



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **EMOTION BASED MARINE PLANNING A THREAT TO FISHING INDUSTRIES**

Recfishwest is calling on state and commonwealth governments to improve the process for all marine-park planning and for the fishing sector to have greater involvement in future discussions following the Premier's announcement today of four new marine parks.

Recfishwest Acting Executive Director Kane Moyle said marine parks in Western Australia require sign off from state environment and fisheries ministers, yet the recreational and commercial fishing sectors first opportunity to formally comment on marine park plans is when planning is complete and a draft management plan released.

"Recreational and commercial fishers are typically the group most affected by marine park zoning, but they have no say in planning for marine parks," Mr Moyle said.

"The greatest risks to Camden Sound are not created by the commercial or recreational fishing sectors. If we are not vigilant the price of fresh fish will rise to 'luxury' prices and it will become increasingly difficult to take your kids fishing.

"We are not opposed to marine parks being implemented, but the fishing public, both recreational and commercial, must be involved in the initial planning stages.

"Both commercial and recreational fishers have agreed to assess all activities against their potential impact on whales and other marine life and alter fisheries management if risks are identified.

"This government's original recommendation was to provide additional protection to whales. Despite whale populations having never been healthier, additional sanctuary zones have been drafted with no relevance to whale conservation."

Mr Moyle said this represents emotion based marine planning at the cost of other marine stakeholders.

"Recreational fishers have a strong conservation history in the Kimberley, pro-actively advocating for total protection for all species of sawfish and several species of river whaler shark."

Mr Moyle said Recfishwest welcomes the inclusion of the wilderness fishing area around Montgomery Reef in the Kimberley and sees this as a viable alternative to sanctuary zoning in a number of sites in Western Australia.

“Recreational and commercial fishers had traditionally strongly supported whale conservation in remote areas such as Camden Sound, but it needs to have a risk assessment as part of the management development process.

“Sensible discussion and careful planning is the best way forward and this must involve the recreational and commercial fishing sectors.”

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