



Australian Government

Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts

Assessment of the
Queensland Eel Fishery

October, 2009

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Disclaimer

This document is an assessment carried out by the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts of a commercial fishery against the Australian Government *Guidelines for the Ecologically Sustainable Management of Fisheries – 2nd Edition*. It forms part of the advice provided to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts on the fishery in relation to decisions under Parts 13A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts or the Australian Government.

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Table 1: Summary of the Queensland Eel Fishery (QEF)

Publicly available information relevant to the fishery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QLD <i>Fisheries Act 1994</i> • QLD <i>Fisheries Regulation 1995</i> • QLD Fisheries (Freshwater) Management Plan 1999. • Annual Status Report 2005 – QLD Eel Fishery • Annual Status Report January 2007 – QLD Eel Fishery • Annual Status Report 2007 – QLD Eel Fishery • Annual Status Report 2008 – QLD Eel Fishery • Annual Status Report 2009 – QLD Eel Fishery • QLD Eel Fishery 2009 progress against DEWHA conditions and recommendations
Area	<p><u>Adult Eel Sector:</u></p> <p>Permitted waters are restricted to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) An impoundment formed by a dam that is specifically listed on an eel authority (for example a public impoundment such as Cressbrook Dam) (b) A privately owned, artificially created impoundment within a catchment stated on an eel authority (for example a farm dam). <p><u>Juvenile Eel Sector:</u></p> <p>Juvenile eel collection is allowed in the following 21 rivers: Albert, Barron, Brisbane, Burdekin, Burnett, Burrum, Caboolture, Coomera, Currumbin, Fitzroy, Johnstone, Kolan, Logan, Maroochy, Mary, Mooloolah, Mulgrave, Nerang, Noosa, Pine and Tully.</p> <p>Collection is allowed at, or downstream of, the most downstream dam or weir and up to 200m either side of the mouths of these rivers.</p>
Fishery status	Unknown
Target Species	<p>Southern Shortfin Eel (<i>Anguilla australis</i>)</p> <p>Longfin Eel (<i>Anguilla reinhardtii</i>)</p>
Byproduct Species	None permitted
Gear	<p><u>Adult eel sector:</u></p> <p>Baited eel traps or round traps are permitted with a single entry mesh funnel and a floated cod-end.</p> <p><u>Juvenile eel sector:</u></p> <p>Fyke nets, dip nets and flow traps are allowed to be used in the juvenile eel sector of the fishery and must contain Bycatch Reduction Devices (BRDs).</p>
Season	No closed seasons are applied to eel fishing in Queensland.
Commercial harvest 2008	25 tonne within the adult eel sector and 446 kilograms within the juvenile eel sector of the fishery.
Value of commercial harvest 2008	<p><u>Adult eel sector:</u> Approximately \$275,000</p> <p><u>Juvenile eel sector:</u> No estimate available</p>

Take by other sectors	Indigenous and recreational harvest is thought to be negligible.
Commercial licences issued	There are currently 25 licences within the adult eel sector of the fishery and 13 within the juvenile eel sector.
Management arrangements	<p>The fishery is managed under Queensland <i>Fisheries Act 1994</i>, the Queensland <i>Fisheries Regulation 2008</i> and the <i>Fisheries (Freshwater) Management Plan 1999</i> and through a number of input and output controls including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited entry; • size limits; • gear restrictions; • spatial closures; and • possession limits (recreational sector).
Export	Export is mainly to Hong Kong, China and Taiwan and is only permitted for adult eels.
Bycatch	Bycatch is generally low and consists of small, abundant and common species.
Interaction with Protected Species¹	<p>Interactions with protected species are recorded in Species of Conservation Interest (SOCI) logbooks.</p> <p>Interactions with freshwater turtles occur in the adult sector of the fishery, of the freshwater turtles caught, 98% are released alive.</p> <p>There have been no reported interactions within the juvenile eel sector.</p>
Ecosystem Impacts	Impacts on the ecosystem caused by the QEF are considered to be low. Apparatus used has minimal impact on the physical environment and non-target species. There are also restrictions in place on the locations and number of traps that can be used to minimise any potential risks.

¹ 'Protected species' means all species listed under Part 13 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), including whales and other cetaceans and threatened, marine and migratory species.

