

Submission
No 925

INQUIRY INTO RECREATIONAL FISHING

Organisation: Newcastle District Anglers Association Inc
Name: Mr Robert Smith
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Submission to the LC Select Committee on Recreational Fishing- Inquiry (2 pages)

- i) The Newcastle District Anglers Association is concerned that there is no avenue for the recreational fisher to have input, a say or any interaction in the advice given to the Minister or Authorities by Ministerial appointed members of advisory committees or trusts.
- ii) The Association cannot see the advantage of having Marine Parks and no-fishing zones created or being undertaken without substantial marine scientific advice to back up the decisions. It appears that these decisions are emotively based to appease environmentalists because recreational fishing is seen as an easy target to justify the precautionary principal. We believe that the real threats to biodiversity such as erosion, pollution, sewage, siltation, habitat destruction, stormwater, chemical and land runoff, toxic algae, disease, deoxygenated swamps and acid sulphate water are not targeted as problems to the same extent by government or the so-called environmentalists. These environmental conditions have caused huge marine kills and stock losses but they still prevail.
- iii) Recreational fishing offers a huge economic benefit to coastal and inland communities which give government good GST revenue from a broad spectrum of spending including about \$10 mil from NSW fishing license fees. We must ask "Why do some of the general public need a license to catch a feed for the family in the first place" or to just enjoy the huge social benefit that fishing offers. Why would you need a license to catch carp, eels or catfish in the freshwater systems? The Association is also concerned that DII public servants, which is believed to relate to about 30, are paid entirely by this license money. Other costs such as Administration, Compliance and large Loan repayments are paid by angler money for no other reason than to prop up ailing departmental budgets.
- iv) Improvements to fish habitat and maintained access facilities will always be welcome and sensible bag and size limits need to remain.
- v) Overstocking of waterways is seen as a potential problem
- vi) The Association sees the current management program making the resource sustainable where current regulations are acceptable.
- vii) As far as Ecological Sustainable Development is concerned we believe that governments need to tackle the above mentioned environmental issues highlighted at ii)

Submission compiled by Robert Smith, President, by authority of the NDAA Inc Executive Committee.