

# Western Basin Dredging and Disposal Project (EPBC 2009/4904)

## Environmental Performance Report December 2023

For the attention of: The Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment  
and Water



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Cover Photos :

1. Colin J. Limpus, Nancy N. FitzSimmons, and Milani Chaloupka (2021). Flatback Turtle, *Natator depressus*, Seven Year Review: 2013/14 – 2019/20 Breeding Seasons at Curtis, Peak and Avoid Islands. Brisbane: Department of Environment and Science, Queensland Government. Report produced for the Ecosystem Research and Monitoring Program Advisory Panel as part of Gladstone Ports Corporation’s Ecosystem Research and Monitoring Program.

2. Colin J. Limpus, Nancy N. FitzSimmons, Ian Anderson, Leisa Baldwin, Wayne Bennet, Leisa Fien, Fiona Hoffmann, Erwin Hoffmann, Duncan J. Limpus, and Trevor Turner (2021). Monitoring of eastern Australian flatback turtle, *Natator depressus*, breeding populations in the Gladstone region: 2020-2021 breeding season. Brisbane: Department of Environment and Science, Queensland Government. Report produced for the Ecosystem Research and Monitoring Program Advisory Panel as part of Gladstone Ports Corporation’s Ecosystem Research and Monitoring Program.

3. Pers. Communication Danielle Cagnazzi (Assessment of Toxicological Status of Australian Humpback and Australian Snubfin Dolphins in the Port Curtis and Port Alma, 2020)

## Executive Summary

The 2023 Environmental Performance Report (EPR) has been prepared to comply with the following conditions of the Western Basin Dredging and Disposal Project (WBDDP) *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act) Approval 2009/4904:*

### Condition 36

*Ecosystem and Research Monitoring Program (ERMP)*

*The person taking the action must submit to the Minister an Annual Environmental Performance Report covering the following topics:*

- a) Dolphins, dugong and marine turtles, and other megafauna;*
- b) Migratory shorebirds; and*
- c) Seagrass.*

### Condition 37

*ERMP*

*12 Months from the date of approval, a report must be submitted outlining the initial environmental activities for the 12 month period. The report is to be called the Environmental Performance Report and must be submitted within 42 days of the 12 month activity period. The Environmental Performance Report must include proposed environmental management improvements to be implemented through the DCMP, WQMP and other Plans as relevant. Reports are required annually from thereafter.*

All on-going projects under the ERMP came to an end in October 2022 (Appendix 1). No formal meeting of the ERMPAP was held in the current reporting period.

The program is on hold as GPC is currently in the planning phase for future dredging under this approval.

## Appendix 1: ERMP timeline

ERMP timeline	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019		2020		2021		2022	
									Jan to June	July to Dec	Jan to June	July to Dec	Jan to June	July to Dec	Jan to June	July to Oct
<u>Projects</u>																
<b>Baseline Studies</b>																
Baseline Light Monitoring of Marine Turtles																
Shorebird Monitoring																
Marine Megafauna and Acoustic Monitoring																
<b>Tier 1 gap Analysis Studies</b>																
Central Queensland Corals and Associated Benthos: Monitoring review and gap Analysis																
Migratory Shorebird Monitoring Review																
Research, monitoring and management of seagrass ecosystems adjacent to port developments in central Queensland: Literature Review and Gap analysis																
Review of Water Quality Studies																
Review of Coastal Dolphins in Central Queensland, particularly Port Curtis and Port Alma regions																
Status of the dugong population in the Gladstone area																
Monitoring of Coastal Sea turtles																

**Environmental Performance Report 2023**

ERMP timeline	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019		2020		2021		2022	
									Jan to June	July to Dec	Jan to June	July to Dec	Jan to June	July to Dec	Jan to June	July to Oct
<u>Projects</u>																
Reports 1-6																
Loggerhead																
Green																
Hawksbill																
Olive Ridley																
Flatback																
Leatherback																
<b>Tier 2 Projects</b>																
Green Turtle population and Health study																
Monitoring Seagrass Seedbank Density and Viability within Port Curtis																
Monitoring the survival and recovery of shorelines, specifically Tidal Wetlands (Mangroves/Saltmarsh/Salt pans)																
Dugong feeding ecology and habitat use (dugong feeding trail assessment)																
Dugong tagging in collaboration with Green Turtle tagging and turtle population and health studies																
Migratory Shorebird Monitoring: Understanding Ecological Impact																
Migratory Shorebird Survey																
Dolphin Monitoring																

**Environmental Performance Report 2023**

ERMP timeline	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019		2020		2021		2022	
									Jan to June	July to Dec	Jan to June	July to Dec	Jan to June	July to Dec	Jan to June	July to Oct
<u>Projects</u>																
Turtle Nesting Populations on Curtis, Peak and Avoid Islands																
Green Turtle Satellite Telemetry																
Flatback Turtle Satellite Telemetry																
Green Turtle Blood analysis																
Monitoring of Coastal Lighting Effects on Marine Turtles																
Aquatic Ambient Noise Monitoring																
Study on the cause and health condition of beached dugong																
Monitoring of Australian humpback dolphins at Agnes Water to investigate distribution and movement patterns adjacent to the Gladstone Ports Corporation ERMP study area																
ERMP Synthesis Report																
Assessing the impact of Reclamation Activities on Migratory Shorebirds at the Western Basin Reclamation Area																
Toxicological assessment of Australian humpback and Australian Snubfin Dolphins																
Migratory Shorebird Monitoring: Correlates of changing shorebird numbers																
	Completed															