



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

Ref: 000676260

The Hon William Byrne  
Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries  
Minister for Sport and Racing  
PO Box 729  
Rockhampton QLD 4700

Dear Minister

I am writing to you as the Delegate of the Minister for the Environment in relation to approvals under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) for five Queensland commercial fisheries.

In October 2014, the Australian Government Minister for the Environment, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, wrote to the former Queensland Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, the Hon Dr John McVeigh MP, to seek his views on a reform proposal to extend the maximum timeframe for EPBC Act approvals from five years to ten years for commercial fisheries assessed as posing low environmental risk. These approvals are based on assessments of the fisheries' impacts on marine species protected under Part 13 of the EPBC Act, as well as evaluating fisheries for the purpose of export approval under Part 13A.

Minister McVeigh responded in favour of this proposal in November 2014, consistent with the majority view of all parties consulted. The Minister for the Environment subsequently agreed to proceed with the proposal. Officers from the Department of the Environment and the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries have worked collaboratively over the last several months to determine which Queensland fisheries continue to meet all relevant EPBC Act requirements and can therefore have their export approval extended until August 2025. The five fisheries deemed eligible for extended EPBC Act approvals are listed at **Attachment 1**.

These extensions have been assessed for the purposes of the protected species provisions of Part 13 and the wildlife trade provisions of Part 13A of the EPBC Act. The assessments took into account all of the management arrangements implemented by the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The management regimes for four of these five fisheries are currently accredited under Part 13 of the EPBC Act, for interactions with protected species. I am satisfied that it remains unlikely that fishing operations conducted in accordance with these management regimes will adversely affect the conservation status of protected species or affect the survival or recovery in nature of listed threatened species or adversely affect the conservation status of listed migratory species, cetaceans or listed marine species. I also consider that under the current management regimes, operators are required to take all reasonable steps to avoid the killing or injuring of species listed under Part 13 of the EPBC Act.

I have therefore agreed to continue the accreditation of the management regimes for these four fisheries under Part 13 of the EPBC Act. Ongoing accreditation will ensure that individual fishers operating in accordance with the current management regime are not required to seek permits if they are at risk of killing or injuring listed species in Commonwealth waters. The remaining fifth fishery operates wholly within QLD state waters and so does not require Part 13 accreditation.

I consider that all five fisheries operate in line with the Australian Government *Guidelines for the Ecologically Sustainable Management of Fisheries – 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. Given the management arrangements and precautionary measures in place in each fishery, I have decided to amend the list of exempt native specimens to allow export of product from each fishery to continue until 28 August 2025.

I would like to thank you for the constructive way in which your officials have approached this reform process and these assessments.

Yours sincerely



Paul Murphy

Delegate of the Minister for the Environment

13/11 October 2015

**Queensland managed fisheries eligible for ten year approval under the EPBC Act**

1. Commercial Crayfish and Rocklobster Fishery
2. East Coast Pearl Fishery
3. East Coast Trochus Fishery
4. Eel Fishery
5. Spanner Crab Fishery