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## **MSC Assessment Australian Northern Prawn Fisheries**

MRAG Americas is pleased to announce that the MSC fishery certification assessment is underway for the Australian Northern Prawn Fishery. This assessment will evaluate this fishery for compliance with the Marine Stewardship Council Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Fishing. The certification body contracted to assess this fishery is MRAG Americas.

The fishery under assessment is defined here as the Australian Northern Prawn Fisheries (Tiger and Banana). The client for the assessment is Shareholders of the NPF Industry Pty Ltd. WWF will serve as co-client to assist during the independent assessment process.

The provisional assessment schedule sets out the key stages and approximate timings involved. Initially, MRAG Americas seeks to open a dialogue with all organisations or individuals with a direct interest in this fishery. Anyone wishing to become a consultee 'stakeholder', to nominate other organisations/individuals as stakeholders or to provide comments or information to the assessment process (in terms of the status of the stock, ecosystem interactions or fishery management practices) is invited to contact MRAG Americas. The MSC has developed a guide for stakeholder input, available at <http://www.msc.org/documents/get-certified/stakeholders> and a template for stakeholder response available at [http://www.msc.org/documents/get-certified/stakeholders/template\\_for\\_stakeholder\\_input](http://www.msc.org/documents/get-certified/stakeholders/template_for_stakeholder_input). You may use the template or provide your response in any other format. The assessment schedule is illustrated on the following page. For reference, month 1 is taken to be June. The target date for certification of the fishery is 6th April 2012.

A preliminary assessment team of individuals with experience of stock assessment, ecosystem interactions and fishery management appropriate to this fishery has been selected and is also posted. Any alternative nominations of suitable individuals are also welcomed.

The contact details for MRAG Americas are:

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**Table 1: Assessment schedule: Northern Prawn Fishery.**

	Target date*
<b>Publicise the start of the assessment</b>	
Announcement of assessment on MSC website	07 June 2011
<b>Assessment team confirmation</b>	
Nominate Assessment Team members	07 June 2011
Confirm Assessment Team members	24 June 2011
<b>Confirmation of the Default Fisheries Assessment Methodology (FAM)</b>	
Start of consultation period	08 July 2011
End of consultation period	17 October 2011
<b>Assessment site visit &amp; stakeholder meetings</b>	
Announce site visit	18 July 2011
Carry out site visit & stakeholder meetings	19 September 2011
Peer Review	
Peer reviewers nominated	02 September 2011
Peer reviewers confirmed	19 September 2011
Announce timescale for peer review of draft report	08 December 2011
<b>Stakeholder review of Public Comment Draft Report</b>	
Start of consultation period	20 January 2012
End of consultation period	19 February 2012
<b>Stakeholder Review of Final Report</b>	
Start of consultation period	14 March 2012
End of consultation period	29 March 2012
<b>Issue Public Certification Report</b>	06 April 2012