



Australian Government

Department of the Environment and Heritage

## Oceans Action Bulletin

**An Update from the Marine Division of the  
Department of the Environment and Heritage**

**7 April 2006**

This Bulletin updates you on Australian Government activities in the marine environment. Please forward to any interested parties. For further information or to unsubscribe from this Bulletin, please email [samantha.meyer@oceans.gov.au](mailto:samantha.meyer@oceans.gov.au)

### **Extension Granted for Cyclone-Affected Businesses**

The Australian Government's commitment to help rebuild communities devastated by Cyclone Larry has been demonstrated with an extension to submit applications for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Structural Adjustment Package.



Minister for the Environment and Heritage Senator Ian Campbell said a one-month extension would be granted to fishing-related businesses within the cyclone-affected area, giving them until 31 May to submit their applications.

"Fishermen have seen their vessels sunk at their moorings and others have lost business records," said Senator Campbell.

*Dept of Foreign Affairs and Trade - Overseas Information Branch*

"These people need time to restore their livelihoods and the Government is prepared to help them in every way it can."

Senator Campbell said he had been advised of a number of fishing businesses impacted by Larry whose owners would face significant difficulties in meeting the April 30 deadline for applications.

He said the extension would be provided in three parts:

- a general one month extension (to 31 May 2006) for:
  - land based businesses where the business premises are between 17°S and 18°30'S;

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- fishing businesses where the fishing vessel is generally moored, or the operator lives between 17°S and 18°30'S; or
  - land based businesses or fishing businesses where the businesses adviser's business premises are between 17°S and 18°30'S.
- where a business can show that it has lost significant business records due to the cyclone, a basic application would be accepted in the first instance, with a full application to be worked up after the deadline with assistance from the Department of the Environment and Heritage and Queensland government agencies.
  - where an applicant can demonstrate they will be unable to complete an application due to personal circumstances associated with the cyclone, for example being involved as a member of the SES or family in the area requiring assistance, a basic application will be accepted in the first instance, with a full application to be worked up after the deadline.

“The Government is committed to helping cyclone-affected communities get back on their feet and this extension is another example of that commitment,” Senator Campbell said.

Further information on the Great Barrier Reef Structural Adjustment package can be found online at: [www.qraa.qld.gov.au/](http://www.qraa.qld.gov.au/)

### **Further Advice Requested on Orange Roughy Nomination**

The Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Senator Ian Campbell, this week announced that further advice would be sought in relation to a nomination to list the commercial fish Orange Roughy as a threatened species.

The Orange Roughy was nominated for listing as a threatened species under the Australian Government's environment legislation - the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.



*Orange Roughy*

“The nomination to list Orange Roughy underwent an assessment by the Australian Government's independent Threatened Species Scientific Committee (TSSC). The Committee has now provided advice to me,” Senator Campbell said.

“The advice from the Committee indicates that there are serious concerns regarding the long-term conservation of the Orange Roughy.

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The Orange Roughy is an important part of the deep water fisheries of the coast of southern Australia. As such, it has been under the active management of the Australian Fisheries Management Authority for a number of years.

“Given that the species forms part of an actively managed fishery it is beholden on me to ensure that I have all the facts relevant to the species survival before me when I make my decision,” Senator Campbell said.

“Accordingly, I have asked for additional analysis in the context of potential biological and ecological implications for the species and how these relate to risk of extinction and potential recovery.

“I will make my decision once I have received and considered carefully the additional advice”.

### **Securing our Fishing Future – Exit Assistance Tender Opens**

Fisheries Minister Senator Eric Abetz has announced the release of tender documentation for Business Exit Assistance under the Australian Government’s \$220m *Securing our Fishing Future* package.

“The \$150m Business Exit Assistance tender is the centrepiece of a package that aims to boost the long-term profitability and sustainability of Commonwealth fisheries,” Senator Abetz said.

“The tender provides an opportunity for those wishing to leave the industry to do so, while also improving the profitability of those who remain. This is the largest structural adjustment of this kind for fishers. I strongly urge you to consider this request for tender carefully”.



*Unloading a catch © Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries*

The closing date for tenders is **8 June 2006**.

“The tender focuses on four target fisheries - the Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery (except for the GAB Trawl Sector), the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery, the Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery; and the Northern Prawn Fishery. All other Commonwealth fisheries, with the exception of those that managed by a joint authority or internationally-managed, may also tender but are not a high priority in this process.

“To assist fishers in making these important decisions, I also encourage fishers to take advantage of the up to \$1 500 available to them to secure professional advice on whether they should participate in the tender process. In addition, officers from my Department will

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be visiting a number of key ports around Australia from 5 April to 3 May to act as a first point of contact for issues relating to the tender process”.

The Minister also noted the finalisation of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the South-east Marine Region, to be announced shortly by Senator Campbell.

“Fishers who receive their request for tender in the coming week, will also receive an update when the MPAs are finalised. If the new boundaries significantly impact on fishers, whether they are in Commonwealth or state fisheries, more fishers may be eligible to participate in the tender process”.

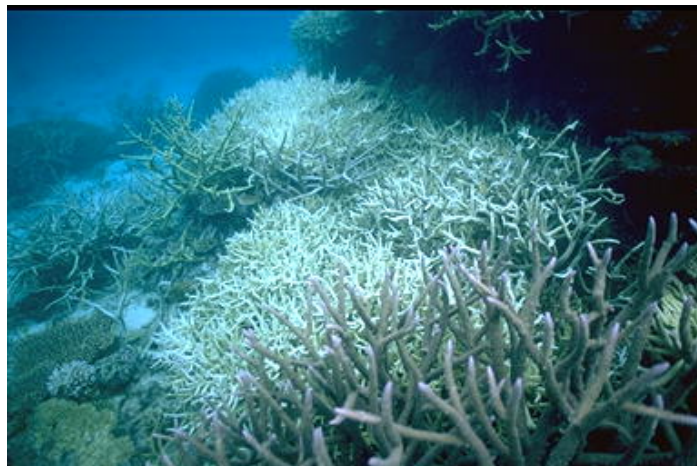
Information on the Request for Tender, or the locations of the information sessions, can be obtained from the *Securing our Fishing Future* helpdesk on **1800 617 866**.

### **Indigenous Trainees Monitoring Coral Bleaching**

Traditional knowledge and the latest scientific research are joining forces to monitor the impacts of coral bleaching on one of Australia's icons, the Great Barrier Reef.

Four Indigenous trainees are spending the next couple of months working alongside Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) research scientists aboard the Pelican 1, a 19 metre sailing catamaran designed for marine research, environmental, social, and educational projects.

The project, which supports on-going reef monitoring work undertaken by GBRMPA, has been made possible with more than \$85 000 funding from the Australian Government's Natural Heritage Trust.



*Coral bleaching survey* © GBRMPA

"This innovative project gives the Indigenous communities in the Great Barrier Reef region the opportunity to use their traditional knowledge of their sea country and to share it with scientists," Senator Campbell said.

"It will expose Indigenous people to the latest scientific research and help them develop greater strengths in managing their natural resources, especially in coming to grips with new threats like coral bleaching."

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