

The ExxonMobil logo is positioned in the top left corner of the page. It features the word "Exxon" in a white, sans-serif font, followed by "Mobil" in a similar font, with a red and blue checkered symbol integrated into the letter "i". The background of the entire page is an aerial photograph of an offshore oil rig in the ocean, with a red banner at the bottom containing white text.

ExxonMobil

INFORMATION BULLETIN  
March 2024

CONSULTATION

# Gippsland Basin Decommissioning

Decommissioning Campaign #1 Project Update

Esso is committed to engaging with the communities where we operate and helping our stakeholders to understand our business. This information bulletin has been developed as part of Esso's commitment to keep relevant persons and other stakeholders informed of planned activities in Bass Strait and to provide them with sufficient information about the nature and scale of the activity as well as its potential risks and impacts, so that they can make an informed decision as to whether their functions, interests or activities are affected.

## Overview

Esso Australia Resources Pty Ltd (Esso) is a wholly owned subsidiary of ExxonMobil Australia Pty Ltd. Esso is the operator of the assets in Bass Strait that are part of the Gippsland Basin Joint Venture between Esso and Woodside Energy (Bass Strait) Pty Ltd (Woodside Energy) and the Kipper Unit Joint Venture (Esso, Woodside Energy, and MEPAU A Pty Ltd). These assets comprise 19 platforms with approximately 400 wells, six subsea facilities and more than 800 kilometres of subsea pipelines.

After delivering energy to Australia for over 50 years, many of the Bass Strait fields are now reaching the end of their productive life. As a result, Esso is planning to undertake the first Bass Strait decommissioning campaign. Activities proposed as part of the Decommissioning Campaign #1 Project include the removal of the topsides of up to 13 facilities, the removal of two monotowers and the removal of the upper jacket sections of up to 10 steel piled jacket (SPJ) facilities.

Following an extensive heavy lift vessel (HLV) contracting exercise, Esso has awarded an execution contract to Allseas Marine Contractors Australia. The Allseas HLV *Pioneering Spirit*, along with support vessels, will be used to remove and transport the topsides and steel substructures to Barry Beach Marine Terminal for dismantling, recycling and disposal.

This bulletin provides information on the activities planned to be conducted as part of the Decommissioning Campaign #1 Project, so that relevant persons and interested stakeholders can make an informed decision as to whether their functions, interests or activities are affected.

↑ Cover: Fortescue platform

→ The Allseas HLV *Pioneering Spirit* utilising its topside lift system

## Activity location

Esso's operations are located in Bass Strait, off Victoria's Gippsland coast in Australia. The area lies entirely within the South-west Marine Region. The facilities to be removed as part of Campaign #1 activities are located in water depths ranging from 38 metres (Dolphin) to 94 metres (Mackerel). Their distance from the coast ranges from 21 kilometres (Dolphin) to 77 kilometres (Kingfish B).

The potential location (or locations) at which the HLV or construction support vessels (CSVs) will transfer the removed topsides and jacket sections to a barge for transport on to Barry Beach Marine Terminal is to be confirmed and further information will be communicated in future information bulletins. It is expected this location will be in sheltered waters closer to Barry Beach.

## Activity timing

**Estimated commencement of activities:** Preparation activities using a CSV are expected to commence in the fourth quarter of 2026. The HLV *Pioneering Spirit* is expected to arrive in the field in the third quarter of 2027.

**Estimated duration of offshore activities:** The removal campaign timing window is expected to extend from the fourth quarter of 2026 until early 2028. Activities will not be continuous and the timing and order of activities will be contingent on regulatory approvals, joint venture approvals, suitable weather conditions and vessel schedules.

The HLV *Pioneering Spirit* is expected to be in the field for approximately four months. Offshore activities will be conducted on a 24 hours per day basis.



Consultation and notifications will be conducted with relevant persons prior to commencement of and throughout the activities.

