

Friday, 17 April 2009

SPENCER GULF MARINE PARK WORKING GROUP ESTABLISHED

Environment and Conservation Minister Jay Weatherill today announced the establishment of a Marine Park Working Group, which will review the outer boundaries for marine park six in the Spencer Gulf - and provide feedback within two months.

Mr Weatherill said that three pilot working groups have been established to advise on possible outer boundary changes to five of the 19 marine parks.

The others are the South East Marine Parks Working Group, which will review the outer boundaries for marine parks 18 and 19, and the Far West Coast Marine Parks Working Group, which will review the outer boundaries for marine parks one and two.

Each working group will include representatives of key sectors, including the seafood industry, conservation sector, recreational fishing sector, local government, and State Government. Direct consultation will also occur with Aboriginal representatives during the working group process.

“These working groups will assist me in considering any alteration to the outer boundaries of these marine parks and provide some preliminary advice for development of zones within the parks,” Mr Weatherill said.

“This advice can then be used as a starting point for the statutory zoning and consultation process outlined in the *Marine Parks Act 2007*, which is due to commence later this year.

“Once the groups complete their work, I intend to establish similar groups for the remaining marine parks.”

The nominated local government representative on the Spencer Gulf Marine Park Working Group is Mayor Graeme Stirling of the District Council of Tumby Bay.

“I am pleased that Minister Weatherill has adopted this type of approach to establishing the inner and outer boundaries of the marine parks. By allowing the various interested parties to have direct input into setting both the inner and outer boundaries of the marine parks, the marine parks concept should receive greater acceptance by the general community,” Mayor Stirling said.