



THE HON CHRIS BOWEN MP
MINISTER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY

MC24-014149

The Hon Bob Baldwin
Chair
Australian Fishing Trade Association (AFTA)
PO Box 3310
THORNTON 2322

thehonbobbaldwin@gmail.com

Dear Mr Baldwin

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CB', written over the text 'Dear Mr Baldwin'.

Thank you for your correspondence of 1 July 2024 regarding exclusion zones in offshore wind areas. I appreciate the time you have taken to bring this matter to my attention.

Coexistence with other marine users is a core principle in establishing the offshore wind industry in Australia. Regulations to the *Offshore Electricity Infrastructure Act 2021* are currently under development, which relate to rules for proposing offshore wind farms in and around recreational fishing, navigation and other maritime activities. The regulations will require feasibility licence holders to consult with existing uses of the area, including with organisations representing recreational fishers whose activities may be affected by proposed projects. Consultation may include matters such as the location of offshore wind turbines and access during construction and operation.

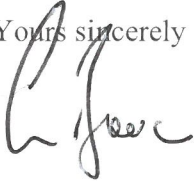
The Australian Government's view of coexistence with recreational fishing is that we expect most fishing activities to be able to continue most of the time. I expect project developers to work with existing users of the area on the layout of their project to minimise impacts. At times there may be restrictions on access for safety of people, infrastructure and vessels. There may also be a need to restrict certain activities near offshore wind infrastructure such as cables.

Australia's Offshore Infrastructure Regulator will be responsible for making safety and protection zone determinations. These zones will be determined on a project-by-project basis and will only be approved if there is clear justification for them in the Australian context. The Regulator will seek to ensure that offshore infrastructure is appropriately protected without unreasonably restricting the movements of recreational fishing vessels in accordance with international law and balancing coexistence with other marine users. There may be times when access to areas around offshore infrastructure is restricted for safety reasons. These areas will be as small as possible. Overseas experience shows that once projects are operating, these zones are typically reduced to 50m or sometimes removed.

The Regulator has produced a factsheet 'Offshore renewables and interactions with fisheries' that is found at www.oir.gov.au/news-and-community/brochures-and-fact-sheets, and includes information on how the offshore wind industry will apply the principle of coexistence as it is established around Australia. Under the *Offshore Electricity Infrastructure Act 2021*, coexistence arrangements will need to be determined during the feasibility stage before a developer can apply for a commercial licence, which is the point at which a decision will be made about whether to approve an offshore wind project for construction.

Thank you again for raising this matter with me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Bowen', written in a cursive style.

CHRIS BOWEN