



Recfishwest

Media Release

Recfishwest seeks Minister's support for fisheries management package

Recfishwest has presented to Fisheries Minister Norman Moore an alternative management package for west coast demersal scalefish and licence fees.

"Recfishwest has accepted the Minister's challenge to develop an alternative management strategy to reduce the recreational take of key west coast demersal scalefish by 50% without the use of a high licence fee," executive director, Frank Prokop said today.

In developing this package Recfishwest has consulted with key recreational fishing stakeholders through a number of industry summit meetings.

The 50% reduction formed the basis of the management discussions. Following negotiations, Recfishwest endorsed an individual limit of one and a boat limit of two dhufish together with an individual limit of two high risk demersal species within the west coast bioregion. A further two pelagic species such as mahi mahi and Spanish mackerel would also be permitted.

Recfishwest has strongly advocated for the carriage of a release weight to be compulsory for anyone who lands a west coast demersal species.

Research has proven that the release weight dramatically improves survival of dhufish. Mr Prokop said that it was important to continue to improve survival of released fish.

"Our proposal does not include a \$150 demersal licence fee, but rather introduces a modified version of the government's proposed state-wide Boat Fishing Licence of \$30 per individual fishing from a registered boat," Mr Prokop said.

In taking this position Recfishwest is mindful that not all recreational fishers will be entirely happy with the proposal. Nevertheless, Recfishwest recognises the importance of a licence as a valuable research census tool and an additional revenue source that can be applied to recreational fishing priorities such as; habitat and stock enhancement, dedicated recreational compliance patrols, research and education.

While an agreed position on licences was not able to be reached during the consultation with other industry groups there was wide scale support for the biological aspects of the proposal.

"This shows significant leadership from the recreational sector in responding to a sustainability challenge in the face of a conservation movement looking to lock up the oceans to fishing," Mr Prokop said.

Recfishwest urges the government to strongly consider this package given that it addresses the key issues and removes the element of the original proposal that attracted significant public opposition.

Mr Prokop hoped that the community would see the benefits of this compromise package.



Recfishwest Management Package

West Coast Demersal Management Proposal

- Closed Season for High Risk West Coast Demersal Scalefish 15 Oct – 15 Dec.
- High Risk West Coast Demersal Scalefish Sub Category – mixed bag limit of 2 (Including an individual dhufish bag limit 1 and boat limit 2. Charter Boat limit of 6 dhufish).
- West Coast Pelagic Scalefish Sub Category – mixed bag limit of 2.
- Some pelagic species moved from High Risk to Medium Risk.
- Compulsory release weight to be carried when landing of High Risk West Coast Demersal Scalefish.
- Removal of High Risk Species Boat Limit of 8.

Licence Proposal

- State-wide Boat Fishing Licence @ \$30 per individual fishing from a registered boat (Note: No Licence required by any person fishing to a licensed person's bag limit).
- Charter boat fishing licence of \$15 per trip to apply state-wide where a person fishes on a charter boat without an annual Boat Fishing Licence.
- Standardise existing licence categories to \$40ea.
- 10% discount for multiple licences and 50% discount for concessions and under 16.
- No west coast demersal fishing licence.

Compromise Package & Percentage Reductions	
New High Risk West Coast Demersal Scalefish Category - a mixed bag limit of 2 per licence holder	34% (includes impact of boat licence)
Closed season 15 Oct – 15 Dec for High Risk West Coast Demersal Scalefish Category	15%
Compulsory release weight	2%
Total	51%

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Media Contacts

Frank Prokop, Executive Director - Recfishwest ph. 92463366 or 0419949118

Kane Moyle, Principal Policy Officer - Recfishwest ph. 92463366 or 0403898432