

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN
TERRITORY**

WRITTEN QUESTION

Ms Purick to Minister for Primary Industry, Fisheries and Resources

Limmen Bight Marine Park

1. What commercial fishing operations currently operate in the area proposed as the Limmen Bight Marine Park in the sea waters, along the coastline and in the mouth of the included rivers.

A: The waters in or near the proposed marine park are known to currently support a number of operations in the Mud Crab and Barramundi Fisheries. The Spanish Mackerel, Offshore Net and Line, Bait Net, Aquarium, Trepang and Coastal Line Fisheries could also operate in the area of the proposed Marine Park.

2. List the type of commercial seafood operations by species caught and their location.

A: Mud crabs are the primary species harvested in the Mud Crab Fishery. The main areas of harvest within or near the waters of the proposed marine park (as recorded against fishery logbook returns) are the Roper River, Port Roper and Limmen Bight River.

The Barramundi Fishery primarily targets barramundi and king threadfin. The main areas of harvest within or near the waters of the proposed marine park (as recorded against fishery logbook returns) are Beatrice Island, Limmen Bight River, Limmen Bight, Port Roper, Roper River, Spillen Creek and Towns River.

3. What is the value of these commercial seafood operations to the Northern Territory seafood industry and economy?

A: In 2010, the total commercial mud crab catch was valued at \$7.89 million. Over the last three years an average of 25% (i.e. valued at approximately \$1.97 million) of the catch has come from waters within or near the proposed area of the marine park.

At the point of first sale in 2010, the overall catch value of the commercial Barramundi Fishery was \$5.05 million. Over the last three years an

average of 8% (i.e. valued at approximately \$404 000) of the catch has come from waters within or near the proposed area of the marine park.

4. What consultation was undertaken with these operators in regard to the proposed marine park?

A: Key stakeholders including the Northern Territory (NT) Seafood Council and Amateur Fishermen's Association of the NT were provided advance notice of the announcement of the proposed boundaries. The Management Plan for the proposed marine park will be developed via a detailed consultative process that will include all fishing and other stakeholders. This government is committed to ensure any such consultation is taken into consideration of the future management arrangements of the proposed park.

5. If no consultation was undertaken, why not.

A: The NT Government is currently only proposing boundaries to a multiple-use marine park. Full consultation with all stakeholders will be undertaken as part of the marine planning process.

6. How were the boundaries of the proposed marine park decided upon.

A: The marine park boundaries largely align with the coastal boundaries of the proposed Limmen National Park and with the adjacent Marra Aboriginal Land Trust land, and extend to the limit of Territorial waters at approximately three nautical miles.

7. What scientific research has been undertaken to support the proposed marine park, through what institution and which researchers.

A: A summary of the biodiversity values of the proposed marine park, including references, are available in a technical report on the website. These values include turtle, dugong and dolphin habitats and significant seagrass beds. The researchers involved include scientists from the Department of Natural Resources, the Environment and the Arts, as well as experts on dugongs and seagrass from James Cook University and Queensland Fisheries.

8. What legislation is required to establish the marine park and what is the planned consultation in regard to any required legislative framework.

A: Marine parks are established under the Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act and the current public consultation period is part of these legislative requirements. In the event that any changes to fisheries

management were determined following the consultation process, these would need to be made in accordance with the provisions of the Fisheries Act.

All stakeholders will be fully consulted as part of the management planning process and as legislatively required under both Acts.
