

Hon Jon Ford MLC
Minister for Fisheries
14th floor May Holman Centre,
32 St Georges Terrace
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Minister

Re: Protection of Large Sharks

Thank you for your letter of 13th October requesting Recfishwest's views on the possible measures to reduce the take of sharks by the recreational sector.

Recfishwest shares your concerns for the long-term sustainability of Western Australian shark stocks. We believe that the responsibility for the state of the shark fishery in Western Australia lies solely with the commercial sector. The recreational catch of sharks is minuscule in comparison to that taken by the commercial sector. We believe any variation to the catch effort of recreational shark fishery would have no tangible benefit to future sustainability.

I have attached a letter from John Webber, President of the Western Australian Game Fishing Association (WAGFA) outlining the total number of sharks caught from all major game fishing clubs state wide in the last 11 years. These figures show that a major part of the recreational catch for the period June 02 til July 03 represents only 0.013% of the 2,042,089 kg reported commercial catch for the same period.

The annual take for recreational fishers would amount to less than one days take from a single commercial long line. Recfishwest therefore believes that management measures would be best invested in reducing the commercial catch of sharks for the long term sustainability of this fishery. We believe that any adjustments to current catch effort for the recreational sector would provide no benefit.

Recfishwest notes also that the Exmouth Game Fishing Club has proactively removed the heaviest shark category on the internationally renowned GAMEX game fishing competition in a bid to ensure that extremely large sharks are not weighed in.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact our office on 9246 3366.

Yours faithfully

Des Wood
Chairman
15th December 2005

CC Doug Bathgate

Chairman – Des Wood
Executive Director – Frank Prokop

Email: recfish@recfishwest.org.au
Website: <http://www.recfishwest.org.au>