### Activity description

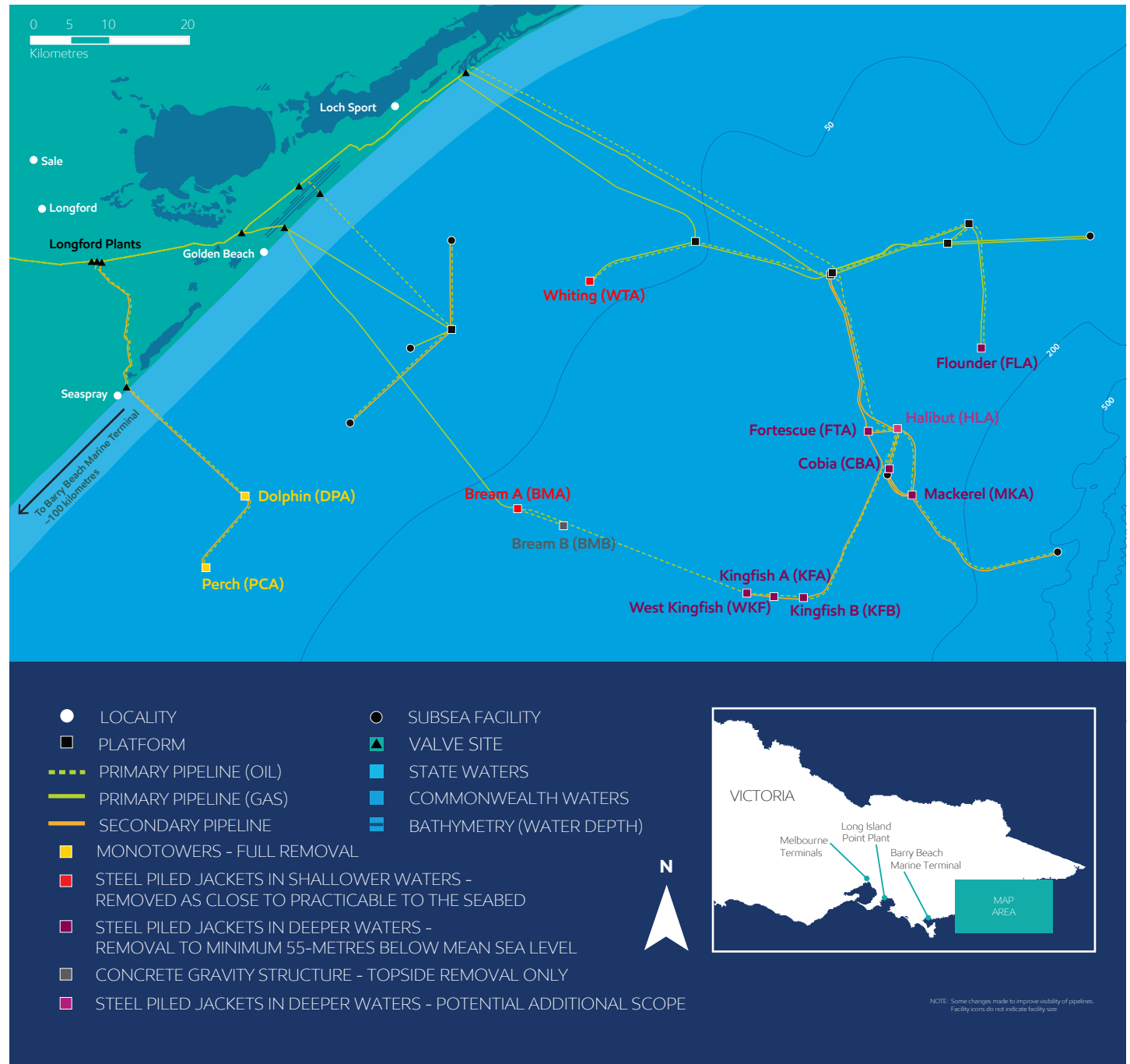
#### Scope of Decommissioning Campaign #1

The scope and facilities included in Decommissioning Campaign #1 Project are:

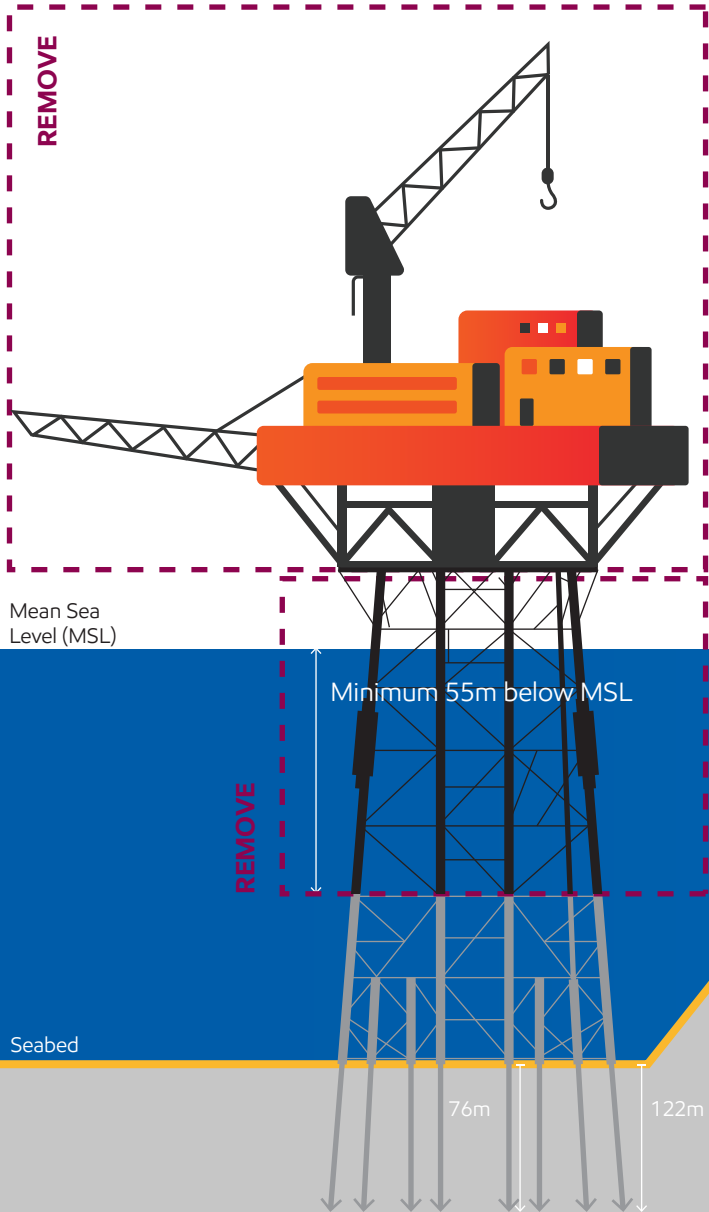
- Full removal of two monotowers (Perch, Dolphin)
- Removal of the topsides from the Bream B platform that sits on a concrete gravity structure (CGS)
- Removal of the topsides and upper jacket sections (and potentially well conductors) on seven SPJs in deeper water (Kingfish A, Kingfish B, West Kingfish, Cobia, Mackerel, Fortescue and Flounder) to a depth of at least 55-metres below mean sea level
- Removal of the topsides and upper jacket sections of one SPJ in shallower water (Whiting) to as close as practicable to the seabed. This may be below, or just above the seabed.
- One of two removal options for the Bream A facility, dependant on the requirement for reuse of this facility as part of the South-east Australia Carbon Capture and Storage project (SEA CCS);
  - Removal of the flare boom and radio tower only; or
  - Removal of the topsides and the jacket to as close as practicable to the seabed.

Contingent on vessel availability schedules and the timing of the completion of facility preparation activities (including well plug and abandonment), additional activities may include the removal of the topsides and upper jacket sections (to at least 55-metres below mean sea level) of one further facility (Halibut).

The Bream B CGS base will remain in place, with appropriate navigational aids installed, until a decision is made on the final end state for this facility.



