



**The Hon. Greg Hunt MP**  
Minister for the Environment

**MEDIA RELEASE**

30 October 2015

**Citizen scientists to help monitor marine pollution**

Fishers and surfers will become citizen scientists in a major new science project to monitor the impact of sewage on Australia's marine biodiversity and ecosystems.

Together with researchers, recreational water users will contribute to a National Outfall Database, to be developed in consultation with the states and Northern Territory.

Funded with \$400,000 from the Australian Government, water users will collect samples to supplement monitoring of outfall flows and gauge pollutant concentrations.

The research will form the basis of a national collaboration between communities, scientists, water authorities and government agencies with the aim of working together to reduce the pollution load on our marine environment.

The project will be led by the Clean Ocean Foundation as part of research by the Marine Biodiversity Hub under the National Environmental Science Programme (NESP).

Clean Ocean Foundation's John Gemmill welcomed today's announcement.

"Since achieving our crucial goal of the upgrade of the Eastern Treatment Plant that discharged at Gunnamatta, Clean Ocean Foundation has been steadfastly focussing on addressing outfalls from a national approach, because our oceans know no borders," he said.

"Clean Ocean Foundation is thrilled that the value of a National Outfall Database (NOD) has been recognised by the Federal Government and honoured to be asked to deliver the NOD. It is a very important step in the cleaning up of Australia's coastline."

The Marine Biodiversity Hub, funded with \$23.88 million from the National Environmental Science Programme, is conducting research in Australia's temperate marine waters to help manage and protect our coastal and marine environments.

The hub's research will inform measures to protect coastal and marine species and ecosystems.

The National Environmental Science Programme focuses on collaborative, practical and applied research that informs on-ground action.

The Australian Government is committed to integrating science into decision-making in good environmental policy.