



Australian Government

Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts

Mr Stuart Smith
Chief Executive Officer
Department of Fisheries Western Australia
3rd Floor, The Atrium
168 St George's Terrace
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Mr Smith

I am writing to you as Delegate of the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts in relation to the export approvals of five Western Australia (WA) fisheries granted under Part 13A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

In May 2009, we met with officers from your Department as part of our annual bilateral meetings regarding EPBC Act export (Part 13A) and protected species (Part 13) matters. At this meeting, we discussed the upcoming timetable for WA fisheries requiring assessment against the EPBC Act noting the heavy workload for both agencies in the second half of 2009. In response to this workload, both of our agencies agreed to investigate options to spread the assessment load and look for efficiencies in preparing for, and conducting fishery assessments.

In addition, on 27 May 2009 you wrote to the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) requesting a short-term extension to the export approval of the Shark Bay Snapper Managed Fishery to allow the results of a review of the fishery's Ecological Risk Assessment to be considered as part of the reassessment of the fishery seeking ongoing export approval under Part 13A of the EPBC Act.

In consideration of these issues and in consultation with officers from your Department, I have decided to extend the export approvals for five WA fisheries. The fisheries concerned and the extension timeframes are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1 –Extensions of export approvals for WA fisheries requiring reassessment under Parts 13 and 13A of the EPBC Act.

Fishery	Current expiry date	Extended expiry date
Shark Bay Snapper Managed Fishery	30 June 2009	30 September 2009
Broome Prawn Managed Fishery	13 August 2009	30 April 2010
Onslow Prawn Managed Fishery	18 November 2009	30 April 2010
Nickol Bay Prawn Managed Fishery	18 November 2009	30 April 2010
Kimberley Prawn Managed Fishery	30 November 2009	30 April 2010

I understand officers from our Departments have been in contact with regard to these extensions and are already working towards meeting the new assessment timeframes.

With regard to the four prawn fisheries, I understand the proposal discussed between our officers is to conduct one assessment of all four fisheries, rather than four individual assessments. I commend this new approach and ask that your submission seeking ongoing export approval is provided no later than 30 November 2009. I also ask that officers from your Department preparing the submission liaise closely with us to ensure it contains relevant information at an appropriate level of detail.

We have requested this longer lead-in time (normally three months) and closer consultation during the preparation of your submission, in recognition of the new approach to the reassessments of these four fisheries. Should this approach prove successful we may look to apply it to other fisheries and regions to improve resourcing efficiencies and outcomes of future assessments for both agencies.

Please note that in granting these extensions, I expect the Department of Fisheries WA (DFWA) to continue to work towards meeting the recommendations developed, and agreed to by DFWA, during the initial assessments of these fisheries in 2004. These recommendations will continue to apply to the short-term export approvals for the five fisheries.

If you require further details or would like to discuss the matters above, please contact Mr Lee Butcher, Assistant Director, Sustainable Fisheries Section on 02 6274 2324 or Lee.Butcher@environment.gov.au. I look forward to continuing a co-operative relationship on these matters.

Yours sincerely

[Signed]

Nigel Routh
Delegate of the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

25 June 2009