

# Queensland Marine Specimen Shell Collection Fishery 2009

Progress against DEWHA conditions and recommendations



**Queensland** Government

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## Progress in implementing Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) conditions and recommendations for the Queensland Marine Specimen Shell Collection Fishery.

The Queensland Marine Specimen Shell Collection Fishery (MSSCF) was granted a five-year exemption from export controls under the EPBC Act on 1 December 2004. As part of the assessment, DEWHA made a range of recommendations to QPIF to address perceived sustainability risks or uncertainties. Details of the progress QPIF has made in relation to the current recommendations are outlined in this document.

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### Recommendation 1:

QPIF to inform DEWHA of any intended amendments to the management arrangements that may affect sustainability of the target species or negatively impact on protected species or the ecosystem.

**Progress:** Ongoing

There have been no management changes during the reporting period.

### Recommendation 2:

By December 2005, QPIF to develop fishery specific objectives linked to performance indicators and performance measures for species representative of those listed in Groups 1-3 (Appendix 1 of the report — *Ecological Assessment of Queensland's Marine Specimen Shell Collection Fishery July 2004*) including, but not necessarily limited to, most commonly caught species in the fishery.

**Progress:** Complete

QPIF developed a Performance Measurement System (PMS) for the MSSCF based on the outcomes of the ecological risk assessment conducted in 2005.

The PMS was endorsed by Harvest Management Advisory Committee (MAC) and implemented by QPIF in 2007. A copy of the PMS for the MSSCF can be found at [http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/documents/Fisheries\\_SustainableFishing/Fisheries-PMS-SpecimenShellCollect-2008.pdf](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/documents/Fisheries_SustainableFishing/Fisheries-PMS-SpecimenShellCollect-2008.pdf)

### Recommendation 3:

QPIF to monitor the status of the fishery in relation to the performance measures, once developed. Within 3 months of becoming aware of a performance measure not being met, DPI&F to finalise a clear timetable for the implementation of appropriate management responses.

**Progress:** In progress

The performance of the MSSCF was measured against indicators in the PMS in 2008 and reported in the 2009 Annual Status Report. No measures were triggered.

#### Recommendation 4:

DPI&F to conduct, within 12 months, a compliance risk assessment to determine the most effective use of resources and to specify the measures needed to ensure adequate compliance with the management regime. Within two years, DPI&F to develop and implement a compliance strategy for the fishery that includes clear management actions to address compliance risks.

##### Progress: Complete

A compliance risk assessment was conducted for the MSSCF in June 2005 to determine compliance priorities and allow the most effective use of Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol resources.

The risk assessment identified taking protected species of shells; exceeding the catch limit; use of unauthorised gear; retaining molluscs taken by other fishing methods; and taking molluscs from within an egg mass or those depositing an egg mass, as the highest priorities for enforcement and compliance in the Fishery. There were also a number of activities rated as having a moderate risk, which are also being addressed.

#### Recommendation 5:

From 2005, QPIF to report publicly on the status of the fishery on an annual basis, including explicit reporting against each performance measure, once developed.

##### Progress: Ongoing

QPIF have provided annual reports on the status of the fishery since 2005 with the exception of 2007 when there was no commercial activity. For that year, QPIF advised DEWHA by letter of the progress made in meeting the Recommendations for the fishery.

#### Recommendation 6:

QPIF to review the research information needs and priorities to meet the management information and performance measurement needs of the fishery. Analysis of research needs should take into account any gaps in the basic biological parameters required for the ecologically sustainable management of specimen shell species. QPIF to develop a research strategy to address identified priority areas and explore ways to cooperatively share in or take advantage of research done in other specimen shell fisheries.

##### Progress: Complete

QPIF developed the *Harvest Fishery Research & Development Priorities (2008-2013)* document in 2008 which aims to:

- focus the development of research & development projects for the Queensland harvest fishery sectors
- provide a publicly available document to disseminate research priorities as identified by the Harvest Fisheries Scientific Advisory Group to research providers and funding organisations
- provide a register of past and ongoing relevant research.

Research information needs and priorities to meet the management information and performance measurement needs of the MSSCF were considered a low research priority by the Harvest MAC given the very low level of activity in the fishery and the outcomes of the Ecological Risk Assessment for the fishery that showed that no species was at higher than a low sustainability risk from the impacts of the fishery.

**Recommendation 7:**

DPI&F to ensure that reliable estimates of recreational harvest of specimen shells are obtained and factored into the assessment and management of the MSSCF.

**Progress: Ongoing**

DPI&F surveyed Queensland's malacological societies for harvest estimates of specimen shells in 2005 and 2006. Results have been provided in the annual status reports for the fishery.

These surveys provide DPI&F with a more complete picture of the total number of removals by this fishery. The results confirm that only small numbers of specimen shells are being collected by enthusiasts and helps provide greater public confidence that the MSSCF is being managed sustainability.

