

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOP ON
LOBSTER BIOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT**

Statement by Minister for Fisheries

MR D.J. KELLY (Bassendean — Minister for Fisheries) [2.04 pm]: This morning I was pleased to attend the commercial west coast rock lobster managed fishery annual management meeting in Fremantle. The fishery harvests more than \$400 million of western rock lobster each year and makes an important contribution to the economy and social fabric of coastal communities along the state's west coast. The meeting is co-hosted by the Department of Fisheries and the Western Rock Lobster Council, and provides the opportunity for industry members to discuss issues facing the fishery. Another meeting is planned for Geraldton on Thursday.

The lobster fishery has recently celebrated its seventeenth straight year of sustainability certification by the Marine Stewardship Council. The fishery was the first in the world to be certified by the Marine Stewardship Council and this latest recertification arguably makes our western rock lobster the most sustainable in the world. It is therefore fitting that I was able to announce this morning that the Western Rock Lobster Council has been successful in its bid to host the twelfth International Conference and Workshop on Lobster Biology and Management in October 2020. Perth hosted the inaugural conference in 1977. The conference now attracts hundreds of lobster biologists, fishers, oceanographers and fisheries managers from more than 20 countries. The conference will not only provide an important opportunity to exchange ideas and knowledge with people from different backgrounds, but it is also another example of how the rock lobster fishery contributes to the state's economy, as all the attendees will need hotels to stay in, food to eat and probably a drink or two. The conference bid has been made possible thanks to collaboration between the Western Rock Lobster Council, the Department of Fisheries and the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation. It is another example of the good work of the Western Rock Lobster Council and I look forward to working with them to ensure that our rock lobster fishery remains the best in the world for years to come.