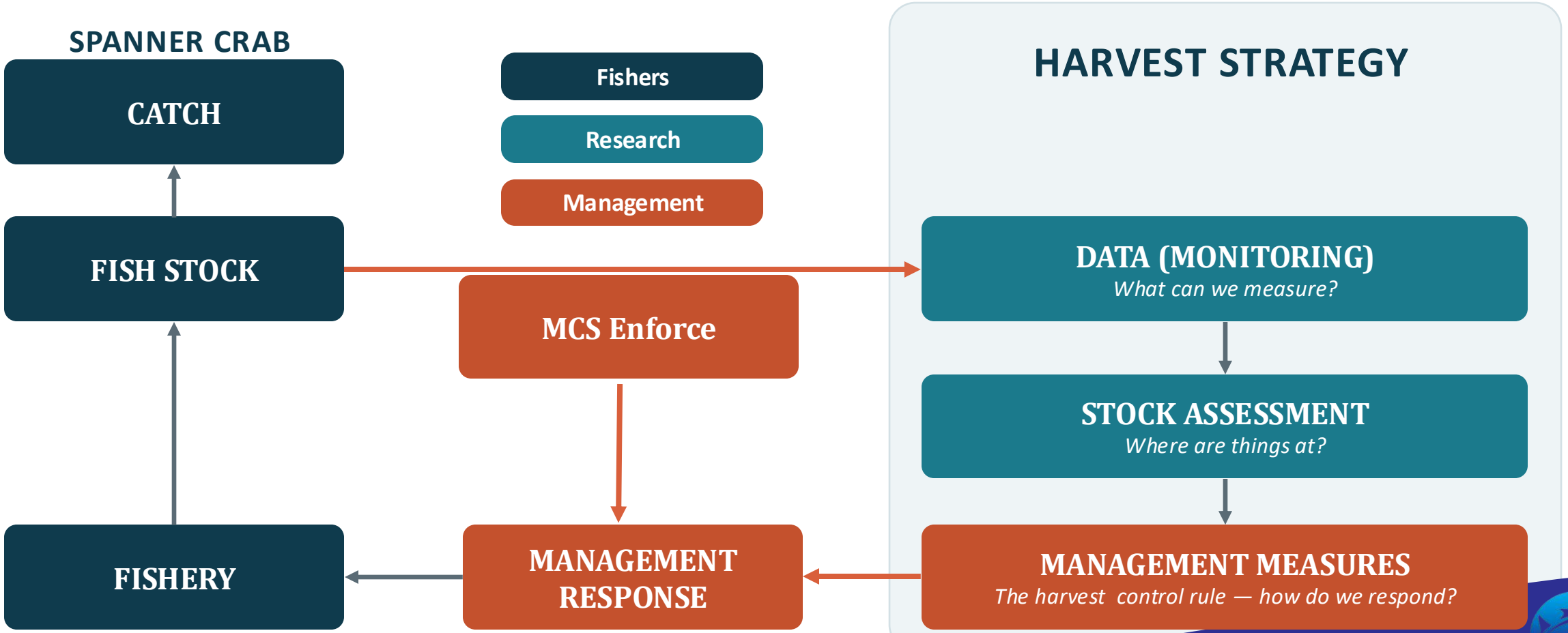

Diagram adapted from the FishPath framework, used to develop this strategy.

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What this current strategy does not include



1

Quotas (TAC)

- ❑ For now, NO

2

License allocation

- ❑ Sits alongside this strategy, not within it.
- ❑ Still evolving toward fairness and transparency.

Thanks!

Any Feedback?

Mrs Mellissa Joseph, Fisheries Management

mjoseph@sfa.sc



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The Harvest Strategy: Current Management & MCS



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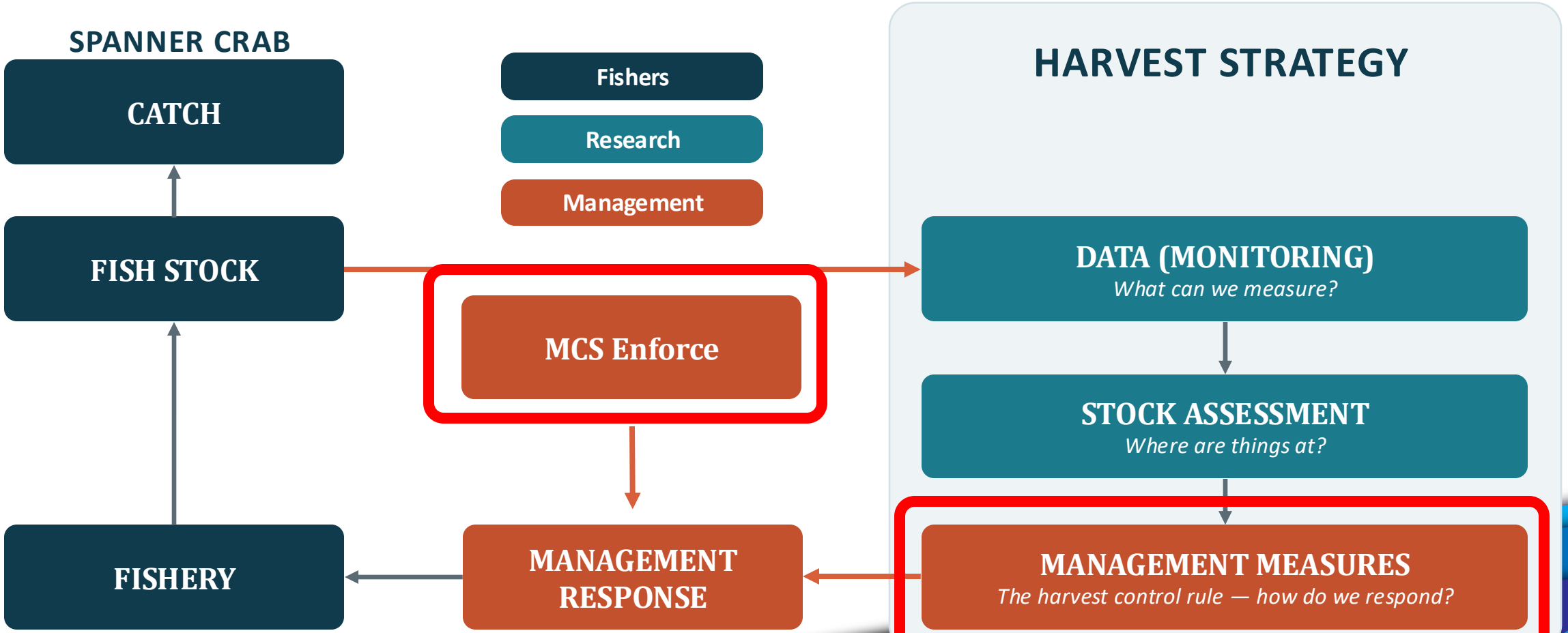

Diagram adapted from the FishPath framework, used to develop this strategy.

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What you can keep

- **Spanner Crab (*Ranina ranina*) only** — no other species.
- **Never keep** a berried (egg-carrying) crab.
- **No fishing** in marine parks or closed areas.
- **Check size** .

8 cm

minimum carapace length

measured base of eye socket to centre of posterior shell margin.

Licensing Framework

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Leaving port & coming home

Leaving port

3 hrs before departure — call SFA

- Give SFA: vessel, crew, VMS status, trip plan.
- SFA's OK is only good for 2 hours.
- Depart only from approved ports: Victoria, Providence, Bel Ombre, Praslin/La Digue.

Coming home

4 hrs before arrival — call SFA

- Give SFA: ETA, port, unload time.
- No offloading to another vessel at sea.
- Don't change port or schedule without SFA's OK — except real emergencies, call at once.

Calling hours: Mon–Fri 8am–6pm · Sat 9am–12pm · Sun / public holiday — call the working day before, 9am–6pm

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The tracker (VMS)

ON

the whole trip

- **Reports to SFA every hour** — don't block, alter or tamper with the signal.
- **Off only** if you're in port over 3 hours.
- **Tracker down?** Tell SFA right away.
- **Broken more than 24 hrs** → head back to port.

No working tracker, no trip.

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Gear limits & required papers

350

traps per license, total

100

traps per set, max

Square or circular baited tangle-net traps only.

Crew & papers onboard

Registered Seychellois crew only.

Carry onboard: this license, small-scale vessel license, Fishers Registration Card.

Also carry copies of the Certificate of Vessel Registration and other relevant certificates.

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Logbook & landings

1

Record daily

Catch and effort, set by set, in the SFA logbook.

2

Report everything

All catch retained or discarded, including non-target species.

3

Hand it in

Within 1 week of the trip ending, or before your next trip — whichever comes first.

Before your first trip, the Master completes SFA's one-on-one logbook training.

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Seychelles Spanner Crab Fishery Logbook

Vessel Particulars		Trip Particulars					
Vessel Name			DD	MM	YY	HH	M
SZ Number		Departure Date and Time					
Vessel Owner		Departure Port					
Skipper Name		Arrival Date and Time					
No: of Crew		Arrival Port					

Expenditures

	Type	Quantity	Est. Value (SR)		Type	Qantity	Est. Value (SR)
Fuel				Gear 1			
Bait 1				Gear 2			
Bait 2				Gear 3			
Bait 3				Ice			
Food				Others			

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SPANNER CRAB COMMERCIAL FISHERY LOGBOOK																													
	SET DATE & TIME								HAUL DATE & TIME								FISHING LOCATION	FISHING EFFORT						RETAINED CATCH			DISCARDS		
SET NO	DAY		MONTH		YEAR				SET START TIME				HAUL END TIME				GRID N0:	TANGLE NET SET (No.)			TANGLE NET HAUL (No.)			SPECIES	NUMBER	Wt. (Kg)	SPECIES	NUMBER	Wt. (Kg)

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Challenges

Poaching
Data only comes from licensed fishers

Licensed fishers not fishing
Deserving fishers are being left out of the fishery

Incomplete and inconsistent Logbook reporting
Uncertainty in fishery data

Underreporting
Berried or undersized crabs are concealed
Missing from the catch and effort logbook

Uncooperative fishers
Uncommon, but still happens



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Call SFA

BEFORE YOU LEAVE — AND BEFORE YOU RETURN

2525421

4670341

3 hrs before departure · 4 hrs before arrival

Failure to comply can mean a fine, or your license suspended or revoked.

This is a plain-language summary — the full SFA license document is the legal reference.

Thanks!

Any Feedback?

Freddy Lesperance, MCS

flesperance@sfa.sc



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The Harvest Strategy: Current Data collection and Assessment



