

## **Exmouth Gulf Taskforce Communique**

### **Meeting 11, 14 May 2025**

#### ***Latest news***

The 11<sup>th</sup> and final meeting of the Exmouth Gulf Taskforce (the Taskforce) was held in Exmouth on 14 May 2025. The meeting was chaired by Mr David McFerran, Taskforce Chair.

The Taskforce discussed a range of topics, including:

- Nganhurra Thanardi Garrbu Aboriginal Corporation Sea Country Planning.
- Dr Jenny Shaw, Research Director, Western Australian Marine Science Institution provided an update on the knowledge review report and State of Exmouth Gulf Reporting Framework.
- Marine heatwave conditions including impacts to the Exmouth Gulf and considerations for Taskforce advice.
- Updates from state government on projects in the Exmouth Gulf including Department of Transport and Water Corporation.
- Final Taskforce recommendations, strategic advice and reporting requirements to fulfill its Terms of Reference to the Minister for the Environment.

The Taskforce also hosted two Community Information Forums in Exmouth on 13 May 2025 and Onslow on 15 May 2025. The Forums covered: an overview of the 2021 government decision; Taskforce establishment and Terms of Reference; Taskforce role, reporting, activities and next steps. Updates by the Western Australian Marine Science Institution and Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (Fisheries) were also provided to both communities.

The Taskforce was pleased with the level of attendance and the interest, knowledge and understanding demonstrated by the attendees. The Taskforce noted the attendees' views on protections for Exmouth Gulf and current economic values and opportunities for the region.

#### ***Who is on the Taskforce?***

The Taskforce comprises representatives of member organisations appointed by the Minister for the Environment. Membership includes:

- Independent Chair;
- Commonwealth Department of Defence;
- Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions;
- Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation;
- Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage;
- Department of Transport;
- Department of Water and Environmental Regulation;
- Gascoyne Development Commission;
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (Fisheries);
- Shire of Exmouth;
- Shire of Ashburton;
- Nganhurra Thanardi Garrbu Aboriginal Corporation;
- Sea Harvest;
- Recfishwest;
- Cape Conservation Group / Protect Ningaloo Campaign; and
- Community members (x 2).

#### ***Background***

The Exmouth Gulf Taskforce was established under section 25 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*. Secretariat support is provided by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation.

***What is next?***

The Taskforce has delivered its final advice to the Minister for the Environment, aligned with its Terms of Reference. This advice complements the Exmouth Gulf Taskforce Interim Report, published in May 2024. The Taskforce also delivered a knowledge review report, updating key information gaps on the Gulf and its surrounds. The Taskforce concludes in June 2025.

A list of meetings, workshops and key stakeholder engagements undertaken by the Taskforce throughout its tenure are outlined in the tables below:

**Taskforce meetings**

Date	Location	Description
1 September 2022	Exmouth	Meeting 1
18 November 2022	Perth	Meeting 2
10 March 2023	Exmouth	Meeting 3
15 June 2023	Perth	Meeting 4
11 August 2023	Exmouth	Meeting 5
7 September 2023	Online	Extraordinary meeting – Taskforce Interim Report finalisation
23 November 2023	Perth	Meeting 6
15 March 2024	Exmouth	Meeting 7
13 June 2024	Perth	Meeting 8
23 August 2024	Exmouth	Meeting 9
3 December 2024	Perth	Meeting 10
14 May 2025	Exmouth	Meeting 11

**Taskforce workshops and stakeholder engagements**

Date	Location	Description
July–August 2022	Perth	Various stakeholder engagement meetings – Taskforce establishment
11 May 2023	Perth	Taskforce workshop – Exmouth Gulf protections options and recommendations
11 October 2023	Perth	Taskforce presentation ‘Safeguarding the Extraordinary Exmouth Gulf’ Biodiversity Conference 2023, Listen to Country
7 November 2023	Carnarvon	Taskforce update – NTGAC Annual General Meeting
6 March 2024	Perth	Taskforce workshop – Cape Range Subterranean Waterways protections
21 March 2024	Perth	Taskforce update presentation – EPA Board
20 May 2024	Onslow	Taskforce update – Shire of Ashburton community information forum
21 May 2024	Exmouth	Taskforce update – Shire of Exmouth Council

Date	Location	Description
21 August 2024	Exmouth	Taskforce community information forum
22 August 2024	Exmouth	Taskforce strategic workshop
4 September 2024	Kalgoorlie	Taskforce update – DWER Aboriginal Water and Environmental Advisory Group
10 September 2024	Exmouth	Executive cross-government Exmouth familiarisation and Gulf boat trip (Chair)
30 October 2024	Perth	Taskforce information session and workshop – climate change, marine heatwaves and Exmouth Gulf heritage
18 November 2024	Onslow	Taskforce update – Shire of Ashburton community information forum
1 April 2025	Perth	Taskforce workshop, reporting discussion and marine heatwave presentation
13 May 2025	Exmouth	Taskforce community information forum
15 May 2025	Onslow	Taskforce community information forum

### ***More information***

The Terms of Reference describes the role of the Exmouth Gulf Taskforce and can be found at:

[Exmouth Gulf Taskforce | Western Australian Government \(www.wa.gov.au\)](https://www.wa.gov.au/government/committees-and-panels/exmouth-gulf-taskforce)

If you would like to contact the Taskforce, please email: [exmouthtaskforce@dwer.wa.gov.au](mailto:exmouthtaskforce@dwer.wa.gov.au)