



Co-Chairs' Update 3 November 2015

Consideration of options

The targeted consultations to test our revised zoning options concluded at the end of August with 80 meetings held in 11 locations and by phone, with over 200 regional and national stakeholders.

The meetings were very productive and our proposals were generally well received.

We received constructive feedback in relation to our options and also identified new issues for which we have been finding solutions.

Advice from the Expert Scientific Panel

As mentioned in our previous updates, we made a number of requests for advice to the Expert Scientific Panel (ESP) in relation to issues raised during consultations held by the Bioregional Advisory Panels (BAPs).

At a final face-to-face meeting in Hobart in mid September, the ESP considered these issues and has now provided us with a series of findings and advice. This includes synopses of research results that have been published since the Commonwealth Marine Reserves (CMRs) system was proclaimed in 2012 and that are relevant to reserves that we have been considering (for example, comprehensive sampling surveys that were recently conducted in the Geographe and Oceanic Shoals CMRs).

Panel member input

Informed by the ESP advice and following our 'option testing' with key stakeholders in July and August, we have spent the last month further refining our recommendations for

zoning. We believe that we are very close to finding a workable set of solutions.

An early draft of the report was circulated to the members of the five regional panels for comments; we then held panel meetings over the phone to discuss recommendations about the reserves specific to their region.

Completion of the Review

It is critically important to ensure thorough consideration of all material brought before us during the consultations. Although we have been working hard to finalise the report for the Review quickly, bringing all the threads together, within and across the ESP and the BAP streams, it has been a complex and challenging task and has taken longer than expected.

We recently met with Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, Senator Anne Ruston, who has recently been given responsibility for fisheries, and updated her on the review and our progress.

We have asked the Government for a short extension of time to help us deliver the best possible options and will deliver a final report by the end of the month.

Prof. Colin Buxton

Mr Peter Cochrane

Co-Chairs of the Bioregional Advisory Panels

Further information:

For more information about the Commonwealth Marine Reserves Review and the Panels, please visit: www.marinereservesreview.gov.au