



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 Moore

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

In June 2011, the Western Australian Department of Fisheries submitted the *Application to the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities on the WA Beche-de-mer Fishery Against the Guidelines for the Ecologically Sustainable Management of Fisheries 2011* for consideration of further export approval for the Western Australian Beche-de-mer Fishery.

The submission has been assessed for the purposes of Parts 13 and 13A of the EPBC Act, taking into account measures that have been developed by the Western Australian Department of Fisheries in response to recommendations made in the 2007 assessment of the fishery.

I am pleased to advise that assessment of the Western Australian Beche-de-mer Fishery 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/beche-de-mer/index.html>

I consider that the management arrangements for the Western Australian Beche-de-mer Fishery meet most of the Australian Government *Guidelines for the Ecologically Sustainable Management of Fisheries - 2nd Edition*. I am satisfied that the operation of the fishery remains consistent with the objects of the wildlife trade provisions of Part 13A of the EPBC Act, given the lack of bycatch and byproduct due to the hand collection methods used in the fishery and the management arrangements currently in place, which include limited entry, gear restrictions and species-specific minimum legal size restrictions based on size at maturity estimates. I am also satisfied that the operation of the fishery over the period of the declaration as an approved wildlife trade operation is unlikely to be detrimental to the survival or conservation status of any taxon to which the fishery operation relates, or threaten any relevant ecosystem.

Accordingly, I have decided to declare the Western Australian Beche-de-mer Fishery an approved wildlife trade operation until 29 August 2014. The declaration will be subject to the conditions at **Attachment A**.



While there are some environmental risks associated with the Western Australian Beche-de-mer Fishery, I believe the Western Australian Department of Fisheries is committed to addressing these issues and has already taken proactive steps in some areas. Officers from the Western Australian Department of Fisheries and the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities have agreed to three additional recommendations to be implemented before the next Australian Government assessment of the fishery (**Attachment B**). These recommendations focus on minimising the risk of localised and serial depletion to target species, incorporating stock information into management arrangements as it becomes available and facilitating complementary research and management with other relevant jurisdictions.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'N. Routh', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nigel Routh
Delegate of the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and
Communities

31 August 2011

Conditions on the approved wildlife trade operation declaration for the Western Australian Beche-de-mer Fishery

1. Operation of the fishery will be carried out in accordance with the management regime under the Western Australian *Fish Resources Management Act 1994*.
2. The Western Australian Department of Fisheries to advise the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities of any intended material change to the Western Australian Beche-de-mer Fishery legislated management regime and management arrangements that could affect the criteria on which *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* decisions are based.
3. Western Australian Department of Fisheries to produce and present reports to the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities annually as per Appendix B of the *Guidelines for the Ecologically Sustainable Management of Fisheries - 2nd Edition*.

Recommendations to the Western Australian Department of Fisheries on the ecologically sustainable management of the Western Australian Beche-de-mer Fishery

1. The Western Australian Department of Fisheries to continue to monitor catch, effort and spatial information collected from logbooks. Based on this information, the Western Australian Department of Fisheries to implement management measures as appropriate to:
 - a. reduce the risk of localised and serial depletion of target sea cucumber species; and
 - b. limit the catch of other species of sea cucumber to sustainable levels.
2. The Western Australian Department of Fisheries, as stock information becomes available, to review and refine performance indicators for redfish (*Actinopyga echininites*) to ensure harvest levels are sustainable.
3. The Western Australian Department of Fisheries to investigate and facilitate collaborative research and complementary management arrangements for sea cucumber resources with all relevant jurisdictions across northern Australia.