

Submission  
No 927

## INQUIRY INTO RECREATIONAL FISHING

**Organisation:** The Fishing Party  
**Name:** Mr Robert Smith  
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**THE FISHING PARTY**

**SUBMISSION**

# **Legislative Council Select Committee on Recreational Fishing**

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**Written terms of reference for clause 1 are on page 9**

In addressing the five terms of reference of clause 1 the following is submitted for consideration.

a)

- The current decision making processes regarding Marine Parks and Marine Protected Areas for recreational fishing in NSW are publicly seen as political moves rather than resulting from evidence based science.
- In determining Marine Protected Areas consultation with fishing stakeholders may have been acknowledged, as that is the law but had very little impact on the final pre-determined decisions
- It is understood by the public, promoted and instigated by the decision makers that Marine Parks and that legislation are not Fisheries Management tools, so why do the MPA management, given enormous amounts of funding, manage it as if it is.
- There is no baseline to which recreational fishing can be judged as being improved. Changing weather, seasonal conditions, breeding cycles, water quality and quantity and failing habitat all contribute to good and bad fishing opportunities.
- Marine Parks and zonings are not readily identified for compliance.

b)

- Recreation Fishing Trusts are established to hold the funds raised as Recreational Fishing License fees
- It is TFP opinion that recreational fishing trusts have been an excuse by government to defray ailing consolidated fund departmental budgets even to the extent of having approx thirty public servant wages and inclusions of compliance for both recreational and commercial fishers and administration costs paid from recreation trust money.
- Recreational compliance income and fines are lost to consolidated revenue rather than back into the trusts.
- Recreational trust monies have been used to pay back government loans that were used to retire some commercial fishing entitlements.
- It is publicly understood that trust members are carefully appointed by the Minister and then promoted as being recreational fishing representatives.
- Advisory committee members are seen to be also carefully appointed by the Minister and promoted as recreational fishing representatives.

- NSW has a reported one million plus people who access the recreation fishing resource, some occasionally and others constantly but all have no say in who their representatives are or should be, or what these carefully selected trust or advisory member representatives advise the Minister on or agree to.
- It is understood that the Trust and Advisory members receive paid allowances and that the money comes from Recreational Fishing License fees including to those representing conservation movements who pay nothing.

c)

- It is promoted that recreational fishing generates approx \$3bil pa to the Australian economy which would entail \$300mil pa in GST revenue that is given back to each state and territory in proportion.
- NSW is reported to generate approx \$800mil pa of that revenue receiving back \$80mil pa in GST.
- So it is seen by TFP that recreational fishing creates economic benefits to a lot of businesses and communities throughout coastal and inland NSW.

- Accommodation, fuel, food and beverages, bait /tackle and ice, repairs and maintenance, boats/trailer/vehicle purchases, family involvements, fishing media and software, tournaments and fishing club activities are part and parcel of the financial expenditure which has no participant age barrier.

d)

- Water quality/quantity, habitat and access are vital for recreational fishing future and policies should reflect those to be improved including freshwater.
- Inland water management for rivers and streams are vital for the survival of freshwater fish stocks. Fish passage must not be halted or river flows impeded.
- Recreational Fishing Havens have a limit to the opportunities if crowds are attracted or steered there because of no fishing zones causing overloading of the facilities.
- Marine Protected Areas are usually the best fishing spots so that then means crowding in other potential fishing areas
- Artificial reefs should be established in the less fish attractive marine environments that have been allocated to anglers. They do not have to be expensive.

e)

- Ecologically sustainable development is described as '**using, conserving and enhancing the community's resources so that ecological processes, on which life depends, are maintained, and the total quality of life, now and in the future, can be increased**'.
- Recreational Fishing and Access is the major target compared to commercial fishers, from the anti-fishing environmentalists who either want to ban recreational fishing altogether or get a high percentage of fishable area placed off limits to anglers
- Recent changes have taken place within the commercial sector that was instigated from an overdue environmental assessment of that industry. It is understood that the outcome puts that industry in a better position to argue against any environmentalist concern about the marine future.
- On the other hand recreational fishing has not been environmentally assessed to show that that industry is not a threat environmentally or an unsustainable industry. There is no evidence to show that it is unsustainable but it may well be that this needs to be done to curb the emotional anti-fishing agenda.

- It has been promoted that the recreational fishing marine species remain sustainable under the current regulations.
  
- The matter of ecologically sustainable development for the recreational fishing industry not only would entail the matter of environmental assessment of that sector but a Regulation Impact Statement would be advantageous also on the lines of the Federal Government requirements which are : from DEWA. The Regulation Impact Statement (RIS) must:
  - i) Provide an analysis of the problem the regulation is designed to address;
  
  - ii) State the objectives of the regulation and the options for meeting the objectives;
  
  - iii) Assess environmental, health and other non-monetary outcomes of regulatory proposals; and
  
  - iv) Analyse the impact of the costs and benefits of each option on:
    - i) consumers;
  
    - ii) business;
  
    - iii)government; and



- iv) the community.
  
- v) We need to consider, in an integrated way, the wider economic, social and environmental implications of our decisions and actions for Australia, the international community and the biosphere; and
  
- vi) We need to take a long-term rather than short-term view when taking those decisions and actions:

This submission has been compiled by Robert Arthur Smith B.M on authority of The Fishing Party executive committee.

A representative of the Party will be available to address the LC Select Committee at a hearing

**TERMS OF REFERENCE for clause 1**

(a) the current suite of existing regulatory, policy, and decision-making processes in relation to the management of recreational fisheries in New South Wales, including the process for the creation of Marine Protected Areas and Marine Parks and the efficacy of existing Marine Protected Areas and Marine Parks,

(b) the effectiveness and efficiency of the current representational system of trusts and advisory committees that advise government departments and statutory authorities,

(c) the value of recreational fisheries to the economy in New South Wales,

(d) the gaps in existing recreational fishery programs, including the number and location of Recreational Fishing Havens, and

(e) ecologically sustainable development issues related to improving recreational fisheries.