

**Submission
No 103**

**INQUIRY INTO CLOSURE OF THE CRONULLA
FISHERIES RESEARCH CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE**

Name: Mr Andrew Fraser MP & National Maritime Science Centre
Date received: 10/08/2012



10 August 2012

Selection Committee on Cronulla Fisheries
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Submission to the Legislative Committee on Cronulla Fisheries

Please find enclosed a submission from Professor Les Christidis, the Director, of the National Marine Science Centre (NMSC) in Coffs Harbour, which I fully support and endorse.

I believe the decision to relocate staff to Coffs Harbour will greatly enhance the excellent fisheries research already being conducted at the NMSC.

The NMSC has state of the art marine research facilities supported by a team of world class academic staff, under the direction of Professor Christidis. I am well aware of the excellent research work being undertaken at the NMSC as I have had many meetings with Professor Christidis over recent months and have had the opportunity to visit the NMSC on many occasions.

Coffs Harbour has a large commercial fishing industry which is supported by Marine Park staff. The Director of Commercial Fisheries for the NSW Department of Primary Industries is already based in Coffs Harbour.

The relocation process will be of great benefit to the Coffs Harbour community by providing employment opportunities both directly and indirectly to those who relocate and their families. Coffs Harbour is a vibrant, growing regional centre that has excellent educational and recreational facilities.

The NMSC has the capacity to increase its research role as there are a number of excess laboratories and the opportunity to develop a marine research hub in northern NSW.

Moving research scientific staff to Coffs Harbour will not only enhance the existing facility, but will also open the opportunity to increase the research capability of fisheries.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Fraser MP
Member for Coffs Harbour
Assistant Speaker
AF:CF



**Southern Cross
University**
National Marine Science Centre

August 10, 2012

Selection Committee on Cronulla Fisheries
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

RE: Submission to the: Legislative Council Selection Committee on Cronulla Fisheries.

Southern Cross University's National Marine Science Centre (NMSC) welcomes the relocation of DPI Fisheries scientists to Coffs Harbour. The NMSC has been exploring opportunities with DPI Fisheries to enhance the research outputs of both organisations. Being based at the NMSC will allow the DPI researchers to access state-of-the-art marine research facilities, will complement and enhance the NMSC's research programs, and provide for the development of a marine research hub in northern NSW.

The National Marine Science Centre is a teaching and research facility of Southern Cross University. A core team of five academic staff underpin a range of research programs within the broader context of Southern Cross University's School of Environment, Science and Engineering. The Centre's research strategy focuses on Biodiversity, Ecological Interactions, Aquaculture and Sustainable Fisheries as four major strands.

The Biodiversity and Ecological Interaction strands are well developed within the Centre, while the Aquaculture research stream has been developed over recent years. The aquaculture has an international focus which complements the activities of DPI Fisheries at Port Stephens.

Sustainable Fisheries is an emerging research strand at the NMSC. The confluence of warm and cold currents along the Coffs Coast creates a dynamic environment that presents challenges for sustainable fisheries while also meeting community expectations for marine conservation. There is local demand for research into sustainable fisheries but a current lack of key research staff based north of Newcastle. The NMSC has the facilities to support research into sustainable fisheries, but has limited staffing capacity to undertake it. Research staff from DPI Fisheries will be able to take advantage of this niche to maintain and enhance existing research programs, as well as developing new ones.

We are conscious of the issues associated with relocating DPI staff to Coffs Harbour. However, we wish it noted that two highly qualified and productive fisheries staff on fixed term appointments (whose contracts end this month) are currently based at the NMSC.

The co-location of university and government researchers at the NMSC will bring a range of benefits. For the university, it will increase the research output of the Centre and maximise use of the NMSC's facilities. In addition, it will increase the relevance and profile of the institution, leading to the development of a marine research hub. For DPI, it will avoid duplication of state-of-the-art research facilities, provide tangible access to postgraduate research students, maximise research outputs through partnerships in areas of shared interests and provide great opportunities for professional development of staff.

Yours sincerely

Professor Les Christidis
Director
National Marine Science Centre