

Exmouth Gulf Taskforce Communique

Meeting 4, 15 June 2023

Latest news

The fourth meeting of the Exmouth Gulf Taskforce (Taskforce) was held in Perth on 15 June 2023. The meeting was chaired by Ms Laine Ashforth-McDonald.

The Taskforce considered the following:

- The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) provided an update on terrestrial and marine park planning.
- The Nganhurra Thanardi Garrbu Aboriginal Corporation (NTGAC) presented on the cultural values of the Exmouth Gulf. The NTGAC provided an overview to the Taskforce of their aspirations for country and people, including the development of a ranger program.
- Dr Ben Fitzpatrick from Oceanwise Australia presented on the marine environmental values of north-western Exmouth Gulf.
- The Western Australia Fishing Industry Council Inc (WAFIC) presented on the commercial fishing values of Exmouth Gulf.
- The Taskforce discussed the development of its interim advice recommendations to the Minister for Environment, due to the Minister in August 2023.

The Hon Reece Whitby MLA, Minister for Environment, attended the meeting and thanked the Taskforce for their work, noting the Government recognises the values of Exmouth Gulf.

Minister Whitby highlighted the importance of the Traditional Owners, various agencies and Taskforce members working together towards the common goal of an integrated management approach of the key values of Exmouth Gulf.

The Minister also acknowledged the positive impact of the Ningaloo Nyinggulu documentary on raising the profile of Exmouth Gulf to the broader public.

Who is on the Taskforce?

The Taskforce is chaired by Ms Laine Ashforth-McDonald and comprises representatives of member organisations appointed by Minister Whitby. Membership includes:

- Independent Chair (Ms Ashforth-McDonald);
- Commonwealth Department of Defence;
- DBCA;
- 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 (Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development);
- Shire of Exmouth;
- Shire of Ashburton;
- NTGAC;
- Sea Harvest;
- Recfishwest;

- Cape Conservation Group / Protect Ningaloo Campaign; and
- Community members.

Background

The Taskforce was established under section 25 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*. Secretariat support is provided by DWER.

What is next?

The next meeting of the Taskforce is planned for August 2023 in Exmouth.

More information

The Terms of Reference describes the role of the Taskforce.

If you would like to contact the Taskforce, please email: exmouthtaskforce@dwer.wa.gov.au.