



Australian Government

**Department of Agriculture
and Water Resources**

Senate Environment and Communications References Committee

Inquiry into the environmental, social and economic
impacts of large-capacity fishing vessels commonly
known as 'supertrawlers' operating in Australia's
marine jurisdiction

Supplementary submission from the Australian Government
Department of Agriculture and Water Resources

September 2016

Introduction

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources welcomes the opportunity to provide new information to the Senate Standing Environment and Communications references committees' inquiry into *'the environmental, social and economic impacts of large-capacity fishing vessels commonly known as 'super trawlers' operating in Australia's marine jurisdiction'*.

We provided a submission in November 2015 which is still relevant. We would also like to draw the Committee's attention to the following new information.

Fishery status report 2016 – ABARES

The imminent release of the 2016 fishery status reports will provide the Senate Committee with an update of the economic and biological status of Commonwealth managed fisheries. We will provide the Senate Committee with a summary, relevant to the inquiry, once the reports are released on 30 September 2016.

Productivity Commission Inquiry – Marine Fisheries and Aquaculture - Draft Report August 2016

In December 2015 the Productivity Commission (PC) began its inquiry into the regulation of the Australian marine fisheries and aquaculture sectors. In August 2016, the PC released its draft report. The final is due to be released in December 2016.

In particular, we would like to draw to the Senate Committee's attention, the 'regulatory requirements vs public expectations' section (p.187). This section observes that there is a gap between the standards expected by some in the community and those set (or perceived as set) by regulations. In this section, the Geelong Star, a large factory trawler operating in the Small Pelagic Fishery, is used as the case study.

Specifically the draft report comments:

'The Geelong Star is a prominent example of where regulatory requirements have been considered to be insufficiently stringent by some sections of the community. The Geelong Star has faced calls for it to be banned, despite the fishery in which it is operating (the Small Pelagic Fishery) receiving EPBC Act approval, and scientific information indicating that its operation is not leading to the detrimental impacts claimed (box 7.3).'

Critical knowledge gaps: estimating potential maximum cumulative anthropogenic mortality limits of key marine mammal species to inform management in the Small Pelagic Fishery area – FRDC

Relevant to the Senate Committee's inquiry, the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) has recently released the above report which is publically available on their website. FRDC will also provide an update of new research which has been published since its original submission.

Regulatory changes to the Small Pelagic Fishery – AFMA

The independent regulator, the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) will be providing an update on regulatory and management changes since its original submission.