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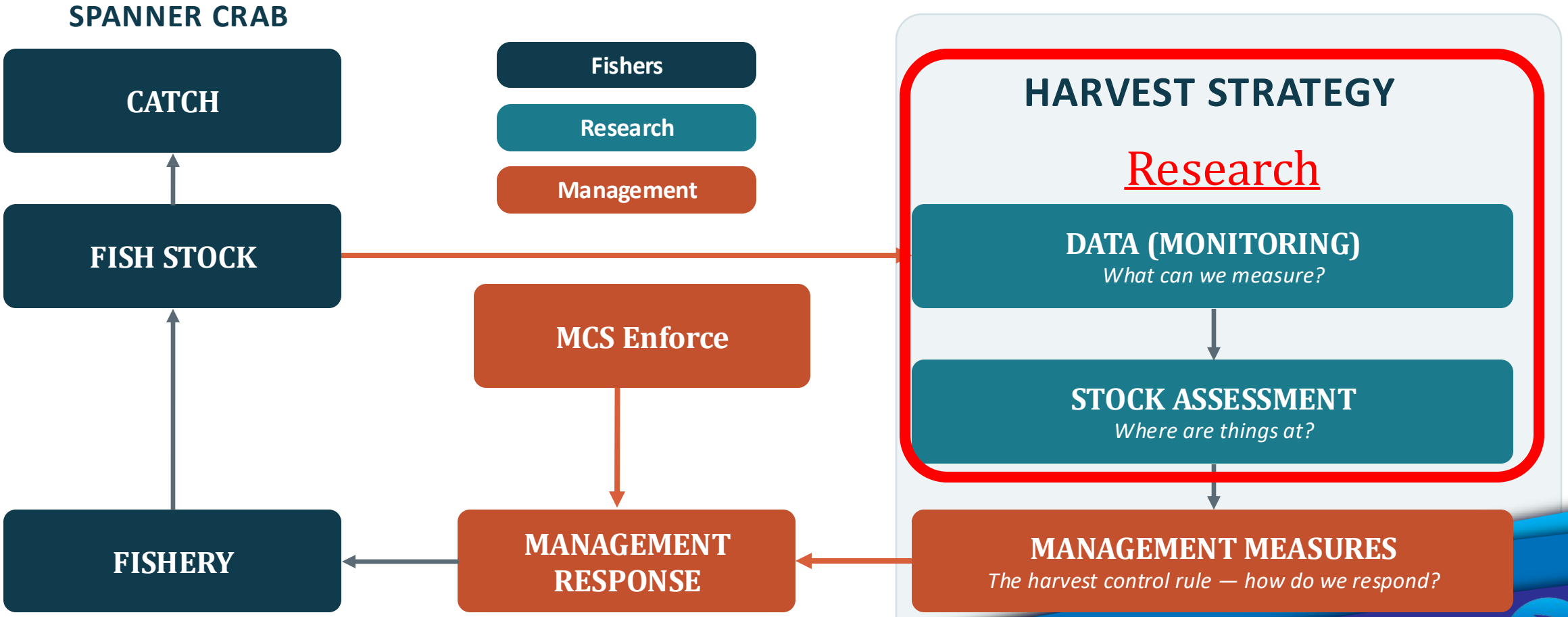
How the fishery and the strategy connect



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Harvest Strategy

Research

- **DATA (MONITORING)** *How are we performing?*
- **STOCK ASSESSMENT** *Where are things at?*

RESEARCH: monitoring and assessment

Assessment conducted in past 4 years?

- Yes → *Maintain Status Quo*
- No

1 Data collection



2 Check data

Signs of change?

- No
- Yes

3 Stock assessment

MANAGEMENT DECISION

4 Harvest control rule

Review cycle

Does the Harvest Strategy meet your objectives?

- Sustainable fishing
- Maintained livelihoods
- Transparent decision-making

Data collected – Spanner crab fishery

COMMERCIAL FISHERY
(Fishery-dependent)



SCIENTIFIC SURVEY
(Fishery-independent)





Fishing logbooks



Date	Species	No. kept	Weight (kg)
12/04/24	Spanner crab	26	52.0
13/04/24	Spanner crab	33	64.5
16/04/24	Spanner crab	28	58.0
15/04/24	Spanner crab	34	71.0
14/04/24	Spanner crab	20	40.0

Port monitoring





Spanner crab survey





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Biological data

- Sex (M/F)



- Individual Body Weight



- Carapace Length



- Reproductive Marker



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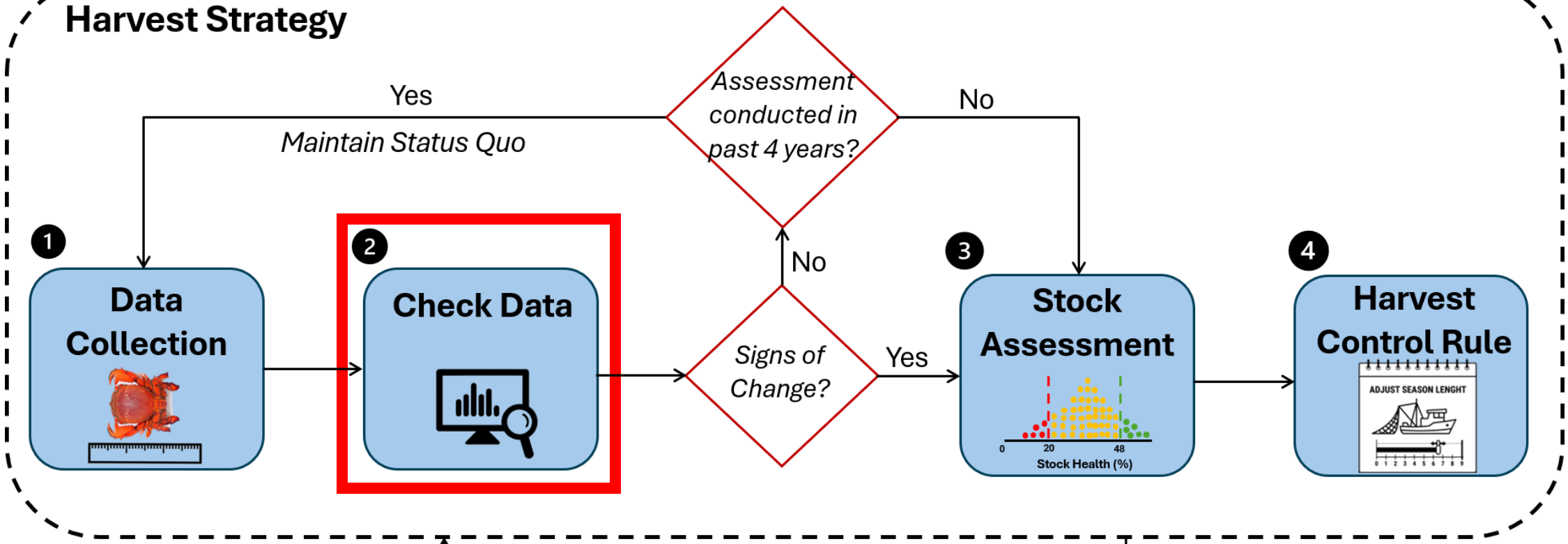
Harvest Strategy



Does the Harvest Strategy meet your objectives?