Table 2: Progress in implementation of recommendations made in initial assessment of the QEF

Recommendation	Progress	Recommended Action
1. DPI&F to inform DEH of any intended amendments to the management arrangements that may affect sustainability of the target species or negatively impact on bycatch, protected species or the ecosystem.	Met and Ongoing No changes were made to management arrangements during the reporting period.	This recommendation has been met and will continue to apply under the new exemption for this fishery for the next four and a half years. Refer to Recommendation 2, Table 4
2. By the end of 2006, DPI&F to revise fishery specific objectives for the adult and juvenile eel fisheries to ensure that they specifically recognise the need to manage impacts on bycatch, protected species and the ecosystem. DPI&F to also develop performance indicators and performance measures for target, bycatch, protected species and impacts on the ecosystem.	Met The QEF Performance Measurement System (PMS) has been adopted in the fishery following submission to the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) in February 2007. The PMS is a key component of any enhanced management arrangements for the eel fishery, as it provides a set of transparent and verifiable measures against which Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries, part of the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (QPIF) can assess and report on the performance of the fishery.	DEWHA commends QPIF on implementing the PMS for the QEF and considers the action taken by QPIF to be appropriate and does not seek to maintain this recommendation on the QEF export approval.
3. DPI&F to monitor the status of the adult and juvenile fisheries in relation to the performance measures once developed. Within	Met One performance measure was triggered by fishing during the 2008 effort year. Descriptions of	DEWHA commends QPIF on implementing the PMS for the QEF and considers the timeframes in place to respond to any performance measures being triggered is appropriate. DEWHA notes that QPIF reports against the PMS annually as part of the

<p>3 months of becoming aware of a performance measure not being met, DPI&F to finalise a clear timetable for the implementation of appropriate management responses.</p>	<p>the trigger event can be found in the 'Performance against fishery objectives' section of the 2009 Queensland Eel Fishery Annual Status Report.</p> <p>As part of QPIF's commitment to sustainable fisheries management, performance of the fishery against the identified objectives is analysed and reported publicly on an annual basis. A timetable for the implementation of appropriate management responses arising from any performance measure trigger will be developed within three months of QPIF becoming aware.</p>	<p>reporting requirements and does not seek to maintain this recommendation on the QEF export approval.</p>
<p>4. DPI&F to conduct a risk assessment of compliance and enforcement activities in the adult and juvenile eel fisheries. Outcomes of the risk assessment will be used to develop a compliance and enforcement strategy for the fisheries, including a timetable for the implementation of key components of the strategy.</p>	<p>Met</p> <p>In March 2007 the Queensland Boating and Fishing Patrol (QBFP) completed the compliance risk assessment for the QEF. Detailed strategies to address the risks identified by this assessment have been developed through the QBFP strategic and operational planning processes that are reviewed annually. Through identification and prioritisation of compliance risks associated with the fishery, planning and operational processes at the district level may be</p>	<p>DEWHA commends QPIF on the compliance risk assessment that was undertaken by QBFP for the QEF and considers the action taken by QPIF to be appropriate and does not seek to maintain this recommendation on the QEF export approval.</p>

	improved and risks mitigated.	
5. From 2005, DPI&F to report publicly on the status of the fishery on an annual basis, including explicit reporting against each performance measure once developed.	<p>Met and Ongoing</p> <p>The 2009 Queensland Eel Fishery Annual Status Report is the fifth report to be completed for the Queensland Eel Fishery. QPIF has an ongoing commitment to publicly report on the fishery annually.</p>	<p>Annual reports presented to DEWHA on the QEF are also available on QPIF's website.</p> <p>It is important that reports be produced and presented to DEWHA annually in order for the performance of the fishery and progress in implementing the recommendations in this report and other managerial commitments to be monitored and assessed throughout the life of the declaration.</p> <p>DEWHA commends QPIF on the way they currently present the annual reports to DEWHA and encourage its continuation.</p> <p>Refer to Recommendation 3, Table 4</p>
6. DPI&F to undertake fishery independent monitoring of representative unimpounded rivers on an annual basis to enable trends in adult eel abundance indicative of any declining recruitment to be identified.	<p>Met</p> <p>Fishery independent monitoring of freshwater species (including eels) occurred annually through the Long Term Monitoring Program (LTMP) between 2000 and 2006. Due to recent resourcing limitations, this program has not been undertaken during 2007-09 and its future is currently under review.</p>	<p>DEWHA commends QPIF on the monitoring that was undertaken as part of the LTMP and considers the action taken by QPIF to be appropriate. QPIF are encouraged to report to DEWHA on the outcome of the review for the LTMP to ensure measures are still in place to identify any decline in species abundance.</p> <p>DEWHA does not seek to maintain this recommendation on the QEF export approval.</p>
7. DPI&F to develop and implement sustainability indices for eel stocks within 3 years, to ensure some assessment of the proportion of adult eels that can be sustainably harvested is conducted on an annual basis. The annual assessment of the adult eel	<p>Met</p> <p>A QPIF and the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) project showed that fishery independent catch per unit effort (CPUE) data obtained from LTMP surveys was suitable to use as an index of abundance of adult</p>	<p>DEWHA commends QPIF on the FRDC project that was undertaken to address this recommendation. With the PMS for the QEF now being used to assess the fishery against measures annually, DEWHA encourages QPIF to ensure this remains an adequate tool to assess the proportion of adult eels that can be sustainably harvested.</p> <p>DEWHA does not seek to maintain this recommendation on the</p>

