



CHAIR'S SUMMARY

Council held its 23rd meeting in Port Stephens 24 and 25 February 2021.

The Council focused on several current matters including the Fisheries Harvest Strategy development and the impending formation of the external working group for the Abalone Harvest Strategy. The Council noted that that submissions on the draft Harvest Strategy Policy and Associated Guidelines are currently being reviewed following their public exhibition.

A focused overview of the newly created Freshwater Environment Unit was also provided to Council with an update on the DPI Native Fish Drought response and status of inland water flows also appreciated.

An update on the Marine Estate Management Strategy – Initiative 4 (Protecting Aboriginal cultural values of the marine estate) projects was provided to Council with some highlights in this area being: the Elders as mentors project which commenced in Batemans and Jervis Bay Marine Parks recently and, the extension of the successful Sea Country School Education program from the south to the central and northern parts of the State.

The Council noted that the EOI for membership to the Aboriginal Fishing Trust Fund Expenditure Committee (AFTEC) closed on 24 February and the new membership is to be formalised prior to the close of the next funding round. Council also noted that the current membership of the Aboriginal Fishing Advisory Committee will expire in August 2021 with a call for EOI commencing some time before that.

Other matters discussed during the meeting included proposed fisheries and aquaculture regulation changes which are out for consultation currently; updates on Local Management Plan development; NSWALC Fishing Trust processes and; an update on the Regional Water Strategies workshop rollout by DPIE Water. Further matters involving cross Ministerial council collaboration and waterway access issues were discussed.

The 23rd Meeting concluded with DPI Executives attending an informal working lunch with Council, providing opportunity to engage directly on a number of matters relevant to the Aboriginal fishing.

Danial Chapman

Chair

26 March 2021