- Sustainable fishing
- Maintained livelihoods
- Transparent decision-making

Review Cycle

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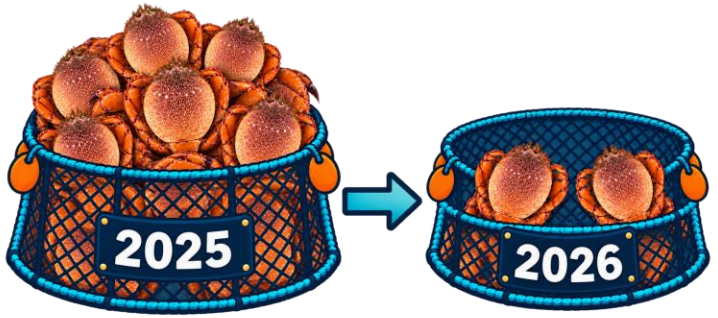
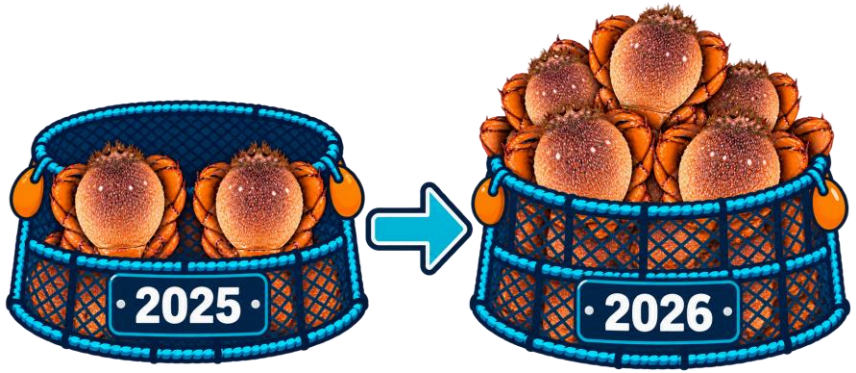
1 **Low catch**



2 **High catch**



A trigger means “investigate further”. It does not automatically mean closure.

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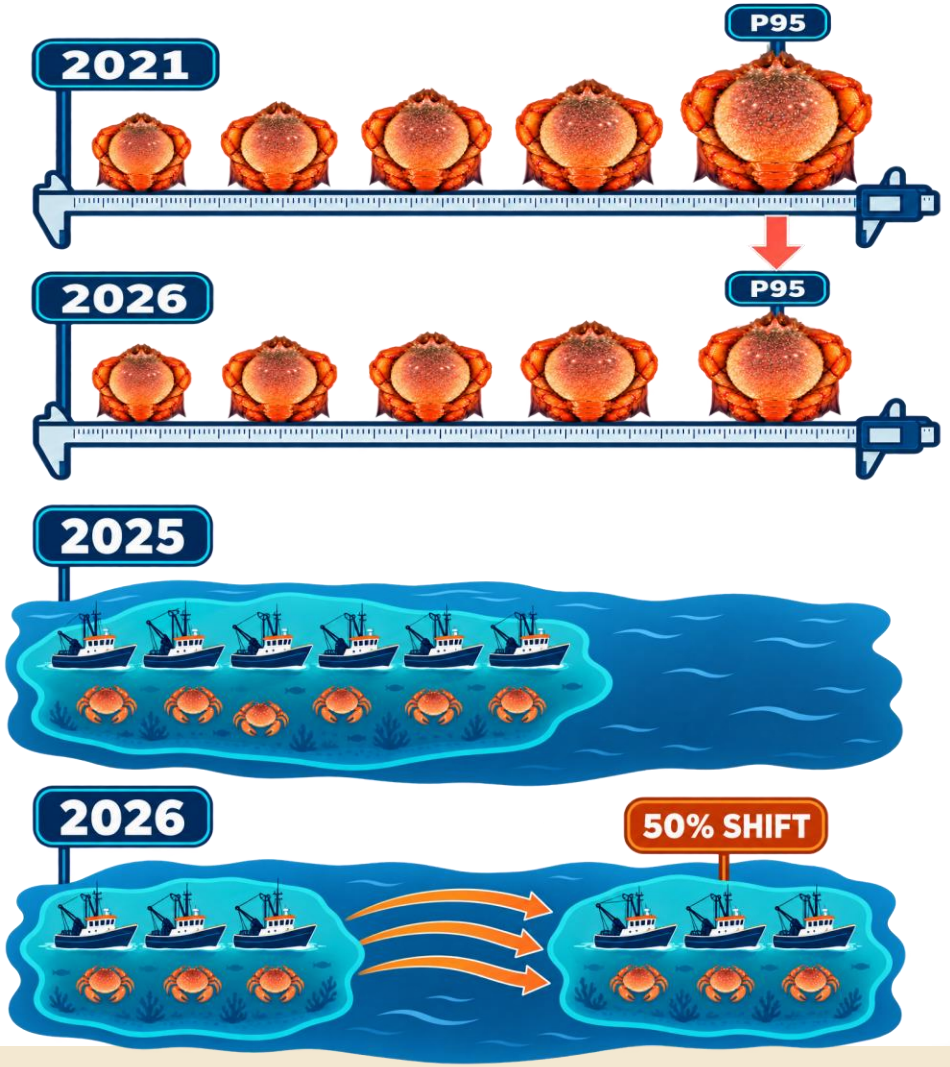
3 Fewer large crabs

4 Shift in fishing grounds



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Harvest Strategy

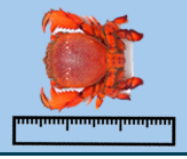
Assessment conducted in past 4 years?

