

**Submission
No 89**

INQUIRY INTO RECREATIONAL FISHING

Organisation: Laurieton United Servicemans Club Fishing Club, North Haven
Bowling Club Fishing Club, Lake Cathie Bowling Club Fishing
Club, Kendall Fishing Club, Laurieton Hotel Fishing Club

Date received: 3/03/2010

02 March 2010

Select Committee on Recreational Fishing
Parliament House
Macquarie St
SYDNEY NSW 2000

INQUIRY INTO RECREATIONAL FISHING

Recreational fishers, as a major user group of the marine environment, have extensive knowledge, experience and information to contribute for the improvement and maintenance of their sport. We welcome this opportunity to make this submission for the members of the following clubs:

- Laurieton United Services Club Fishing Club.
- North Haven Bowling Club Fishing Club.
- Lake Cathie Bowling Club Fishing Club.
- Kendall Fishing Club.
- Laurieton Hotel Fishing Club.

1. Marine parks, and particularly sanctuary zones, do not address the environmental issues that threaten marine life nor are they based on scientific fact.

It is our belief that they are established to attract Green electoral preferences and to appease Green lobby groups. They are also seen by recreational fishers as a revenue raising exercise.

It is our opinion that adequate legislation exists within NSW Fisheries to address any conservation or protection requirements. In fact, recreational fishers have been calling for more Fisheries officers for many years.

2. The current practice of committee and trust members being appointed, does not sit well with us. Recreational fishers would give more support if the representatives were elected by them.

3. It is reported that recreational fishing contributes approx. \$550 million per annum to the NSW economy, \$21 million per annum to Port Macquarie alone. Sun Herald, Feb.21. 2010, reports anglers are expected to spend \$2 million in an upcoming game fishing event.

Whilst these figures are significant, we suggest the dollar value is much higher given the community contributions made by recreational fishers and their clubs.

The negative social and economic impacts are well known and reported when fishing closures are enforced. The Green lobby would have us believe that recreational fishing tourism will be replaced by ecotourism. WE HAVE ECOTOURISM NOW.

Perhaps this question could be answered for us. How does the following factual example contribute to the NSW economy?

'A consultancy firm was hired to estimate the economic impact prior to the declaration of the Port Stephens marine park. It found visitation would be cut by more than 50% if recreational fishers could not access their favourite grounds. The report recommended alternatives should be found. The marine park was declared and in the following weeks 300 recreational fishers were fined \$500 each. Then half page coloured advertisements were placed in newspapers and fishing magazines to encourage recreational fishers to visit.'

The way we see it – NSW taxpayers pay for a consultant – The report is ignored – NSW anglers are fined – NSW taxpayers pay to advertise to entice more anglers. ??????????

4. Recreational fishing havens have been a welcome and successful initiative. However the commercial fishing effort has been transferred to non haven areas. Recreational fishing licence monies could be used for more commercial buy outs.

We recommend a review of commercial fishing practices such as:

- Interstate beach haulers accessing NSW beaches.
- Professional fishing zones and the laws that govern them.
- Professional fishing sustainability in rivers left open to them.
- Our major concern is that the **migratory spawning run** along the east coast, of our most commonly targeted fish e.g. bream, luderick, tailor, mullet, whiting & sea mullet. These can be plundered at will by professional beach haulers, whilst recreational fishers are asked or told to conserve.
- It is a fact that professional fishermen can take in one haul more than recreational fishers could take in a lifetime.
- We also believe that aquaculture should be a major project for our State government. This should include those pro fishermen that have been involved in buyouts from other river systems.

Not only could aquaculture be a big revenue raiser for our state, but an immense employment opportunity for deposed fishermen. It would also contribute to the sustainability and boosting of fish stocks.

5. There is room for any ecologically sustainable development, but we point out that existing development and infrastructure, e.g. flood mitigation, storm water run off, chemicals and nutrients from agricultural practices, destruction of marine habitat etc., contribute to major aquatic environmental issues.

These environmental issues need to be urgently addressed. Does any politician or green advocate believe that by declaring 540ha of Lake Cathie a sanctuary zone will prevent another fish kill such as that recently experienced?

In conclusion, recreational fishers call for meaningful representation, consultation and input into any process that affects their valued pastime.

We trust this submission gives you an accurate insight into the feelings and concerns of our recreational fishing families.

Kind regards

Bert Hayes, Chairman
President
Laurieton United Services Club Fishing Club

Ray Robinson, President
North Haven Bowling Club Fishing Club

John Robbins, President
Lake Cathie Bowling Club Fishing Club

Alan Sanderson, President
Kendall Fishing Club

Bruce Hall, Secretary
Laurieton Hotel Fishing Club