resource will incorporate assessment of the impacts of environmental variability, where possible.	eels and sustainability indicator. LTMP surveys were conducted annually from 2000-06. The program is currently under review in light of changes to QPIF resourcing. In March 2007 QPIF developed a PMS for the fishery. The fishery is assessed against the measures annually.	QEF export approval.
8. In the event that the current genetic study on Long Fin Eels reveals that eel stocks harvested in the fishery are not panmictic, DPI&F will investigate alternative management arrangements with a view to implementing management measures that ensure that catchment fidelity is adequately taken into account. A program for the collection of fishery dependent and independent data to inform management will also be investigated.	Met Postgraduate research was undertaken at Southern Cross University (SCU) in NSW on the genetic population structure of longfinned eels. Unpublished conclusions from this research suggest that longfinned eels are panmictic (Moore 2008). In addition to the SCU study, recently published research has found genetic trends which suggest panmixia within juvenile eel populations along Australia's east coast (Kang-Ning and Wann-Nian 2007). Fishery dependent data continues to be collected through compulsory monthly logbooks. Fishery independent monitoring occurred annually from 2000-06 and is currently under review in light of budgetary limitations.	It appears from the studies conducted that short and longfinned eels form a single panmictic breeding stock and that traditional stock assessment models are therefore not appropriate. As such QPIF should liaise with those jurisdictions, whose eel population form a sub-set of the global population, to determine if stock numbers are in decline across all jurisdictions and, if they are, to review and modify the management plan to ensure the sustainability of the fishery. This action is implemented through recommendation 4. DEWHA considers the action taken by the QPIF to be appropriate and does not seek to maintain this recommendation on the QEF export approval. Refer to Recommendation 4, Table 4 relating to cross jurisdictional cooperation.

<p>9. DPI&F to conduct a cost-benefit analysis on methods to facilitate juvenile eel recruitment upstream past waterway barriers. If an appropriate mechanism is identified, DPI&F to implement the mechanism and/or encourage relevant authorities to put in place measures to facilitate ongoing juvenile eel recruitment past waterway barriers.</p>	<p>Met In May 2009, QPIF drafted an economic cost-benefit analysis titled ‘Benefit-Cost Analysis for Proposed Juvenile Eel Recruitment Past Waterway Barriers’ (Maroske, 2009), which was employed to investigate the benefits associated with proposed juvenile eel recruitment past waterway barriers. Conclusions from the analysis suggested that the high costs associated with building and maintaining an effective juvenile eel passage system would have to result in significantly increased eel recruitment for it to be an economically viable initiative. As a result it is difficult to justify the facilitation of trap-and-transport passage systems in the eel fishery as this exercise is not considered economically feasible, given the current lack of available resources and the total value of the fishery.</p>	<p>DEWHA considers the action taken by the QPIF to be appropriate and does not seek to maintain this recommendation on the QEF export approval.</p>
<p>10. Within three years, DPI&F to undertake a risk analysis of the bycatch species, including protected species, taken in the fishery to identify those species vulnerable to fishing. Management measures to mitigate</p>	<p>Met An ecological risk assessment (ERA) of the Queensland Eel Fishery was undertaken in September 2006. The ERA was submitted to DEWHA in July 2007.</p>	<p>DEWHA considers the action taken by the QPIF to be appropriate and should risks become apparent QPIF to address in a timely manner.</p> <p>DEWHA does not seek to maintain this recommendation on the QEF export approval.</p>