Yes

Maintain Status Quo

No

1 **Data Collection**



2 **Check Data**



Signs of Change?

No

Yes

3 **Stock Assessment**



4 **Harvest Control Rule**



Review Cycle



Does the Harvest Strategy meet your objectives?

- Sustainable fishing
- Maintained livelihoods
- Transparent decision-making

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How does the assessment work?

- Growth
- Natural Mortality
- Biggest Size
- Maturity
- Length-frequency

→ Stock Assessment Continuum →









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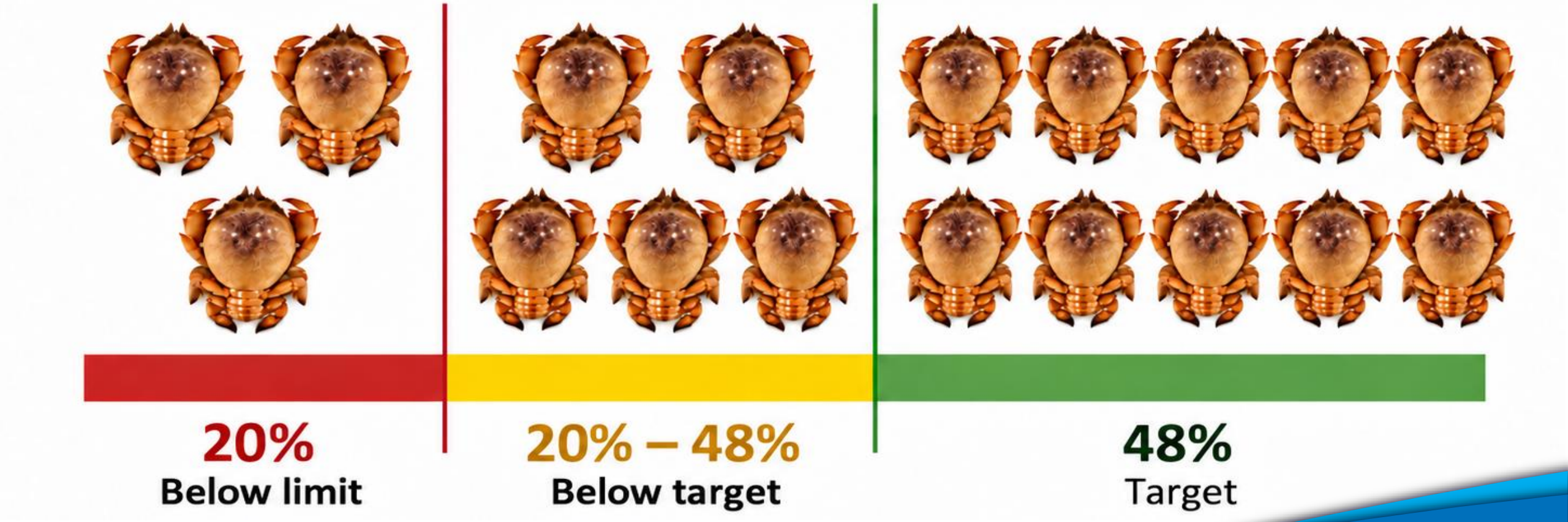
What does the output mean?



Stock Health (% of unfished population)

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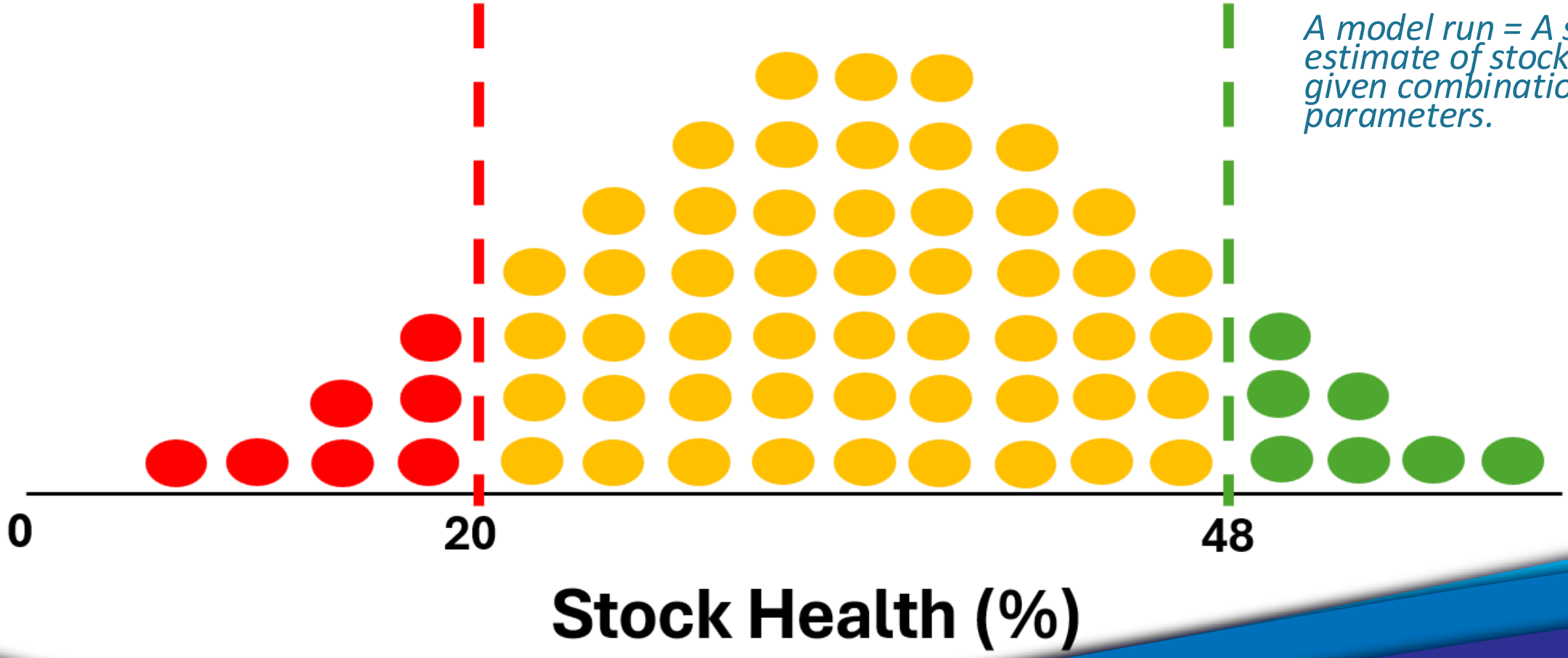
Accounting for uncertainty with many model runs



