



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Agriculture,  
Water and the Environment**

Mr Wez Norris  
Chief Executive Officer  
Australian Fisheries Management Authority  
Box 7051  
Canberra BC  
CANBERRA ACT 2610

Dear Mr Norris

I am writing to you as the Delegate of the Minister for the Environment in relation to a request to amend a condition placed on the Part 13 accreditation of the Commonwealth Small Pelagic Fishery (the fishery) under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

In April 2020, the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) applied for an amendment to Condition B of the fishery's accreditation under Part 13 of the EPBC Act due to COVID-19 restrictions being in place on the AFMA onboard Observer Program.

After assessing AFMA's request, I have amended Condition B to allow for electronic monitoring and auditing to be used during COVID-19 restrictions in lieu of onboard observers so that the intention of Condition B can continue to be met while the Observer Program is suspended.

Yours sincerely

William Quinn  
Delegate of the Minister for the Environment  
26 June 2020

**Recommendations to the Australian Fisheries Management Authority on the  
ecologically sustainable management of the Commonwealth Small Pelagic Fishery,  
June 2020**

1. Operation of the Commonwealth Small Pelagic Fishery will be carried out in accordance with the Small Pelagic Fishery Management Plan in force under the *Fisheries Management Act 1991* (Cth).
2. The Australian Fisheries Management Authority to inform the Department of the Environment and Energy of any intended material changes to the Commonwealth Small Pelagic Fishery management arrangements that may affect the assessment against which *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* decisions are made.
3. The Australian Fisheries Management Authority to produce and present reports to the Department of the Environment and Energy annually as per Appendix B of the *Guidelines for the Ecologically Sustainable Management of Fisheries - 2nd Edition*.

### **PART 13**

- a) Prior to fishing, mid-water trawl vessels must have in place effective mitigation approaches and devices to minimise interactions with dolphins, seals and seabirds.
- b) Until 21 December 2020, or for the time period that AFMA's on-board observer program is suspended due to COVID-19 restrictions (whichever is shorter), that each new midwater trawl vessel be subject to 100 per cent electronic monitoring, with 100 per cent review of electronic monitoring footage for the first ten fishing trips, and that one observer be deployed for at least one fishing trip as soon as practicable, with additional observer coverage or other monitoring implemented as appropriate, following scientific assessment of the Small Pelagic Fishery.

From 21 December 2020, or from when AFMA's on-board observer program is re-instated (whichever comes first) that at least one observer be deployed on each new mid-water trawl vessel for the first 10 fishing trips, with additional observer coverage or other monitoring implemented as appropriate, following scientific assessment of the Small Pelagic Fishery.