

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Recommendation 1**

That the Offshore Constitutional Settlement be resolved as a priority by NSW Fisheries to ensure a holistic (consistent) approach to fisheries management across the State/Commonwealth boundary (3 NM).

### **Recommendation 2**

That the Minister implement share management immediately after 30 April 1998 in fisheries whose MACs request it.

### **Recommendation 3**

That kingfish trapping be recommenced on an experimental basis. NSW Fisheries and ex commercial kingfish trappers should operate this pilot scheme for 1 year. Independent assessment of the recreational take, the black market take and the charter boat take should be carried out along with a detailed stock assessment.

Kingfish traps as a method should be assessed for their efficiency, bycatch, state of the fish as landed and value at point of sale in comparison with line fishing for kingfish.

The Total Allowable Catch Committee should be furnished with the results of the assessment and take into account the commercial data for the years 1990- 1995. A TAC for kingfish should be set within 3 months of receiving the detailed stock assessment and take data, and no longer than 18 months from the tabling of this report.

### **Recommendation 4**

The Standing Committee recommends that to protect the beach haul fishery, other boat-based fishing methods (including purse seine operators) should not be able to operate within 500m of the shore. (Shore being defined as the limit of the high water mark).

**Recommendation 5**

That the activities of charter boats be clearly defined and regulated by a system of registration and licencing. The lodgement of catch returns should be a condition of this licence.

**Recommendation 6**

That the Government amend the Fisheries Management Act 1994 and/or associated regulations to broaden the Department's awareness of, and contact with, the post harvest sector, and to provide fish marketing organisations with a more formal role in liaising with fishers. These amendments should establish a more comprehensive framework to combat the black market trade in fisheries product and provide a means of informing fishers of ways to maximise the value of their catch.

**Recommendation 7**

That a compulsory levy (to be determined through consultation with industry) be collected from the first receiver, levied on each kilo of product caught or imported into NSW. Funds raised from this levy should be used to improve quality assurance, product development, seafood promotion, and environmental sustainability.

**Recommendation 8**

That a benchmarking process which identifies the duties of the enforcement branch and the associated level of resources required be undertaken, followed by an assessment of the ability of the enforcement branch, as currently resourced, to comply with these expectations.

**Recommendation 9**

That a Volunteer Fishing Liaison programme be established in New South Wales. The role of Volunteer Fishing Liaison Officers should be limited to education and offence reporting, with no enforcement duties.

### **Recommendation 10**

That the NSW Government introduce a general recreational fishing licence. Licence fees should be set between \$20 and \$30 per annum, with special arrangements for short and long term licences, children and families. The revenue raised through these licences must be held in trust under the control of a Board of Trustees to engender trust in the system by, and ensure accountability to, recreational fishers.

### **Recommendation 11**

That:

- the application form for a general recreational fishing licence ask the applicant to estimate (1) how many hours per month they spend fishing and (2) what percentage of this time is spent fishing warm freshwater, alpine freshwater, estuarine, ocean beach and deep sea environments. The form should make it clear that this information will be used to allocate funds to these fishery types;
- the information from (1) be used, in conjunction with research funded through the licence fee trust, to determine average recreational catches per unit of effort with a view to estimating the recreational catch in each defined fishery; and
- the information derived from (2) be used to allocate licence fee revenue to research and management programs relating to fisheries with the greatest recreational effort.

### **Recommendation 12**

That the recreational fishing licence trust fund research into the effectiveness of present recreational fish size and bag limits, new methods to control recreational catches and the size and extent of black market fishing activity with a view to refining mechanisms to manage non-commercial fishing effort.

**Recommendation 13**

That the Government amend Part 3 of the Fisheries Management Act 1994 to provide for a recreational share holding in share management fisheries, based on the recreational component of the catch for each fishery, with management and community contributions for such share holdings to be drawn from the recreational fishing licence trust.

**Recommendation 14**

That the Government amend the restricted fishery regulations to provide for a recreational allocation of TAC for restricted fisheries based on the recreational component of the catch for each fishery, with any consequential financial contributions to be drawn from the recreational fishing licence trust.

**Recommendation 15**

That the Government, when setting up the recreational fishing licence trust, empower the board of trustees to buy the shares of commercial fishers in share management fisheries on behalf of recreational fishers.

**Recommendation 16**

That the Government, when amending the Fisheries Management Act and associated regulations in accordance with Recommendation 13, provide for the purchase of part of any recreational share holding by commercial fishers.

**Recommendation 17**

That the Government release its Coastal Policy without further delay.

**Recommendation 18**

- 1) The Office of Natural Resources and Policy review, as a priority, all natural resource legislation relating to integrated land and water management and development in the coastal zone.

- 2) The performance measures for the review shall be:
  - a) to rationalise, simplify and strengthen the legislative framework (60 Acts) which currently manage NSW Coastal zone.
  - b) the creation of clear and accountable lines of responsibility and management of coastal resources by state agencies.
  - c) a clear separation of the roles of resource management , resource use or extraction regulation, and the monitoring and reporting of the State of NSW coastal resources.
  - d) provision for a compulsory mechanism whereby agencies share and consult in a strategic manner regarding decisions which affect natural resources in the coastal zone.
- 3) That the coastal resources review be implemented in this calender year and report back to Government by June 1998.

