



**Australian Government**

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

Ref: 002068366

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

Dear Mr Norris

I am writing to you as Delegate of the Minister for the Environment in relation to the assessment of the Torres Strait Finfish Fishery under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

In October 2020 the Australian Fisheries Management Authority applied for export approval for the fishery under the EPBC Act.

The application has been assessed and I have declared the fishery an approved wildlife trade operation under Part 13A of the EPBC Act until 1 November 2023. The list of exempt native specimens has also been amended to allow export of product from the fishery while the specimens are covered by the declaration as an approved wildlife trade operation.

The Part 13A declaration includes conditions and recommendation that were agreed by officials from AFMA and the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment as areas requiring ongoing attention. These are set out at **Attachment 1**.

I have also reaccredited the management plan for the fishery under Part 13 of the EPBC Act.

Please note that any person whose interests are affected by this decision may make an application to the Department for the reasons for the decision, and may apply to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal to have this decision reviewed. I have enclosed further information on these processes at **Attachment 2**.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Laura Timmins'.

Laura Timmins  
Delegate of the Minister for the Environment

23 December 2020

**Part 13A conditions to the Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority on the approved wildlife trade operation declaration for the Torres Strait Finfish Fishery – December 2020**

**Condition 1:**

The Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority must ensure that operation of the Torres Strait Finfish Fishery is carried out in accordance with management arrangements defined in the *Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1984*, *Torres Strait Fisheries Regulations 1985*, *Torres Strait Finfish Fishery Management Plan 2013*, *Torres Strait Fisheries Management Instrument No. 14*, *Torres Strait Fisheries (Finfish) Management Instrument 2020*, *Torres Strait Fisheries (Furnishing of Logbooks) Instrument 2020* and in fishery permit conditions.

**Condition 2:**

The Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority must inform the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment of any intended material changes to the Torres Strait Finfish Fishery management arrangements that may affect the assessment against which *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* decisions are made.

**Condition 3:**

The Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority must inform the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment of any intended changes to fisheries legislation that may affect the legislative instruments relevant to this approval.

**Condition 4:**

The Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority must provide reports to the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment annually as per Appendix B of the *Guidelines for the Ecologically Sustainable Management of Fisheries - 2nd Edition*.

**Condition 5:**

By 30 June 2023 the Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority must complete an ecological risk assessment of the Torres Strait Finfish Fishery and develop a associated risk management strategy to address any risks identified in this assessment.

**Condition 6:**

The Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority must review the current measures applied to the management of the take of sharks in the Torres Strait Finfish Fishery to ensure that they are in line with Commonwealth best practice.

**Condition 7:**

The Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority must review the appropriateness of the current minimum size limits for Spanish Mackerel in the Torres Strait Finfish Fishery.

**Condition 8:**

By 30 June 2023 the Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority must develop a harvest strategy for the Torres Strait Finfish Fishery.

**Condition 9:**

The Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority must ensure that there is a sufficient level of compliance measures in place to ensure the sustainable management of the Torres Strait Finfish Fishery, in accordance with the management arrangements in place for the fishery, including the reporting of interaction with protected species.

**Recommendation 1:**

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority to continue to work with the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment and the Protected Zone Joint Authority to implement changes to the *Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1984* to allow data reporting requirements to apply to all fishing sectors in the fishery.

Data collection requirements are to include:

- The total quantity of each target and non-target species removed from the fishery, including any catch discarded prior to landing to an authorised fish receiver;
- Catch and effort data, including location of all commercial fishing activity; and
- Interactions with protected species.

Progress and outcome of this recommendation to be included in annual reports required under condition 4.



## **Notification of Reviewable Decisions and Rights of Review<sup>1</sup>**

There is a right of review to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) in relation to certain decisions/declarations made by the Minister, the Minister's delegate or the Secretary under Part 13A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

Section 303GJ(1) of the EPBC Act provides that applications may be made to the AAT for the review of the following decisions:

- (a) to issue or refuse a permit; or
- (b) to specify, vary or revoke a condition of a permit; or
- (c) to impose a further condition of a permit; or
- (d) to transfer or refuse to transfer a permit; or
- (e) to suspend or cancel a permit; or
- (f) to issue or refuse a certificate under subsection 303CC(5); or
- (g) of the Secretary under a determination in force under section 303EU; or
- (h) to make or refuse a declaration under section 303FN, 303FO or 303FP; or
- (i) to vary or revoke a declaration under section 303FN, 303FO or 303FP.

