

**Independent Expert Scientific Committee on Unconventional Gas Development and
Large Coal Mining Development (IESC)
Meeting 102, 31 January 2024**

**MINUTES
Videoconference**

ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

IN ATTENDANCE

Dr Chris Pigram (Chair)
Dr Andrew Boulton
Professor Jenny Davis
Dr Jenny Stauber
Dr Juliette Woods
Associate Professor Phil Hayes
Professor Rory Nathan
Professor Wendy Timms

OFFICE OF WATER SCIENCE (OWS)

Dr Marcus Finn, Branch Head Northern Basin, Science and First Nations
Dr Des Owen, Director
Amelia Lewis
Andriana Stoddart
Aranza Bulnes-Beniscelli
Ben Klug
Dylan Stinton
Frances Knight
Isabelle Francis
Jason Smith
Dr Sarah Taylor
Tess Nelson

Note: OWS attendees include those with full or partial attendance.

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair acknowledged the traditional owners, past and present, on whose lands this meeting was held, and welcomed members of the Independent Expert Scientific Committee on Unconventional Gas Development and Large Coal Mining Development (IESC) to the meeting.

1.1 Attendance and Apologies

IESC members in attendance and apologies are recorded above.

1.2 Disclosure of Interests

Committee members were invited to make disclosures. Committee members also completed a Meeting Declaration of Interests before the meeting commenced. No actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest were recorded for this meeting.

1.3 Confirmation of Agenda

The Committee endorsed the agenda for Meeting 102.

1.4 Confirmation of Out-of-Session Decisions

The Committee noted that:

- minutes of the Committee's 101st meeting on 13 – 14 December 2024 were agreed out-of-session and published on 3 January 2024; and
- advice on the Aurukun Bauxite Project was provided to the regulator on 14 December 2023 and published on 3 January 2024.

1.5 Correspondence

The Committee noted the status of correspondence to 18 January 2024.

1.6 Action Items

Ongoing items were noted and updates were provided on the timing of completion.

1.7 Forward Planning Agenda

The Committee noted the forward planning agenda.

It was agreed that the next meeting be scheduled to be a videoconference on 6 March 2024.

1.8 Environmental Scan

The OWS reported on recent events.

2. Advice on Projects referred by governments

No projects were referred for advice.

3. Other business

3.1 Nature Positive Reform – Water trigger expansion workshop

The Committee discussed the implications for the IESC of the *Nature Repair (Consequential Amendments) Act 2023*, registered on 15 December 2023, that expanded the 'water trigger' provision in the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. This legislative amendment means that advice must be obtained from the IESC where the regulator considers significant impacts to water resources are likely for any type of unconventional gas development, including coal seam gas, shale gas and tight gas.

3.2 Presentation on alluvial aquifer ecosystem response

Tess Nelson, Water Scientist, Office of Water Science, and PhD student, Macquarie University, presented on subterranean ecosystem ecohydrological response to induced groundwater drawdown in an alluvial aquifer.

4. Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 2.50pm on Wednesday 31 January 2024.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled as a videoconference on 6 March 2024.

Minutes confirmed as true and correct:

Dr Chris Pigram AM, FTSE

IESC Chair

12 February 2024