



MEETING	Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Council
MEETING NO.	Meeting 11 outcomes
DATE	22 November 2018 (12:00-17:30)
	Rowers on Cooks River, Wollie Creek
	Johann Bell (Chair), Jo Starling, Max Castle, Vic Levett, Matt Hansen, Matthew Poulton, Paul Lennon, Ray Tang, Greg Reid, David Rae, Vicki Lear, Peter Turnell.
APOLOGIES	Karl Mathers, Stan Konstantaras

1. Joint meeting Recreational RFNSW and CommFish NSW

See Annex 1 for outcomes.

2. Register of interests

The Chair requested that members declare any additions for the Register since the last meeting. The following members advised they were now representatives of the following committees:

Max Castle – Batemans Bay Bridge Foreshore Advisory Committee

Jo Starling – National Recreational Fishing Council

It was determined there were no conflicts of interest associated with representation on the above committees.

3. Agreement on the agenda

RFNSW members agreed on the agenda for the meeting.

4. Adoption of the record of the previous meeting

The draft outcomes of Meeting 10 were accepted without change as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

5. Future meeting schedule

Meeting 12: February 2019

6. Review of achievements and action items from previous meetings

Council noted the status of achievements and action items from the previous meeting.

7a. Progressing the top 10 priority issues: reviewing status

Council members have identified details of key issues in their regions, sectors or fields which have been collated into an issues summary document. A 'live' structured RFNSW work plan

with specific actions and responsibilities is being maintained. The status of the various actions was discussed and further actions developed where required.

7b. Top 10 issue: Mulloway Recovery Program

Members welcomed the joint discussion on Mulloway during the morning session with CommFish. Council reconfirmed its ongoing commitment to rebuild Mulloway stocks based on a reduction in fishing mortality on the species. Members discussed the issue of a trigger point for total catch, particularly if there is increased targeting of large Mulloway due to the removal of mesh net registrations. RFNSW reiterated the need for ongoing monitoring to determine any effects of increased targeting. DPI confirmed that ongoing monitoring for commercial fishing is being undertaken, as well as collection of statewide recreational fishing data every two years.

Recommendation: The Council supported the need for ongoing regular monitoring of recreational and commercial Mulloway catch, and re-assessment of the status of Mulloway stocks in 12 months. It was agreed that if monitoring indicated that fishing mortality needed to be reduced further, then management action to achieve this should be expedited.

Action item: DPI to undertake and review monitoring of Mulloway stocks and report results to RFNSW within 12 months.

7c. Marine Estate Management

The NSW EPA is carrying out research to identify the people who use our marine environment. The research will inform the EPA's litter prevention program and the NSW Government's development of a state-wide marine litter/debris education campaign.

Action item: DPI to circulate to members the schedule for the remaining EPA community workshops on marine litter.

7d. Stock assessment of key species

DPI updated Council on development of a discussion paper on management options for Kingfish to address perceived declining catch rates based on available scientific evidence. Noting the discussion at the joint session with CommFish regarding the need for consistent size limits across the commercial and recreational sectors, it was recognised that commercial and recreational catch data and information should be included in the discussion paper and be provided to CommFish for review.

Action item: DPI to include commercial and recreational catch data and information in the Kingfish discussion paper and the Chair to send the paper to CommFish for consideration.

7e. Fish associated impacts of Macquarie River Orange pipeline and Burrendong Dam safety upgrade offsets

DPI advised that a watching brief is being maintained on these issues.

Action item: DPI to provide an update on the fish associated impacts of the Macquarie River Orange pipeline and the Burrendong Dam safety upgrade offsets at meeting 12.

