



Australian Marine Sciences Association Inc.

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The Hon Chris Bowen MP
Minister for Climate Change and Energy
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister Bowen,

Re: Offshore renewable energy infrastructure area proposal: Bass Strait off Gippsland

On behalf of the members of the Australian Marine Sciences Association, we are pleased to provide this submission in response to Offshore renewable energy infrastructure area proposal in Bass Strait off Gippsland.

The Australian Marine Sciences Association Inc. (AMSA) is Australia's peak professional body for marine scientists from all disciplines, and for over 60 years has promoted all aspects of marine science in Australia. AMSA actively contributes to the science, management, research, advocacy, education, and community awareness related to marine and coastal ecosystems.

AMSA is supportive of renewable energy projects and The Australian Government's target of net zero emissions by 2050. We support the development of offshore wind projects as it will help Australia achieve these targets. We believe future management plans including ongoing monitoring programs will be the key to successful projects that minimize impacts on the marine environment.

We welcome the exclusion of the Beagle Marine Park from the proposed offshore development areas and the acknowledgement of Gunaikurnai, Bunurong and Boon Wurrung people as Traditional Owners of the adjacent land and sea country. It should also be noted that the marine environment including the locations of the proposed developments are important for many migratory species including the short-finned eel (*Anguilla australis*), that has historical and cultural significance to

Indigenous people¹.

We have the following recommendations on how offshore renewable energy projects can share the area with other users and interests:

- i. Create genuine partnerships and pathways of communication with Traditional Owners at all stages of the development (proposal, site selection, planning, construction, operation and decommissioning).
- ii. Engage in holistic, ecosystem-based and evidence led, planning for sustainable development of economic activity in Australia's marine estate of which offshore renewables will be a critical element.
- iii. Ensure all physical and biological data collected as part of the projects are open access and archived in national data collections (e.g. Australia Ocean Data Network (AODN) portal, AUSEABED, SEAMAP Australia).
- iv. Establish best practice baseline survey and monitoring programs that are coordinated across projects and publish findings in peer-reviewed scientific literature.
- v. Consider opportunities to enhance environmental outcomes by promoting habitat values of infrastructure and nature-based design solutions.

Please feel free to contact president@amsa.asn.au for further information.

Kind regards



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¹ Rose, D., Bell, D., Crook, D.A. (2016) Restoring habitat and cultural practice in Australia's oldest and largest traditional aquatic cultural system. *Reviews in Fish Biology and Fisheries*. 26: 589-600.