

SHARK BAY PRAWN FISHERY

1392. Hon COLIN de GRUSSA to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Fisheries:

I refer to the management arrangements that apply to the harvesting of prawns within the Shark Bay managed fishery.

- (1) What communication was undertaken with the Marine Stewardship Council, which has certified the Shark Bay prawn fishery as sustainable based on spatial and temporal closures, before implementing the headrope reduction?
- (2) Why is third party accreditation by MSC of any value when the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development has reduced the effective size of the fishery by 50 per cent?
- (3) Does DPIRD have the resources to properly manage an MSC-certified fishery in accordance with the objects of the Fish Resources Management Act?
- (4) How is a reduction of 50 per cent warranted when survey results have indicated that western king prawn numbers in 2023 are equivalent to some of the highest numbers seen in the fishery?

Hon PIERRE YANG replied:

On behalf of the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Fisheries, I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided by the Minister for Fisheries.

- (1) The implementation of the 50 per cent headrope reduction was taken in accordance with the Shark Bay prawn harvest strategy, which is a requirement of MSC certification. There is no requirement to consult with MSC prior to management decisions being taken.
- (2) The government's response to addressing sustainability concerns are independent of the MSC accreditation process. The MSC certification process is a quality standard that acknowledges high standards of sustainability management.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) The catch of western king prawns in 2023 is expected to be well below average, with some improvement in prawn recruitment following management measures introduced at the beginning of the year. The 50 per cent headrope reduction is required to effectively manage the power of the fleet and associated impacts on the stock without the need for ongoing restrictive spatial and temporal management controls.