



## **SCIENTIFIC WORKING GROUP COMMUNIQUÉ – MEETING No. 53 15 August 2012**

The following members were present at the Scientific Working Group (SWG) meeting held on 15 August 2012: Peter Fairweather (chair), Luciano Beheregaray, Milena Fernandes, Bronwyn Gillanders, Charlie Huveneers, Martine Kinloch, Hugh Kirkman, Scoresby Shepherd and Hazel Vandeleur. Apologies were received from Anthony Cheshire, Sean Connell, and Luciana Moller.

The SWG wishes to advise the Minister of the following key outcomes:

- SWG briefly discussed the imminent public release of management plans and impact statements for the zoning of the 19 marine parks;
  - SWG was informed that a new structure had been finalised for the amalgamation of the old DENR with the Department for Water. The SWG requests that the Minister instructs Allan Holmes to inform them of the new arrangements for science within the amalgamated Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, especially regarding the capability for monitoring marine parks under this new structure;
  - SWG discussed the first day of the 2-day workshop then underway concerning Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (MER) of marine parks, involving representatives from most jurisdictions within Australia that are managing MPAs. The SWG saw this as an unprecedented opportunity to learn from the experiences of others to continue towards a State system of marine parks that is built upon the principles of best practice. In particular, the SWG listed issues to raise during the workshop's final day;
  - SWG began discussing whether an independent fund should be established to resource MER and research on the effects of marine parks and other spatial allocation decisions in the marine environment. This could be sourced via redirection of funds spent (mainly by private companies) upon environmental impact statements and other activities required for approval of major developments. Advantages would be the high degree of independence in the public eye and the appropriate sharing of costs regarding management of natural resources.
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Prof. Peter Fairweather  
Chair, Scientific Working Group