8. Recreational Fishing Trust matters

a) Project variation - Fish Screening at irrigation diversions in NSW

DPI advised that Charles Sturt University (CSU) had submitted a project variation for the previously funded "Screens for streams" project. The ARC Research Hub application bid was unsuccessful resulting in a reduction in the overall scope and project budget and a reallocation of resources, although the Recreational Fishing Trust component remains largely unchanged. NSW DPI Fisheries will now govern the project with CSU as co-investigators. NSW Local Land Services will now also contribute to the project. Council noted that the Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee had supported the above project variation and agreed it was essential that the project proceed to achieve favourable outcomes for inland native fish populations.

b) New applications – project recommendations from RFSTEC and RFFTEC

RFNSW was advised that the Recreational Fishing Saltwater and Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committees (RFSTEC and RFFTEC) met on 7 and 8 November 2018 to review Trust applications received by DPI. A summary of the RFSTEC and RFFTEC recommendations was provided to Council in the agenda. Council also noted the recommendations made by RFSTEC and RFFTEC in relation to the 2018/19 Habitat Action Grants. RFNSW members also discussed options for setting up discretionary funds from the Recreational Fishing Trusts for Council to access for urgent issues and for setting up essential projects within short timeframes.

Action item: DPI to arrange a meeting between the RFNSW Chair, RFSTEC and RFFTEC Chair, Deputy Director General DPI Fisheries and the Group Director Recreational and Aboriginal Fisheries, to identify how to create a limited discretionary fund for direct use by RFNSW, with appropriate checks and balances.

Action item: DPI to circulate a copy of the Tamworth Council Peel River pollution prevention application to members for information.

9. DPI Compliance presentation

RFNSW welcomed the update by DPI Fisheries Compliance which provided key insights into the role of compliance and major achievements during the year. It was interesting to note the rise in infringement notices in relation to cockle and whelk harvesting. Council sought advice from Compliance on the best methods for measuring recreational catch and possible ways in which the functions of Compliance staff could be revised to assist with the collection of reliable information on recreational catch.

Action item: DPI Fisheries Compliance be requested to consider options for additional ways to gather information on the catch of recreational fishers.

Action item: DPI Fisheries Compliance to provide advice to Council on how many people call the Fishers Watch Phoneline annually and how many are responded to.

10. Social licence update

DPI provided an update on the social licence program. Draft User Guidelines for use of the Fish For Life logo by angling groups and associations have been developed and will be provided to a sub-committee comprised of RFNSW and Trust expenditure committee members for their input. A procurement strategy, which outlines the scope, procurement milestones, evaluation criteria, tender advertising, contract management, tender assessment

and procurement risks, is being developed and will be provided to the sub-committee prior to a proposed tender process being implemented.

11. Breakaway floats

DPI provided details of a social media campaign designed to reduce littering and breakaway floats planned for summer and autumn. Brochures and posters will also be produced for tackle shops, fishing clubs and Fisheries Officers located close to hot spot areas. The main aim is to highlight the following key message to anglers: 'Using breakaway floats contributes to marine littering. It is not OK to litter our marine environment'. Advisory material will be produced to provide anglers with alternative solutions to breakaway floats.

12. Marine Stocking update

DPI advised that a small-scale research stocking program for Kingfish was being undertaken to assess the potential for future releases of the species as a fisheries enhancement tool. This low-level stocking program is being undertaken in two large waterways. Approximately 7,000 fish were stocked in Botany Bay and 3000 in Lake Macquarie in September. DPI proposes to stock an additional 2,000 kingfish in Botany Bay in December. DPI also advised that plans were underway to facilitate production of Dusky Flathead for use in future stocking experiments.

13. Gone Fishing Day update

Action item: Due to time limitations, RFNSW requested DPI to circulate the report for Gone Fishing Day 2018 out of session to members.

14. Saltwater Fishing access update

Sydney Harbour Access

Police patrols of Sydney ferry wharves are set to commence for the 2018-2019 season with a focus on enhancing angler access and enjoyment of these popular facilities by targeting anti-social behaviour, including litter and late night noise. The police patrols are particularly important this year as the temporary closures of the Walsh Bay piers will likely mean displacement of effort to ferry wharves. As noted in previous meetings, continued angler access to Walsh Bay is a condition of consent of the re-development work currently underway at Piers 2/3 and 3/4. It is expected that the construction work will take up to two years. DPI is working with Infrastructure NSW to investigate the potential for installation of cleaning tables and rod holders when the piers re-open. Access to late night toilets is also being discussed.