threats to any species found to be at high risk from fishing operations should be developed and implemented in a timely manner.	<p>The ERA showed that risk posed to bycatch and protected species by the fishery is negligible to minor.</p> <p>An ERA is one aspect of QPIF's commitment to progress sustainable fisheries management.</p>	
11. DPI&F to implement the Species of Conservation Interest logbook in the adult and juvenile eel fisheries within 12 months to enable ongoing recording and monitoring of protected species interactions.	<p>Met and Ongoing</p> <p>SOCI logbooks for both the adult and juvenile components of the QEF were implemented in November 2006.</p> <p>QPIF and the Queensland fishing industry are committed to minimising the impacts of fishing on protected species. SOCI logbooks will enable QPIF to monitor and mitigate interactions with Queensland's protected species, which will further support QPIF's commitment to sustainable fisheries management.</p>	<p>DEWHA commends QPIF on the implementation of the SOCI logbooks. The QEF is known to have a high number of interactions with freshwater turtle species. All interactions reported through the SOCI logbook are associated with the adult eel sector of the fishery, which operates in dams and impoundments. There are currently no reported interactions within the juvenile sector which operates in river basins.</p> <p>Whilst it is unlikely that the fishery interacts with species of freshwater turtles that are protected under the EPBC Act it is important to ensure that species specific reporting of freshwater turtle interactions in logbooks occurs in order to better identify the level of risk posed by these interactions on the species to which it relates.</p> <p>Refer to Recommendation 5, Table 4 relating to species specific reporting in the SOCI logbooks.</p>

Table 3: DEWHAs assessment of the QEF against the requirements of the EPBC Act related to decisions made under Part 13A

Please Note – the table below is not a complete or exact representation of the EPBC Act. It is intended as a summary of relevant sections and components of the EPBC Act to provide advice on the fishery in relation to decisions under Part 13A. A complete version of the EPBC Act can be found on the DEWHA website.

Part 13A

Section 303DC Minister may amend list	DEWHA assessment of the QEF
<p>(1) Minister may, by instrument in published in the Gazette, amend the list referred to in section 303DB (list of exempt native specimens) by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) including items in the list; (b) deleting items from the list; or (c) imposing a condition or restriction to which the inclusion of a specimen in the list is subject; or (d) varying of revoking a condition or restriction to which the inclusion of a specimen in the list is subject; or (e) correcting an inaccuracy or updating the name of a species. 	
<p>(3) Before amending the list referred to in section 303DB (list of exempt native specimens), the Minister:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) must consult such other Minister or Ministers as the Minister considers appropriate; and (b) must consult such other Minister or Ministers of each State and self-governing Territory as the Minister considers appropriate; and (c) may consult such other persons and organisations as the Minister considers appropriate. 	<p>DEWHA considers that the consultation requirements have been met. The public comment period on the QEF submission sought comment on the submission for the QEF and provided sufficient opportunity for consultation with other persons and organisations.</p> <p>No public comments were received during the mandated 20 day consultation period.</p> <p>A letter to the Queensland Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Rural and Regional Queensland the Hon Tim Mulherin MP advises him of the intention to declare the fishery exempt from the export provisions of the EPBC Act.</p>

	The instrument for the QEF made under sections 303DC will be gazetted and made available on the DEWHA website.
(5) A copy of an instrument made under section 303DC is to be made available for inspection on the Internet.	The instrument for the QEF made under sections 303DC will be gazetted and made available on the DEWHA website.

Section 303FR Public consultation	DEWHA assessment of the QEF
<p>(1) Before making a declaration under section 303FN, the Minister must cause to be published on the Internet a notice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) setting out the proposal to make the declaration; and (b) setting out sufficient information to enable persons and organisations to consider adequately the merits of the proposal; and (c) inviting persons and organisations to give the Minister, within the period specified in the notice, written comments about the proposal. 	<p>Under the EPBC Act, a decision to amend the List of Exempt Native Specimen (LENS) does not require a public consultation period. However, a public notice, which set out the proposal to grant export approval to the QEF and included the submission for the QEF was released for public comment which closed on 24 August 2009. No public comments were received.</p>
<p>(2) A period specified in the notice must not be shorter than 20 business days after the date on which the notice was published on the Internet.</p>	<p>A public notice, which set out the proposal to grant export approval to the QEF and included the submission for the QEF was released for public comment on 12 August 2009 and closed on 14 September 2009, a total of 24 business days.</p>
<p>(3) In making a decision about whether to make a declaration under section 303FN, the Minister must consider any comments about the proposal to make the declaration that were given in response to the invitation in the notice.</p>	<p>No public comments about the proposal were received.</p>

