



### CHAIR'S SUMMARY

Council held its 20th meeting in Sydney on 28 and 29 January 2020.

Council was provided with numerous program updates, which members provided feedback on to assist successful delivery. Members also took away points to consider how Council could further assist positive program outcomes as well as what can be drawn on from the programs to better the access to and opportunities associated with fisheries resources for Aboriginal people.

Due to the late withdrawal from the meeting by several members, matters requiring a quorum could not be dealt with. These matters have been deferred to out-of-session consideration or will be dealt with at the next meeting of Council.

Council was provided with presentations from Aboriginal project officers working on the Marine Estate Management Strategy (MEMS) Initiative 4 - Protecting the Aboriginal cultural values of the marine estate. The Council was pleased to see the continued delivery and progress of projects supporting values of the marine estate both in cultural access as well as economic opportunities for Aboriginal communities. It was keenly noted that there had been employment of more Aboriginal people through MEMS Initiative 4 as well as through the DPIE Aboriginal Pathways initiative. Engaging more Aboriginal people in the field of natural resource management, particularly fisheries resources, will increase the knowledge of all parties in managing our precious resources.

The Council was also informed on: regional water strategies and the upcoming Aboriginal community consultation being undertaken; status of harvest strategy development for NSW wild capture fisheries; detail of engagement in the FRDC project investigating "Improving data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders marine resource use to inform decision-making"; the progress of the Aboriginal Cultural Fishing Local Management Plan (LMP) trial; and, the NSW Aboriginal Aquaculture Strategy.

The Council strongly supports the aquaculture strategy and exploring the potential of aquaculture to provide valued economic opportunities for Aboriginal communities. The Council noted that the support provided by the department is to be applauded.

It is noted that the opening of the next Aboriginal Fishing Trust funding round has been delayed until further notice in consideration of individuals and communities needing to deal with the effects of bushfires and not being in a position to be considering and preparing funding applications. The Council looks forward to the next funding round opening and wishes to express its great appreciation of the continued commitment of the Government to having a dedicated trust fund for Aboriginal fishing related programs and projects.

The meeting concluded with an update provided to the Council on DPI projects and other activities under way in the Murray Darling Basin. The presentation focused on DPI initiatives responding to the recent inland fish kills and drought response projects designed to protect



# Department of Primary Industries

## Aboriginal Fishing Advisory Council

the long-time viability of fish stocks affected by the drought in NSW. Council members fully appreciate the dire situation that the drought has caused with many personally affected either directly or through family who rely on our fisheries resources in drought affected areas. The Council extends its ongoing appreciation to those directly dealing with the enormous recovery task and looks to support work being done however it can.

Danial Chapman

Chair

24 February 2020