

Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership (GHHP) Independent Science Panel (ISP)

Chair's report from ISP meeting #7 held on 11 February 2014

The objectives of the meeting were to provide ISP members with an update on GHHP activities, review the ISP's conflict of interest (COI) policy and individual statements, discuss and respond to the GHHP Management Committee's response to the ISP's Report Card Framework recommendation, finalise the GHHP Science Work Program for 2014 including the process to develop pilot year scopes of works.

The GHHP confirmed Dr Bronwyn Harch, Chief of CSIRO Computational Informatics as the new ISP member who will replace Dr Michele Burford who has stepped down from the ISP due to other commitments at the Australian Rivers Institute. Dr Harch brings valuable statistical expertise to the Panel. The ISP acknowledged and thanked Dr Burford for her valuable contributions to the GHHP over the past year.

ISP member COI declarations were updated as required. Members discussed the significance of the COI policy during the pilot year given that many of the piloting projects may be contracted to institutions associated with ISP members. The ISP reaffirmed the Policy and noted that where a COI scenario excludes an ISP member, and a gap in expertise appears on the ISP, the panel can seek advice from experts outside the ISP for advice specific to that issue.

The ISP discussed the GHHP Management Committee's response to the Report Card Framework recommendation, and after considering their constructive feedback, prepared a response for the Management Committee's consideration. The ISP endorsed the Science Work Program for 2014 and the associated budget for consideration by the Management Committee.

At this meeting the ISP progressed the refining of the indicator list and the approach to reference condition values to be trialled. Following this, Scopes of Works for the pilot projects will be developed which will enable the report card indicators and reference condition values to be trialled in 2014 and refined if necessary. Some will be used in the pilot report card to be trialled this year.

Eight GREAN members joined the ISP for lunch and discussions. Discussions focused around pre-prepared questions from GREAN concerning the GHHP Data policy, GHHP's links to other monitoring activities in Gladstone Harbour, and questions around the effects of toxic algae and TBT in the marine environment.

Other matters discussed by the ISP at this meeting included progress on the appointment of the GHHP Science Technical Officer, the Independent Inquiry into the Gladstone Bund wall, commissioned by Minister Hunt (Commonwealth Department of the Environment), progress towards a data sharing agreement with PCIMP and the Management Committee report carding workshop planned for 21 February 2014.

The next ISP meeting is scheduled for the 8 April 2014.