**APPLIES TO: Flounder (as illustrated), Cobia, Mackerel, Kingfish A, Kingfish B, West Kingfish and Fortescue**  
**Potential additional scope for Halibut**

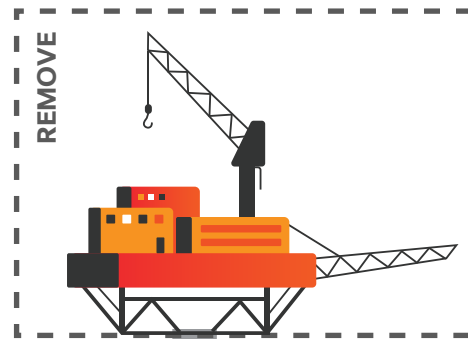


The lower sections of the SPJs in deeper water will remain in place on the seabed, with the clearance above these sections at least 55-metres below mean sea level. Esso will undertake the removal of these remaining lower sections as part of a future decommissioning

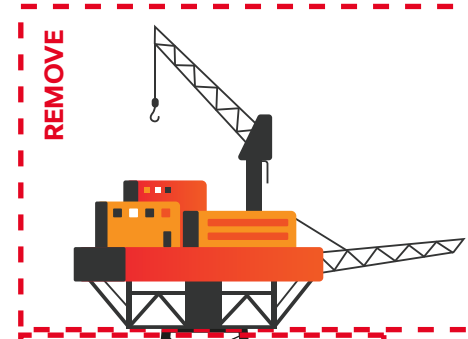
campaign, should a decision on the *Gippsland Basin Decommissioning Campaign #1 Steel Piled Jackets End State Environment Plan* (currently under assessment by the Regulator) be received which requires their removal.

Information required to inform detailed engineering of the appropriate methodology to execute the removal of the lower sections of the SPJs at or below the seabed will be gathered during the Decommissioning Campaign #1 Project.

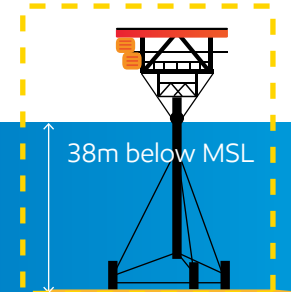
**APPLIES TO: Bream B**



**APPLIES TO: Whiting (as illustrated), and Bream A**



**APPLIES TO: Dolphin (as illustrated) and Perch**



Example platforms showing indicative removal activities for Decommissioning Campaign #1



### **Removal activities**

Activities to be undertaken offshore during the Decommissioning Campaign #1 Project include:

- Preparation of the facilities for removal by the HLV - either by a CSV or personnel on the facility while it is still operating. Cuts will be made either by diamond wire saw or hydraulic shears in strategic locations on the structure to allow for the removal of the topsides and jackets.
- The Dolphin and Perch topsides will be lifted by a CSV.
- The HLV *Pioneering Spirit* will use a motion compensated topside lift system to lift the other facility topsides in one piece and a jacket lift system to lift the jacket substructures and monotower bases in large pieces.
- All removed components will be transferred from a CSV or the HLV onto a barge in a sheltered water location.
- Tugs will then transport the barge from the transfer location to Barry Beach Marine Terminal, where the removed structures will be offloaded, segregated and dismantled for recycling and disposal.

The HLV *Pioneering Spirit* is the largest offshore construction vessel in the world and has undertaken installation and decommissioning projects throughout the Northern Hemisphere. Further information on the *Pioneering Spirit*, including photos and videos can be found [here](#).

Additional vessels such as supply vessels, barges and tugs will be used to support the decommissioning campaign offshore activities from removal through to loading of the structures at Barry Beach Marine Terminal.

The main components of the removed topsides and the jacket and monotower substructures are steel and concrete.

Esso will ensure the maximum practicable amount of material from the removed structures is recycled and that the environmental impacts and risks associated with onshore waste handling, transportation and disposal are managed to As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP) and in accordance with relevant legislation governing waste management onshore.

Following the completion of the Decommissioning Campaign #1 Project activities, surveys will be undertaken to

confirm activities have been completed in accordance with relevant permissioning documents.

The existing 500-metre Petroleum Safety Zones (PSZ) around the facilities will be reassessed to determine the appropriate status after decommissioning activities have been completed. This risk-based assessment will identify if the PSZ for those facilities can be removed or reduced, as they will no longer be operational.

Remaining structures will continue to be marked on nautical charts to ensure other users of the sea are aware of their presence.

## → POTENTIAL IMPACTS, CONSEQUENCES AND CONTROL MEASURES

Esso's aim is to minimise environmental and social impacts associated with the Decommissioning Campaign #1 Project activities. As such, Esso will undertake an impact and risk assessment to identify potential impacts and consequences to the environment resulting from the proposed activities, considering timing, duration, location, values and sensitivities.