#### **Recommendation 19**

That an adequately resourced task force, including representatives of the Department of Land and Water Conservation, NSW Agriculture and NSW Fisheries, be established immediately. This task force should be charged with concurrently:

- reviewing the legislative framework related to acid sulphate soil run-off with a view to removing contradictory provisions so that the regulatory agencies (for example, EPA, DLWC, NSW Fisheries) can more effectively manage impacted areas; and
- assessing the effectiveness and necessity of existing drainage works with a view to recommending the removal, redesign or relocation of drainage works to the relevant Minister[s].

#### **Recommendation 20**

That NSW Fisheries, in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, conduct an extensive research survey to identify key areas of habitat along the New South Wales coast for classification as Marine Parks.

#### **Recommendation 21**

That the Government ensure that the Fishways Program is adequately funded to enable the removal of unnecessary barriers to fish migration and the installation of suitable fishways where necessary. The programme should set targets for the removal of barriers within one year of the tabling date, and report to Parliament within five years.

#### **Recommendation 22**

That the Government make available the funds necessary to expedite the work of NSW Fisheries and the Department of Land and Water Conservation into methods of ameliorating the thermal effects of large impoundments. The aim of this work should be the prioritisation of the capital works necessary to alleviate the cold water pollution throughout the State with a view to implementing a staged conversion program.

#### **Recommendation 23**

That the Department of Land and Water Conservation expedite its river bank willow eradication programme with the financial and non-financial support of the programme's beneficiaries, including funds raised through a recreational licence fee.

#### **Recommendation 24**

That NSW Fisheries, in cooperation with DLWC and the Murray Darling Basin Commission, develop and commence a pilot study in the Macquarie Valley with the specific goals of estimating the combined effects on native and introduced fish species of:

- the partial restoration of the river's natural flow regime in accordance with the Macquarie Marshes Water Management Plan;

- the elimination of cold water pollution downstream of Burrendong Dam; and
- the removal of barriers to fish migration and the installation of fishways (in conjunction with the Fishways Program).

The results of this pilot study should be used to determine the most effective methods of restoring inland fish habitats across New South Wales.

### **Recommendation 25**

That an interdepartmental task force be formed to identify geographic zones within New South Wales suitable for specific types of aquacultural development. This task force should consist of representatives from NSW Fisheries, the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning, the Environment Protection Authority, the Department of Land and Water Conservation, and other relevant agencies and be charged with developing a strategic plan which:

- outlines clear and zone-specific criteria against which aquaculture development applications will be judged. These criteria should include environmental parameters;
- can be used as the basis of aquaculture development plans as provided for under Part 6 of the Fisheries Management Act 1994;
- provides for a predetermined period of community consultation, including public advertisement of proposals and provision for public submissions; and
- nominates a lead agency to act as the point of contact in the development approval process and coordinate the responses of other agencies.

### **Recommendation 26**

That NSW Fisheries be given a statutory obligation to consult with relevant seafood marketing bodies prior to committing significant funds to research the suitability of particular species for aquacultural production.

**Recommendation 27**

That the Director of Fisheries be advised of research results but not hold power of veto over the publication of those results.

**Recommendation 28**

That the Advisory Council on Fisheries Research should identify, as a priority, a consultative process to develop clear and consistent guidelines for the Department and the Advisory Council on Fisheries Research for the identification, prioritisation, assessment, peer review and publication of research. This process should identify a consultative role for each Advisory Council and Management Advisory Committee.

That NSW Fisheries engage each Advisory Council and Management Advisory Committee in the process of identifying key research and data needs.

**Recommendation 29**

That Aboriginal community licences be introduced and that "general purpose licences" be developed to accommodate the indigenous fishing methods of the Aboriginal commercial fishers in the assessment of catch history.

NSW Fisheries should review catch history requirements for indigenous fishers who have been excluded under current restricted fisheries regulations.

**Recommendation 30**

That NSW Fisheries establish an Indigenous Resource Management Committee as a priority. This committee should be constituted under the Fisheries Management Act 1994. The Indigenous Resource Management Committee should have representation from the following stakeholders:

- NSW Aboriginal Land Council;
- Department of Aboriginal Affairs;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (NSW);
- Indigenous commercial fishers;



- Indigenous recreational fishers;
- NSW Fisheries; and
- Nature Conservation Council.

The Committee should aim to progress indigenous access to fisheries and provide representation to RACAC (see Recommendations 31 and 32).

### **Recommendation 31**

NSW aquatic resources, including fish and fish habitat, be assessed as part of the continuing work of RACAC so as to provide an accurate, current and ongoing assessment statement of the state of NSW fisheries.

### **Recommendation 32**

That the Fisheries Management Act 1994 be amended to provide for the provision of adjustment assistance and/or the payment of compensation to commercial fishers who either are excluded from their fishery as a result of a resource allocation decision (eg marine park) or wish to surrender their endorsement. Specific compensation and structural adjustment packages should be determined by RACAC.

### **Recommendation 33**

That a Fishing Industry Structural Adjustment Unit of NSW Fisheries be established to determine, in consultation with RACAC and affected stakeholders, individual structural adjustment packages. The Government must ensure that this Unit is adequately funded.