A model run = A single model estimate of stock health for a given combination of life history parameters.

Thanks!

Any Feedbacks?

Ms Marisa Antha, Fisheries Research

mantha@sfa.sc



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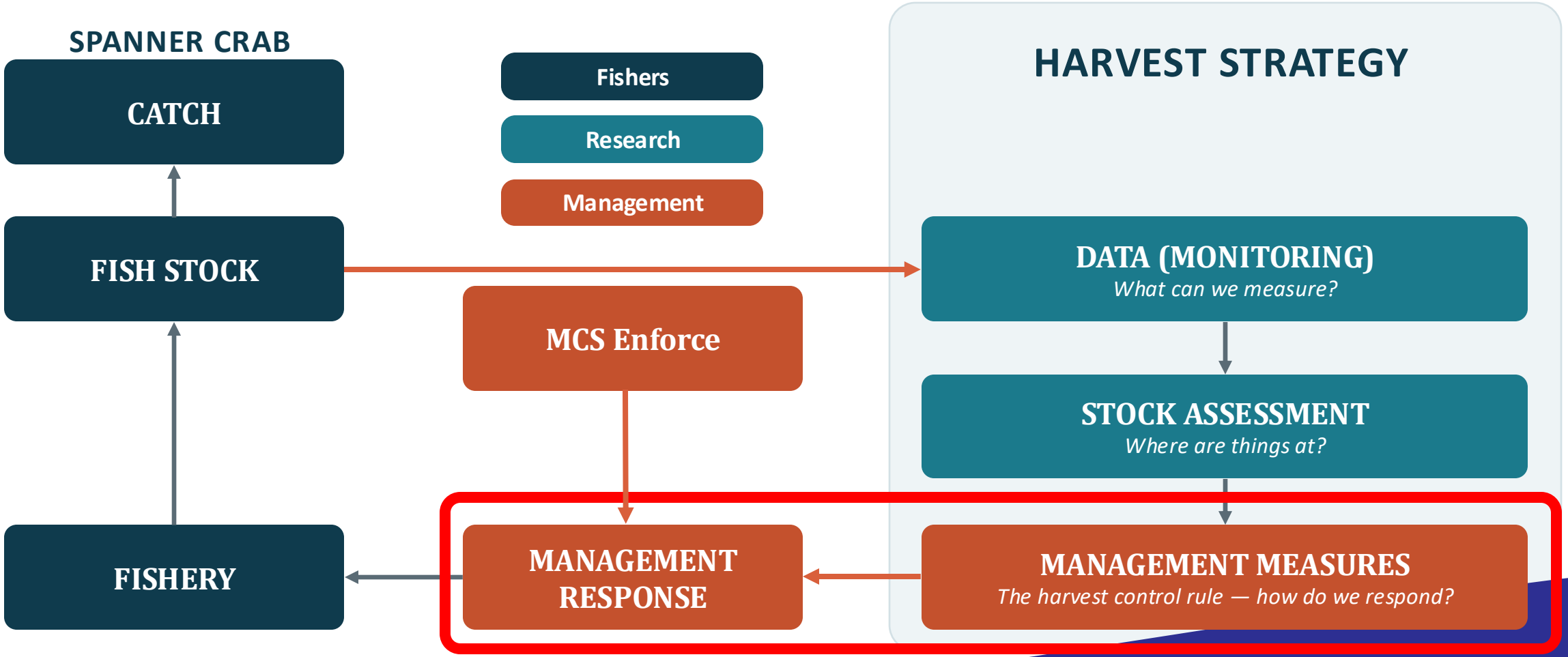
How the fishery and the strategy connect



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Harvest Strategy

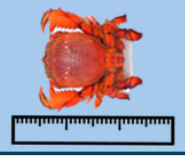
Assessment conducted in past 4 years?

Yes

Maintain Status Quo

No

1 **Data Collection**



2 **Check Data**

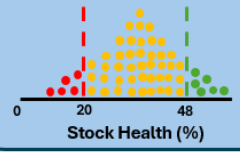


Signs of Change?

No

Yes

3 **Stock Assessment**



4 **Harvest Control Rule**



Does the Harvest Strategy meet your objectives?

- Sustainable fishing
- Maintained livelihoods
- Transparent decision-making

Review Cycle



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What is A Harvest Control Rule?



Take the state/health of the stock and turn/translate it into management action.

For the Spanner Crab fishery, the main action is to change the length of the fishing season according to the health of the stock.

