



MEDIA RELEASE

Local Recreational Fishers Work to Protect Fish Stocks

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Concerned recreational fishing representatives in the Walpole and Manjimup region pushed hard for restrictions on gillnet fishing in the area in an effort to help preserve valuable fish stocks.

Peak recreational fishing body Recfishwest's Regional Policy Officer Andrew Rowland said the Save Our Fish Stocks Committee expressed concerns about the increased use of gillnets in the waters between Windy Harbour and Peaceful Bay.

"At a recent meeting chaired by local MP Nigel Hallett, committee members negotiated substantial reductions in the commercial take of demersal fish species such as dhufish and pink snapper," Dr Rowland said.

"From June next year, the Demersal Gillnet and Longline Fishery, also known as the 'Shark Fishery', will have to reduce the catch of scalefish species by 50% in the waters between Augusta and Chatham Island.

"We applaud the efforts of local committee members in achieving this result. This move will reduce the commercial catch of important species such as dhufish, queen snapper and pink snapper in local waters by more than 20 tonnes."

Save Our Fish Stocks Committee member Wayne Pedretti thanked the local recreational fishing community for its ongoing support,

"We would not have been able to get this far without such a high level of community interest and support," Mr Pedretti said.

"This was a long process and whilst we didn't achieve everything we were seeking, we are happy to accept this agreed outcome which will protect a significant amount of important recreational species.

"The commercial sector will meet in February to consider extending these catch reductions into other zones of the fishery, particularly the waters around Peaceful Bay. Our committee, along with Recfishwest, will push hard to see the catch reduction extended, and we will also remain vigilant to ensure these reductions actually occur next year," Mr Pedretti said.

Recfishwest said the outcome was a significant result for the recreational sector and the community is lucky to have such passionate individuals committed to ensuring the sustainability of recreational fishing in the Walpole and Manjimup region.

Ends.

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Caption for figure: Zones of the Demersal Gillnet and Longline Fishery on the south coast indicating the waters where reductions of demersal scalefish will apply. Zone 1 of the fishery west of 115°30'E will see a reduction of over 20 tonnes.

