

Submission
No 88

INQUIRY INTO RECREATIONAL FISHING

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Issues directly relating to items (a), (c), (d) and (e) of the Terms of Reference for the Inquiry.

(a) Existing processes including those specifically relating to recreational fisheries management and those covering marine parks.

The outstanding feature of the current processes covering recreational fishing and marine parks is how completely confused and ineffective both are. There is no effective synergy between processes that determine the establishment and management of recreational fisheries and those that establish and manage marine parks. The so called 'science' that has been used to justify the creation of marine parks is such badly biased advocacy for poorly designed parks as to be fraudulent (see for example Kearney 2007 and 2008 as attached).

(c) The value of recreational fishing.

The major values of recreational fishing are the cultural and social values associated with family appreciation and enjoyment of aquatic environments and the resources associated with them (see attached 2002 book chapter on valuing recreational fishing). A much undervalued component of this is the appreciation of the interconnection and continuity of marine environments and the necessary community responsibility for all of this State's ecosystems that comes from open access. Area management is simply not adequate or appropriate for most coastal ecosystems.

(d) Gaps in recreational fishing programs.

The biggest strategic gap is the complete lack of commitment to a comprehensive and coordinated approach to Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) of NSW aquatic resources that spans resource conservation and allocation. A major gap more specifically tied to recreational fisheries management is the lack of adequate measures to more equitably allocate resources within the recreational fishing fraternity (less than 10% of anglers take more than 90% of the catch). The recreational fishing sector does not even have agreed statements on why recreational fishers should be given access to resources and what benefits would flow to the people of NSW.

(e) ESD issues related to improving recreational fisheries.

As mentioned under (d) above the lack of an holistic approach to coastal ESD that encompasses strategic consideration of biodiversity conservation, future seafood supply and resource access has resulted in recreational fisheries management and the declaration of marine parks being in isolation of the long-term best interests of all the people of NSW.

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