



Australian Government

Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities

Ref: 2008/00465

The Hon Norman Moore MLC
Minister for Mines and Petroleum, Fisheries and Electoral Affairs
4th Floor, London House
216 St Georges Terrace
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Minister

I am writing to you as the Delegate of the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities in relation to the reassessment of the Western Australian Exmouth Gulf Prawn Managed Fishery under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

In November 2012, the Western Australian Department of Fisheries provided an application to the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities seeking continued export approval for the Western Australian Exmouth Gulf Prawn Managed Fishery.

The application has been assessed for the purposes of the wildlife trade provisions of Part 13A of the EPBC Act. The assessment took into account measures that have been developed by the Western Australian Department of Fisheries in response to the recommendations made in the 2008 assessment of the fishery.

I am pleased to advise that the assessment is now complete. The new assessment report will be available on the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities' website at:

<http://www.environment.gov.au/coasts/fisheries/wa/egprawn/index.html>

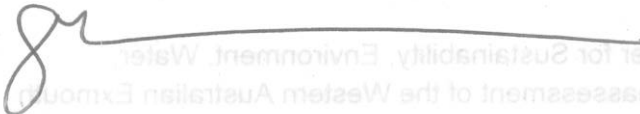
I consider that the Western Australian Exmouth Gulf Prawn Managed Fishery operates in line with the Australian Government 'Guidelines for the Ecologically Sustainable Management of Fisheries – 2nd Edition.' Given the management arrangements and precautionary measures for the fishery including limited entry, seasonal and area openings and closures, the mandatory use of bycatch reduction devices and gear controls, I have decided to amend the list of exempt native specimens to allow export of product from the Western Australian Exmouth Gulf Prawn Managed Fishery for a period of five years, until 8 February 2018.

While there are some environmental risks associated with the Western Australian Exmouth Gulf Prawn Managed Fishery, I believe that the Western Australian Department of Fisheries has in place measures to address these issues. Officers from the Western Australian Department of Fisheries and this department have discussed and agreed to five recommendations for the fishery, focussing on ensuring the continuation of good management practices. These recommendations can be found at **Attachment 1**.

Please note that my decisions under the EPBC Act relate to the management arrangements in force at the time of the assessment decision. To ensure that the decisions remain valid, the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities needs to be advised of any intended changes to the management arrangements and make an assessment that the new arrangements are equivalent or better, in terms of ecological sustainability, than those in place at the time of the original decision. This includes legislated amendments and operational changes that may affect the impact of the harvest in relation to target species, byproduct, bycatch, protected species or the ecosystem.

I would like to thank you for the constructive way in which your officials have approached this assessment.

Yours sincerely



Geoff Richardson
Delegate of the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities

4 February 2013

Recommendations to the Western Australian Department of Fisheries on the ecologically sustainable management of the Western Australian Exmouth Gulf Prawn Managed Fishery February 2013

Recommendation 1:

Operation of the fishery will be carried out in accordance with the WA Exmouth Gulf Prawn Management Plan 1989 in force under the Western Australian *Fish Resources Management Act 1994*.

Recommendation 2:

WA Department of Fisheries to advise the department of any intended material change to the fishery's legislated management regime and management arrangements that could affect the assessment against which *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* decisions are based.

Recommendation 3:

WA Department of Fisheries to produce and present reports to the department annually as per Appendix B of the 'Guidelines for the Ecologically Sustainable Management of Fisheries – 2nd Edition'.

Recommendation 4:

WA Department of Fisheries to investigate measures to improve protected species interaction reporting, including species level identification, with particular attention to sea snake species.

Recommendation 5:

WA Department of Fisheries to conduct appropriate ongoing research and/or monitoring to determine whether the actions undertaken in the Bycatch Action Plan Matrix are sufficient to minimise risk to bycatch species in the fishery.