



**THE HON JOSH FRYDENBERG MP**  
**Minister for the Environment and Energy**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**SECOND EXEMPTION GRANTED FOR NSW SHARK NET TRIAL**

The Turnbull Government has granted the NSW Government a second exemption under national environment law to conduct shark net trials over two years on the NSW north coast between 1 November 2017 and 31 October 2019 due to the risk to human life from shark interactions.

The second exemption allows the NSW Government to deploy nets ahead of the peak swimming seasons and to continue its research into shark mitigation measures over consecutive summers. It follows a similar decision made in November 2016 to grant a 12 month exemption which expires next week.

The trials will continue to assess the catch of target sharks and bycatch of the nets against SMART drumlines used in the trial area. The NSW Government will also use the further trials to scientifically test technical and operational modifications to mesh nets to minimise bycatch and mortality of non-target animals.

The research outcomes of the trials are expected to have broader application to other jurisdictions to inform the use and design of shark mitigation measures nation-wide.

In making this decision, the Turnbull Government considered the important scientific, social and economic interests in exempting further trials from the requirements of national environmental law as well as the potential impacts to nationally-protected species and the marine environment.

The mesh net trials must be conducted in accordance with strict operational requirements and are limited to coastal beaches and other tidal waters on the NSW north coast within the boundaries of Richmond Valley Council and Ballina Shire Council Local Government Areas.

A maximum of ten nets may be used in the trial area at any one time.

The NSW Government will put in place a range of measures to minimise impacts to the environment, including procedures to release all live fauna with the least possible harm and to avoid the deployment of mesh nets during peak whale migration.

The Australian Department of the Environment and Energy will continue to receive regular reports from NSW on the implementation and monitoring of the trial.

A notice of the Government's decision to grant the exemption and reasons are available at <http://epbcnotices.environment.gov.au/exemptionnotices>.

**Ends**