**Background**

Fisheries WA seeks; “to conserve, develop and share the fish resources of the State for the benefit of present and future generations”.

The commercial fishing fleet of 1,400 boats lands a catch worth about $500 million. All aspects of the industry contribute about $1 billion to the State’s economy each year.

Recreational fishing has grown threefold since 1987, with more than 600,000 participants and a total annual economic value in the order of $500 million.

There are over 50 managed fisheries, regulated by a variety of controls such as catch quotas, restrictions on fishing effort, and seasonal or area closures to protect breeding stocks.

Most fisheries are already exploited at or around their assessed sustainable levels.

**What the examination found...**

Fisheries management in WA has been consistently forward looking. Plans are being developed to deal with the growing and competing pressures on all marine resources.

The most valuable fisheries, western rock lobster and pearling, have been sustained for many years and continue to thrive.

Information about the status of minor commercial fisheries and the impact of recreational fishing is limited.

New and increasing demands on the marine resources are creating challenges for fisheries management.

The role of Fisheries WA is expanding beyond fisheries management to the maximisation of economic and other social benefits of fishing.

For effective future fisheries management, some difficult issues and potentially unpopular decisions must be faced.

Stakeholders are critical about aspects of Fisheries WA service delivery and practices.

Securing ‘fish for the future’ will depend on Fisheries WA continuing to implement forward looking management practices.

**What the examination recommended...**

The eight recommendations are in the areas of research, consultation, management plans, compliance, recreational fishing, funding, objections and services, and are aimed at improving management practices, reporting and fisheries management research and development.