For impacts and risks identified, Esso will develop control measures, as applicable, to reduce them to ALARP and acceptable levels.

Consultation with relevant persons will take place throughout preparation of the execution Environment Plan, and Esso will analyse feedback received to inform the impact and risk assessment, including control measures, for Campaign #1 activities.

Regular inspection, maintenance and repairs continue to be conducted at the Fortescue platform →



## → ENVIRONMENT PLAN

Under the *Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006*, before any petroleum-related activities in Commonwealth waters can commence, an Environment Plan must be accepted by the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA).

An Environment Plan is being developed for the Decommissioning Campaign #1 Project activities. This is a comprehensive document that describes the existing environment, including relevant persons, and how Esso will undertake Campaign #1 Project activities to avoid, minimise or manage potential environmental impacts to ALARP and acceptable levels.

Demonstrating ALARP requires a titleholder to implement all available control measures where the cost is not grossly disproportionate to the environmental benefit gained from implementing the control measure.

In the course of preparing an Environment Plan, Esso must consult with relevant authorities, persons and organisations whose functions, interests or activities may be affected by the proposed activities (i.e. a relevant person) and provide the opportunity for any feedback.

Submission to NOPSEMA of the Environment Plan for the Decommissioning Campaign #1 Project activities is expected in the first quarter of 2025.



## Environmental studies

Esso is undertaking a set of environmental studies to inform preparation of the Environment Plan for Decommissioning Campaign #1 activities.

The results of these studies will be used to inform the impacts and risks assessment, including controls to ensure identified environmental impacts and risks are reduced to ALARP and acceptable levels.

The outcomes of these studies will be communicated to relevant persons as part of future consultation activities in 2024 as well as being detailed in the Environment Plan.

Studies currently being planned or undertaken include:

- Spill dispersion modelling to understand the 'Environment that May be Affected' in the event of an unplanned spill event during execution activities
- Underwater noise assessment, including modelling to understand any impacts on sensitive marine fauna as a result of noise from vessel and execution activities
- Sediment dispersion modelling to understand any impacts to the marine environment as a result of disturbance of seabed sediments during activities to remove facilities to at or below the seabed.
- A light emissions assessment to understand any impacts on light sensitive marine fauna as a result of the use of lights on vessels during execution activities
- Greenhouse gas and air emission calculations for execution activities.
- An invasive marine species (IMS) risk assessment to assess the risk of the introduction or spread of IMS as a result of the decommissioning activities and ensure these risks are reduced to ALARP and acceptable levels.



## Consultation

Esso is committed to ongoing engagement with the communities where we operate. Your functions, interests and activities may mean you, your business or your organisation are a relevant person for these activities. Your participation will help Esso to better understand the impacts and risks that may arise from the activities.

As such, we're seeking your feedback on the activities outlined in this bulletin. Consultation for this Environment Plan will close in the fourth quarter of 2024. Your feedback and our response will be included in our Environment Plan for the proposed activities, which will be submitted to NOPSEMA for acceptance in accordance with the *Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage (Environment) Regulations 2009*.

Please let us know if your feedback is sensitive and we will make this known to NOPSEMA upon submission of the Environment Plan, in order for this information to remain confidential to NOPSEMA.

Further consultation regarding Decommissioning Campaign #1 Project activities and potential environmental impacts and risks associated with the activities will be provided in a further information bulletin in the second or third quarter of 2024. A series of stakeholder forums are also being planned for the second quarter of 2024. If you would like to participate in these forums, comment on the proposed activities or would like any additional information, please contact us.



### How to contact us

For more information, visit our Consultation Hub using the QR Code below, or contact our Consultation team at:

T: +61 3 9261 0000

E: [consultation@exxonmobil.com](mailto:consultation@exxonmobil.com)

W: [www.exxonmobil.com.au](http://www.exxonmobil.com.au)



Scan to access the  
Consultation Hub and  
Esso Consultation Questionnaire

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### Acknowledgement of traditional owners



Esso Australia acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country, the Gunaikurnai Peoples, and the land and sea upon which our operations are located.

We recognise the Gunaikurnai Peoples' continuing connection to land, sea, culture and community, and pay our respects to Elders past and present.