Part 16

Section 391 Minister must consider precautionary principle in making decisions	DEWHA assessment of the QEF
(1) The Minister must take account of the precautionary principle in making a decision under section 303DC and/or section 303FN, to the extent he or she can do so consistently with the other provisions of this Act.	The precautionary principle has been considered when making a decision to include specimens on the LENS.
(2) The precautionary principle is that lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing a measure to prevent degradation of the environment where there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage.	

Objects of Part 13A

- (a) to ensure that Australia complies with its obligations under Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Biodiversity Convention;
- (b) to protect wildlife that may be adversely affected by trade;
- (c) to promote the conservation of biodiversity in Australia and other countries;
- (d) to ensure that any commercial utilisation of Australian native wildlife for the purposes of export is managed in an ecologically sustainable way;
- (e) to promote the humane treatment of wildlife;
- (f) to ensure ethical conduct during any research associated with the utilisation of wildlife; and
- (h) to ensure the precautionary principle is taken into account in making decisions relating to the utilisation of wildlife.

Final recommendations to QPIF for the QEF

The material submitted by QPIF indicates that the QEF operates in accordance with the Australian Government *Guidelines for the Ecologically Sustainable Management of Fisheries 2nd edition*. DEWHA considers that the fishery is well managed and unlikely to have an unacceptable or unsustainable impact on the environment in the medium term. Overall, DEWHA recognises that the QEF operates by regulating effort through limited entry, input controls, gear design, and waters open to commercial fishing, all of which are conservative measures to suggest that the fishery is being managed in an ecologically sustainable way.

In making its assessment, DEWHA considers that the range of management measures are sufficient to ensure that the fishery is conducted in a manner that does not lead to overfishing and that stocks are not currently overfished. Taking into account the limited entry, spatial closures, gear restrictions, minimum size limits, and PMS in place, DEWHA considers that fishing operations are managed to minimise their impact on the structure, productivity, function and biological diversity of the ecosystem.

DEWHA is satisfied that the fishery will not be detrimental to the survival or conservation status of the taxon to which it relates in the short term. Similarly, it is not likely to threaten any relevant ecosystem in the short term. To contain and minimise the risks in the longer term the recommendations listed below have been made. DEWHA believes that product taken in the fishery should be exempt from the export controls of Part 13A of the EPBC Act, with that exemption to be reviewed in four years six months.

DEWHA considers that the operation of the fishery does not, or is not likely to, adversely affect the survival in nature of a listed threatened species or population of that species or the conservation status of a listed migratory species, cetacean or listed marine species or a population of any of those species. DEWHA also considers that under the management regime operators are required to take all reasonable steps to avoid the killing or injuring of protected species, and the level of interaction under current fishing operations is low.

Recommendations are provided below with a brief explanation of the related issue/intent. Unless a specific time frame is provided in the recommendation each recommendation must be addressed within the life of the declaration (four years, six months).

