



Media Release

Collaborative study with fishers recognised with peak industry award

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Beach Energy has received the APPEA Award for 'Project Environment Excellence' for collaborating with fishers to develop an extensive research program into the potential impacts of marine seismic surveys on scallop and lobsters.

The research program was developed from a genuine consultation process Beach undertook with the fishing sector in preparation for the Prion Seismic Survey, which took place in the offshore Bass Basin in Commonwealth waters approximately 73km east of King Island in 2021.

The first study was to assess scallop biomass and conduct a 'before and after' impact assessment on potential new scallop beds in a small part in the south-west corner of the Prion Survey area.

The second study is a nation-leading collaborative research project to test emerging advanced seismic survey technologies whilst also researching the impacts to scallop and lobster from conventional compared to the new technologies.

Beach Energy Acting CEO Morne Engelbrecht said Beach's consultation and collaborative approach with fishers was consistent with the company's purpose to sustainably deliver energy for communities.

"Rather than rest on the existing scientific evidence that seismic surveys do not adversely impact fisheries in our survey area, we listened to the fishing industry's concerns and undertook two key studies to further build upon the evidence base," Mr Engelbrecht said.

"We are very pleased to be recognised with the prestigious APPEA Environment Award, and we look forward to sharing more information about the results of the study."

Beach Energy Group Manager Social Performance and Community Linda French, who on Wednesday co-presented on the study with Andrew Sullivan from the Bass Strait Scallop Industry Association (BSSIA), said the relationship between the oil and gas and commercial fishing industries is critical.

"A source of conflict between our two industries in the past has been conjecture around the impacts of seismic surveys on the marine environment, in particular impacts to commercially targeted species such as scallops," Ms French said.

"Beach wanted to demonstrate that it heard the concerns of the fishing sector and agreed to go the extra mile to build upon the evidence base."

Results of the studies will be known later in the year.

Further background

APPEA Awards

The Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association (APPEA) Environment and Safety Excellence Awards aim to reflect and support the safety and environmental principles and leadership of the Australian oil and gas industry by highlighting outstanding examples of performance.

Marine Impact Studies

Beach proposed this study to the Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) who were keen to build upon their existing studies on scallop and lobster. The resulting research program was supported by the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC), Curtin University of Technology, the Bass Strait Scallop Industry Association (BSSIA), and the Department of Natural Resources, Tasmania.

Beach initiated and contributed cash and in-kind support equal to three quarters of the cost of the multi-million-dollar collaborative research project. The project also attracted financial and in-kind support from the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies, Curtin University of Technology, Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC), the Bass Strait Scallop Industry Association and the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Tasmania.

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