If you are dissatisfied with a decision of a type listed above you may:

- by notice, provided in writing, request that the Minister or the Minister's delegate give you a statement in writing setting out the reasons for the decision as per section 28 of the *Administrative Appeals Tribunal Act 1975*. The Minister, or Minister's delegate may refuse to give you a statement of reasons if your application is made more than 28 days after the day on which you received this notice.
- apply to the AAT for independent merits review of the decision. The AAT undertakes *de novo* merits review. This means they take a fresh look at the facts, law and policy relating to the decision and arrive at their own decision. They decide if the decision should stay the same or be changed. They are independent of the Department.

Application for review of a decision must be made to the AAT within **28 days** after the day on which you have received the reviewable decision. However an extension of time for lodging an application may be granted by the AAT under certain circumstances. Please visit the AAT's website at <http://www.aat.gov.au/> or telephone 1800 228 333 for further information. The role of the AAT is to provide a review mechanism that is fair, just, economical, informal and quick.

### **Applications & Costs**

Applications to the AAT are made by lodging an Application Form (Form 1). This can be found on the AAT's website at <http://www.aat.gov.au/>.

There are no strict timelines in which the AAT must review the decision, however the first conference between the parties will usually be held within 6 to 10 weeks of the application

---

<sup>1</sup> In accordance with the *Administrative Appeals Tribunal Act 1975* Code of Practice for Notification of Reviewable Decisions and Rights of Review

being lodged. The time frame for review of certain decisions can be expedited in some circumstances.

The cost of lodging an application for review is \$952 (as of 1 July 2020) (GST inclusive). You may be eligible to pay a reduced fee of \$100.00 if

- you are receiving legal aid for your application;
- you hold a health care card, a Commonwealth seniors health card or any other card issued by the Department of Social Services or the Department of Veteran's Affairs that entitles the holder to Commonwealth health concessions;
- you are in prison or lawfully detained in a public institution;
- you are under 18 years of age; or
- you are receiving youth allowance, Austudy or ABSTUDY.

You may also be eligible for a reduced fee if you can demonstrate to the AAT that paying the full fee would cause you financial hardship. Further information can be found on the AAT's website. Additionally, you can access information about legal assistance at <https://www.ag.gov.au/LegalSystem/Legalaidprogrammes/Commonwealthlegalfinancialassistance/Documents/LegalFinancialAssistanceInformationSheet.pdf>.

If you pay a standard application fee, most of it will be refunded if the case is resolved in your favour. The refund amount is the difference between the fee you paid and \$100. So, if you paid \$920, you get back \$820 and if you pay \$952, you get back \$852. There is no refund if you paid the lower application fee for certain taxation decisions or the reduced fee of \$100.

### Contact Details

Further information or enquiries relating to the decision should be directed to:

The Director  
Wildlife Trade Assessments Section  
Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment  
GPO Box 858  
Canberra ACT 2601  
**Telephone:** +61 (0) 2 6274 1917  
**Email:** [sustainablefisheries@environment.gov.au](mailto:sustainablefisheries@environment.gov.au)

Alternatively you may contact the AAT at their Principal Registry or the Deputy Registrar, Administrative Appeals Tribunal in your Capital City or Territory.

Administrative Appeals Tribunal  
Street address: Level 6, 83 Clarence Street, Sydney  
Mailing address: GPO Box 9955, Sydney, NSW 2001  
T: 1800 228 333 and (02) 9276 5000  
F: (02) 9276 5599  
E: [generalreviews@aat.gov.au](mailto:generalreviews@aat.gov.au)  
W: <http://www.aat.gov.au>

### Freedom of Information Request

You may make an application under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) to access documents. Further information can be found at <http://www.environment.gov.au/foi/index.html>. Please contact the Freedom of Information Contact Officer at [foi@environment.gov.au](mailto:foi@environment.gov.au) for more information.