Table 4: QEF Assessment– Summary of Issues, and Recommendations October, 2009

	Issue	Recommendation
1	<p><u>General Management</u> Export decisions relate to the arrangements in force at the time of the decision. In order to ensure that these decisions remain valid and export approval continues uninterrupted, DEWHA needs to be advised of any changes that are made 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 operational and legislated amendments that may affect sustainability of the target species or negatively impact on byproduct, bycatch, protected species or the ecosystem.</p>	<p>Recommendation 1: Operation of the fishery will be carried out in accordance with the management regime in force under the <i>Queensland Fisheries Act 1994</i>, the <i>Queensland Fisheries Regulation 2008</i> and the <i>Fisheries (Freshwater) Management Plan 1999</i>.</p> <p>Recommendation 2: QPIF to inform DEWHA of any intended amendments to the management arrangements that may affect the assessment of the QEF against the criteria on which <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> decisions are based.</p>
2	<p><u>Annual Reporting</u> It is important that reports be produced and presented to DEWHA annually in order for the performance of the fishery and progress in implementing the recommendations in this report and other managerial commitments to be monitored and assessed throughout the life of the declaration.</p> <p>Annual reports should include: a description of the fishery; management arrangements in place; research and monitoring outcomes; recent catch data for all sectors of the fishery; status of target stock; interactions with protected species; impacts of the fishery on the ecosystem in which it operates; and information outlining progress in implementing conditions and recommendations resulting from the previous accreditation of the fishery (for a complete description of annual reporting requirements, see Appendix B of the Guidelines available from the DEWHA website at http://www.environment.gov.au/coasts/fisheries/publications/guidelines.html).</p>	<p>Recommendation 3: QPIF to produce and present reports to DEWHA annually as per Appendix B to the <i>Guidelines for the Ecologically Sustainable Management of Fisheries 2nd Edition</i>.</p>

3	<p><u>Cross Jurisdictional Cooperation</u></p> <p>Research conducted under the auspices of the Australia and New Zealand Eel Research Group (ANZERG) has indicated that all Australian and New Zealand southern shortfin and longfin eels (<i>Anguilla australis</i> and <i>A. reinhardtii</i> respectively) form part of a single genetic breeding stock – whose spawning area is believed to be located in the Coral Sea.</p> <p>DEWHA have been advised that ANZERG are not conducting any research programs into eel populations in Australian or New Zealand fisheries at present and encourages QPIF to be engaged with relevant cross jurisdictional organisations.</p> <p>Eels are harvested in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and New Zealand and, therefore, DEWHA considers cross jurisdictional communication vital in identifying and addressing any new threats to the sustainability of eel stocks.</p> <p>Given the difficulty in traditional stock and biomass assessments for these species, QPIF is encouraged to maintain close links with other jurisdictions to ensure management arrangements consider changes in the global eel population.</p>	<p>Recommendation 4: QPIF to collaborate with other jurisdictions in pursuing consistent and complementary research needs and management arrangements for target species.</p>
4	<p><u>Species Identification and Reporting of Protected Species² interactions</u></p> <p>DEWHA commends QPIF on the implementation of the SOCI logbooks within the QEF in 2006 to allow for reporting of interactions with protected species.</p> <p>The QEF is known to have a high number of interactions with freshwater turtles within the adult eel sector of the fishery which operates in dams and impoundments. There are currently no reported interactions within the juvenile sector which operates in river basins. The adult eel sector of the fishery reported a number of interactions with freshwater turtles. Whilst it is unlikely that the fishery interacts with species of</p>	<p>Recommendation 5:</p> <p>By November 2010, QPIF to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) develop and implement species specific reporting of interactions with protected species in the QEF, especially freshwater turtles; and (b) in the event that a significant number of interactions with species protected under the EPBC Act becomes apparent, a clear timetable for the implementation of

² 'Protected species' means all species listed under Part 13 of the EPBC Act, including whales and other cetaceans and threatened, marine and migratory species.

<p>freshwater turtles that are protected under the EPBC Act it is important to ensure that species specific reporting of freshwater turtle interactions in logbooks occurs in order to better identify the level of risk posed by these interactions on the species to which it relates.</p> <p>With the focus now on progressing towards an ecosystem based approach to fishery management, DEWHA strongly encourage QPIF to consider ways to ensure fishers receive continued education in regard to improved species identification and handling. Measures such as, protected species identification and handling education and species identification guides would improve reporting of protected species in the SOCI logbooks to better reflect protected species interactions.</p> <p>DEWHA therefore recommends that QPIF develop and implements species specific reporting of interactions with protected species (species of conservation interest) in the QEF, especially freshwater turtles.</p>	<p>appropriate management responses to be made within 3 months.</p>
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Acronyms

ANZERG	Australia and New Zealand Eel Research Group
BRD	Bycatch Reduction Device
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CPUE	Cost Per Unit of Effort
DEWHA	Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
ERA	Ecological Risk Assessment
FRDC	Fisheries Research and Development Corporation
LENS	List of Exempt Native Specimen
LTMP	Long Term Monitoring Programme
PMS	Performance Measurement System
QBFP	Queensland Boating Fisheries Patrol
QEF	Queensland Eel Fishery
QPIF	Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries
SCU	Southern Cross University
SOCI	Species of Conservation Interest