



The Honourable Matt Kean MP
Minister for Energy and Environment

MD19/5258

Mr Patrick Medway AM
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Wildlife Society
PO Box 7336
MOUNT ANNAN NSW 2567

By email: manager@awa.org.au

Dear Mr Medway *Patrick*

Thank you for your letter about the formation of the NSW Platypus and Turtle Alliance.

I appreciated the opportunity to be a part of your milestone celebrations in November 2019. As mentioned on the day, it is a measure of the values of your organisation that you chose to mark the Australian Wildlife Society's anniversary by launching such an important awareness program.

I am aware that opera house-style traps are used to catch yabbies in the state's waterways and that there is a ban on the use of these traps, mostly east of the Newell Highway. In areas where they are permitted, traps must be modified by fitting a ring to the entrance funnel. These measures are in place to minimise the impacts of these traps on non-target native species, such as turtles and platypus.

I remain concerned about the impact of these traps on our native wildlife, particularly the platypus, and there have been constructive discussions about this between the departments of Planning, Industry and Environment and Regional NSW - Primary Industries (Fisheries).

In August 2019, an amendment to the Fisheries Management (General) Regulation 2010 made open pyramid lift nets lawful fishing gear in NSW. This alternative yabby net poses significantly lower risks to non-target air breathing mammals.

The Department of Regional NSW - Primary Industries (Fisheries) is currently pursuing a state-wide ban on the opera house-style yabby trap. While I do not want to pre-empt that decision, I do support measures that will help protect and preserve our native aquatic species.

At the 2019 Meeting of Environment Ministers in November, Ministers agreed to pursue a nationally consistent approach to address the negative impacts that opera house yabby nets have on Australia's native wildlife, and particularly on the platypus. Recommended approaches to address these negative impacts will be considered at the 2020 Meeting of Environment Ministers later this year.

As fishing and fisheries related activities in NSW are administered by the Department of Regional NSW - Primary Industries (Fisheries), I have forwarded a copy of your letter and my response to the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales, the Hon Adam Marshall MP, for his information.

If you have any further questions about this issue, please contact Sarah Balmanno, Director Parks and Conservation Policy, Department of Planning, Industry and Environment on 9995 6910 or at sarah.balmanno@epa.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Matt Kean MP
Minister for Energy and Environment

7.5.20
cc: The Hon Adam Marshall MP, Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales