



Recfishwest Welcomes Wetline Review

Recfishwest praised the announcement by Minister for Fisheries, Jon Ford, on the management arrangements for the West Coast and Gascoyne wetline fishery.

The new arrangements will bring the wetline fishery under management controls. It will foster a small, professional and profitable commercial finfish fishery and give greater responsibility to the recreational fishing sector to better manage their activities.

Executive Director of Recfishwest, Frank Prokop was extremely pleased with the decision. “This is a great day for fisheries management in Western Australia and for Recfishwest. We have been working on an equitable management plan for the wetline fishery in this state for nearly 10 full years and it has finally come to fruition.”

“Recfishwest is especially pleased with the controls on the take of fish by boats that do not qualify for a specific wetline entitlement. Not allowing the take of any fish, or the carrying of any gear for taking finfish will allow for more effective compliance.”

“While some people are concentrating on a not yet realised price increase for local seafood, Recfishwest believes that there will be many benefits, including fish of a consistently higher quality from a dedicated wetline fishery and a reduction in the black market.” Mr Prokop said.

The Chairman of Recfishwest Des Wood also welcomed the management arrangements. “The Minister’s decision represents a significant step forward in sustainable fisheries management. The enormous efforts of Recfishwest have been proven to be worthwhile in what we believe is a visionary and equitable decision.”

Recfishwest believes that recreational fishers will need to adopt even greater responsibility for managing the recreational share of the resource in the future.

This decision paves the way for a more formal allocation of fish stocks to the recreational fishery through the integrated fisheries process.

“Recfishwest is looking forward to the challenge of managing our recreational fisheries to ensure that a quality experience is maintained. This will have enormous benefits to the economy and lifestyle of Western Australians as we are already world leaders in this area.” Mr Prokop said.

Recreational fishers have been the driving force behind a number of successful management measures for the protection of fish stocks such as the Cockburn Sound and Shark Bay pink snapper closures and anticipated protection of blue groper at Rottnest.

“Continuing to manage important species such as dhufish and snapper is the next challenge!” Mr Prokop concluded.

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