



Australian Government

Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities

Our reference: 2008/12964

The Hon. Peter Walsh, MP
Minister for Agriculture and Food
Level 20
1 Spring Street
Melbourne Victoria, 3000

Dear Minister

I am writing to you as Delegate of the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities in relation to the reassessment of the Victorian Sea Urchin Fishery under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

In August 2011, the Victorian Department of Primary Industries provided the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities with a submission for reassessment of the Victorian Sea Urchin Fishery under the EPBC Act.

I am pleased to advise that assessment of the Victorian Sea Urchin Fishery is now complete. The assessment report will be available on the department's website at:
<http://www.environment.gov.au/coasts/fisheries/vic/sea-urchin/index.html>.

I am satisfied that the operation of the Victorian Sea Urchin Fishery is consistent with the objects of the wildlife trade provisions in Part 13A of the EPBC Act. Given the management arrangements and precautionary measures for the fishery including limited entry, gear restrictions, and annual reviews of the fishery's performance against reference points, I have decided to amend the list of exempt native specimens to allow ongoing export of product from this fishery for a period of five years, until 1 November 2016.

While there are some environmental risks associated with the Victorian Sea Urchin Fishery, I believe the Victorian Department of Primary Industries has in place measures to address these issues. Officers from the Victorian Department of Primary Industries and the department have discussed areas requiring ongoing attention and agreed to recommendations focussing on ensuring the continuation of good management practices. These recommendations can be found at **Attachment A**. These recommendations have been an important factor in my decision to include product derived from the Victorian Sea Urchin Fishery in the list of exempt native specimens and I look forward to receiving your confirmation that they will be implemented.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

GPO Box 787 Canberra ACT 2601 Telephone 02 6274 1111 Facsimile 02 6274 1666

www.environment.gov.au



Please note that export decisions under the EPBC Act relate to the arrangements in force at the time of the assessment decision. To ensure that the decision remains valid, the department needs to be advised of any intended changes to the management plan and make an assessment that the new arrangements are equivalent or better, in terms of ecological sustainability, than those in place at the time of the original decision. This includes legislated amendments and operational changes that may affect the sustainability of the target species or negatively impact on byproduct, bycatch, protected species or the ecosystem.

I would like to thank you for the cooperation of your officials in this assessment.

Yours sincerely



Nigel Routh

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

20 October 2011

Recommendations to the Victorian Department of Primary Industries on the ecologically sustainable management of the Victorian Sea Urchin Fishery.

1. Operation of the fishery will be carried out in accordance with the management regime for the fishery in force under the Victorian *Fisheries Act 1995* and *Fisheries Regulations 2009*.
2. The Victorian Department of Primary Industries to advise the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities of any intended change to the fishery's management arrangements that could affect the assessment against the criteria on which *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* decisions are based.
3. The Victorian Department of Primary Industries to produce and present reports to the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities annually as per Appendix B to the *Guidelines for the Ecologically Sustainable Management of Fisheries - 2nd Edition*.