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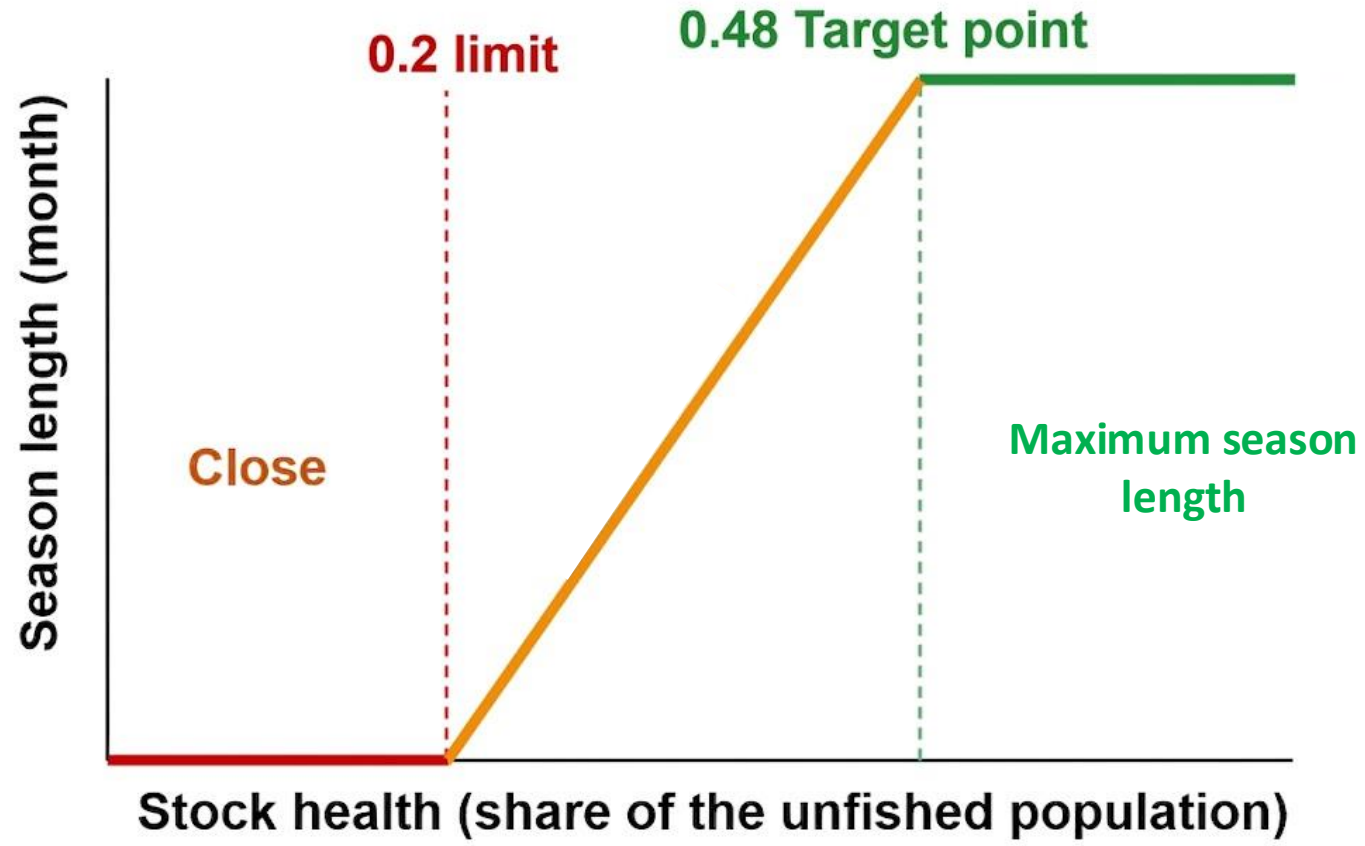
The "hockey stick" Harvest Control Rule



At or above 0.48 (48%)

Maximum season:9 months

Between 0.2 and 0.48

Season length shortens with stock status

Below 0.2 (20%)

Fishery is closed for the season

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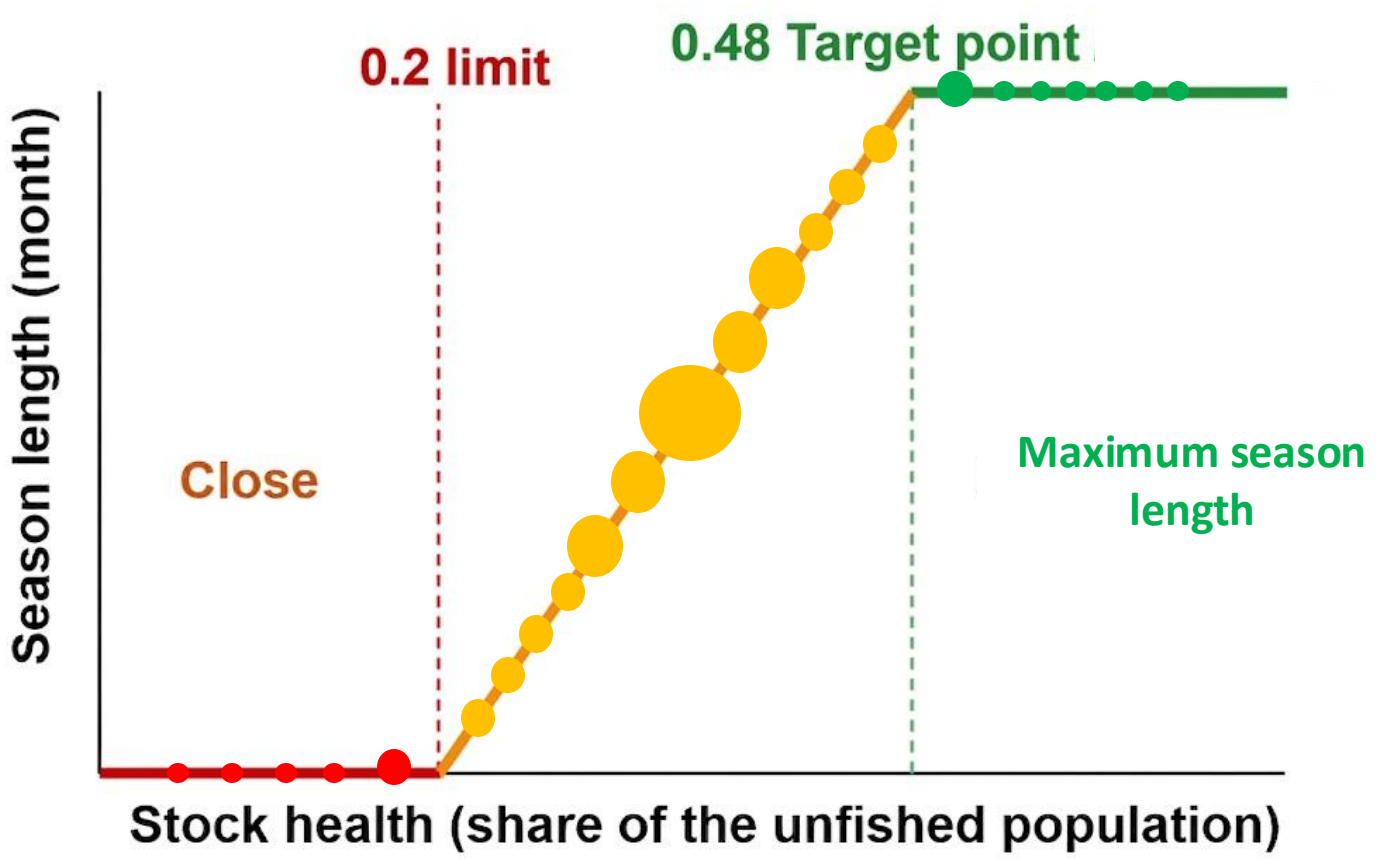
The "hockey stick" Harvest Control Rule



