



**Australian Government**  
**Department of the Environment**

Ref: 2012/04743

Dr Lindsay Joll  
Director Aquatic Management  
Western Australian Department of Fisheries  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, The Atrium  
168 Georges Terrace  
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Dr Joll,

I am writing to you regarding the Department of the Environment's current reassessment of the Western Australian Pilbara Fish Trawl Interim Managed Fishery under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

In May 2013, you wrote to the Department requesting an extension to the export approval for the Pilbara Fish Trawl Interim Managed Fishery, due to delays in finalising a scientific report on the effectiveness of measures to reduce fatal dolphin interactions in the fishery. The list of exempt native specimens was amended in June 2013 to allow product from the fishery to continue to be exported until 29 November 2013.

I would like to thank you for the responses to the public comments that your department provided on 28 October 2013 and for providing the draft scientific report on dolphin interactions.

The ongoing bycatch of potentially significant numbers of dolphins in the Pilbara Fish Trawl Interim Managed Fishery is likely to be a key issue for the Minister for the Environment. I note, however, that the scientific report was provided in-confidence. At present, there would appear to be some discrepancies in the information received by the Department during the public consultation process, and the material provided in the draft scientific report. To resolve and provide clarity on these issues, the Department requests that the report be finalised and released for peer review by relevant scientific experts and stakeholders prior to completing its assessment.

To allow time for this to occur, as Delegate of the Minister for the Environment, I have extended export approval until 21 May 2014. Publishing the report prior to March 2014 will allow sufficient time to complete the assessment process prior to the expiry of the export approval.

If you have any questions regarding this matter please contact Nathan Hanna, Director Sustainable Fisheries, on (02) 6274 1917 or by email at [nathan.hanna@environment.gov.au](mailto:nathan.hanna@environment.gov.au)

Yours sincerely

Paul Murphy  
Delegate of the Minister for the Environment

19 November 2013

