Background
The Great Australian Bight is a unique marine environment. Over 85 per cent of known species in the region are found nowhere else in the world.

The region also supports Australia’s largest commercial fishery, the South Australian Sardine Fishery, and is a significant tourist destination.

The region has been identified as prospective for oil and gas, an important Australian industry. In 2011, BP was granted exploration rights in the Bight and has chosen to collaborate with some of Australia’s pre-eminent science institutions to enhance everyone’s understanding of this vast expanse of ocean and its surrounds.

This science and industry collaboration is delivering one of the largest whole-of-ecosystem studies ever undertaken in Australia. More information about this unique marine territory will inform decision makers and ensure that future developments co-exist with the Bight’s environment, industries and the community.

Partnering with industry
Despite the vast majority of our oil production currently coming from offshore Australia, our nation’s deep sea remains relatively unexplored and there is significant potential for new resources to be found in deepwater frontier basins such as the Great Australian Bight. This research program is a unique approach, forged between industry and science to increase current understanding of the Great Australian Bight for the benefit of all stakeholders.

By applying the learnings from one of the largest whole-of-ecosystem research programs ever undertaken in Australia we will have better informed industry, regulators and government.

Research program
The research program brings together multidisciplinary research teams organised around seven major research themes.

The oceanography, ecology, and geochemistry of the Bight will be studied together with socio-economic research on communities and businesses dependent on the region.

Sharing the knowledge
The collaboration joins together Australia’s national science agency, CSIRO and SARDI, the University of Adelaide and Flinders University, who are partners in South Australia’s premier research partnership, Marine Innovation Southern Australia (MISA), and along with BP, a global company that finds, produces and markets the natural energy resources on which our world depends.

It is critical for Australia’s research institutions to be involved with industry partners: the research results will be made available for the benefit of other stakeholders, such as Commonwealth and State regulators, governments and a diverse range of research, community and environmental groups through publication in science journals, literature and published reports.

An unusual amphipod found during a voyage to the Great Australian Bight in April 2013.
For more information
www.misa.net.au