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The "hockey stick" Harvest Control Rule



[assessment-result-explorer-download (2).html]

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If the fishery closes, how does it reopen?

1

While closed

Annual survey

2

Two years below limit

A spanner crab survey is carried out

3

Reopening

Indicator above 1.5x 150% limit

Once the season resumes, the assessment returns to using your logbooks and port sampling again, alongside the survey- the fuller picture is restored as soon as the fishery is open.

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What rules stay FIXED, regardless of the season length



10 licenses	A fixed number of licensed spanner crab fishers, across Mahé, Praslin and La Digue
150 to 350 trammel nets	depending on vessel size; the cap remains fixed regardless of stock status.
8 cm minimum size	The legal minimum carapace length for spanner crab to be kept.
No berried females	Any female carrying eggs is returned to the water, always — no exceptions
No fishing in marine reserves	Reserves stay off limit for spanner crab fishing, whatever season.
24m LOA	Vessel size



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What changes for you?



Season length	Up to nine months maximum. Opening is fixed in November; the rules sets when it closes.
If stock is at or above the target	You get the full nine month season.
If stock is between the target and limit	The season length is adjusted.
If stock is at or below the limit	The fishery closes for the year.



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Harvest Strategy

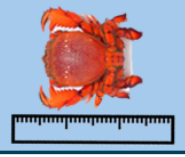
Assessment conducted in past 4 years?

Yes

Maintain Status Quo

No

1 **Data Collection**



2 **Check Data**

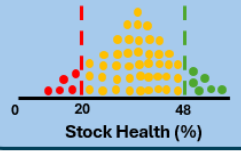


Signs of Change?

No

Yes

3 **Stock Assessment**



4 **Harvest Control Rule**



Does the Harvest Strategy meet your objectives?

- Sustainable fishing
- Maintained livelihoods
- Transparent decision-making

Review Cycle

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based on a decision of the German Bundestag

Why we review, and how often

- Every 1–2 years: the strategy commits to being checked, not set once and left alone.

New data in

- Rules and assessments update as new evidence comes in.

Open issues resolved

- Unresolved items are actively revisited, not left open indefinitely.

Uncertainty re-checked

- We check if parameters have improved.

Is it actually working?

- Confirms strategy effectiveness through evaluation or regular checks.

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What happens in a review, and who's involved

WHAT GETS REVIEWED?



- ❑ Does season length actually track catches, as more years come in?
- ❑ Is the stock genuinely moving toward the target?
- ❑ Is the trigger firing too often, or not enough?
- ❑ Is the trigger doing anything unexpected?



WHO'S INVOLVED?

Decide Policy and rules	**Government** Policy makers	**Fisheries management** Rules and licensing
Advise & enforce Evidence and compliance	**MCS** Enforcement	**Research department** Science and advice
Use & support Fishing and partnership	**Fishers** Resource users	**Stakeholders** NGOs, donors, others

Thanks!

Any Feedback?

Ms Elisa Radegonde, Fisheries Management

esocrate@sfa.sc



SEYCHELLES FISHERIES AUTHORITY

FISHPATH

The Nature Conservancy

IKI INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE INITIATIVE

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SEYCHELLES SPINY LOBSTER

The Harvest Strategy: What we are asking you today



Stakeholder engagement • Savoy Hotel & Spa • Wednesday 30th September 2026

Supported by:
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What we're asking you today

- Observations – undersize crabs and berried females
- Mesh size – potential limit

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The Harvest Strategy: What Happens Next



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What happens next

CONSULTATION ROADMAP

1

Today

Record your views, concerns and recommendations

Consultation

2

Open Comment Period

1-month feedback window
Additional written comments

Feedback

3

Assessment & Finalization

Complete an initial stock assessment, review all feedback, review and finalize harvest strategy

Technical review

4

Validation & Communication

Present assessment results & revised harvest strategy back to fishers

Validation

5

Endorsement & Implementation

Formal endorsement and implementation

Implementation

Adaptive Feedback Loop: Continuous review & adjustment with fishers

Thanks!

Feedback Welcome

Mr Rodney Govinden, Fisheries Research (Chair)