Sydney reservoirs

DPI informed Council that the risk assessment into recreational fishing in Sydney water supply reservoirs has been peer reviewed and will be sent to stakeholders for comment before being sent to the Minister for consideration.

7. General Business

a) Perceived targeting of Murray cod during closed season

Matt Hansen led discussion on the use of large lures and specific baits, such as cheese and bardi grubs, during the closed season for Murray Cod. Anecdotal reports on social media indicate that some anglers appear to be targeting cod in this way. RFNSW recognised the

need for more education about the reasons for the closed season, which is designed to provide protection for spawning cod.

Action item: DPI to liaise with Matt Hansen to develop options and possible research initiatives regarding fishers targeting Murray Cod during the closed season.

Action item: DPI to undertake education initiatives, including social media, highlighting the purpose of the closed season.

Bridge replacement, Batemans Bay update

Max Castle advised Council that Roads and Maritime Services had awarded the tender for the Batemans Bay bridge replacement, which includes complete removal of the pylons.

Action item: DPI to liaise with RMS to investigate options for providing offsets for the loss of fish habitat, including the potential for deploying reefballs or leaving part of the pylons underwater but deep enough to endure that the remaining structures do not pose a navigation hazard (noting the current bridge is a popular fishing location).

RFNSW membership

DPI notified Council that the current terms of RFNSW council members were due to expire at the end of February 2019. It is proposed to advertise for an expression of interest in positions to continue the work of the Council. Existing members will be eligible to reapply.

Proposed Splitters Creek and Portland Dam trout dams

Council supported the inclusion of two former quarry dams (Splitters creek and Portland) on the Section 8 notice for Trout waters as Fly and Lure only dams and a minor amendment to the listing for Khancoban Creek to clarify the inclusion of its tributary, Back Creek in the closure. DPI Fisheries in conjunction with stakeholders has negotiated fishing access to these dams with relevant land managers.

Access to Jounama Pondage

Steve Samuels reported that private conversations with Snowy Hydro indicates that concerns regarding safety issues do not permit recreational fishing boat access on the Pondage to be considered at this time.

Annex 1

MEETING	Joint meeting of the Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Council (RFNSW) and Commercial Fishing NSW Advisory Council (CommFish NSW)
MEETING NO.	Meeting 1 outcomes
DATE	22 November 2018 (9:00-12:00)
LOCATION	Rowers on Cooks River, Wollie Creek

RFNSW		CommFish NSW	
Prof. Johann Bell	RFNSW - Chair	Stuart Richey AM	CommFish NSW - Chair
Peter Turnell	DPI Group Director Recreational & Aboriginal Fisheries	David McPherson	DPI Group Director, Commercial Fisheries & Aquaculture
Dave Rae	Region 1	Graeme Byrnes	MFAC (Commercial Fisher)
Paul Lennon	Region 2	John Luke	Aboriginal Commercial Fishers
Greg Reid	Region 4	Geoff Blackburn	Estuary General Share Managed Fishery
Vicki Lear	Region 4	Mark Cranstone	Lobster Share Managed Fishery
Jo Starling	Region 5	Mitchell Sanders	Ocean Trap & Line Share Managed Fishery
Max Castle	Region 5	Steve Hounsell	Inland Restricted Fishery
Matt Hansen	Region 6	Greg Finn	Sea Urchin & Turban Shell Restricted Fishery
Steven Samuels	Region 8	John Jarvis	Southern Fish Trawl Restricted Fishery
Ray Tang	Region 8	Darren Ward	Ocean Trawl Share Managed Fishery
Vic Levett	Charter Boat Fishing		
Matt Poulton	Spear Fishing		
Brooke McCarthy	Secretariat, RFNSW	Cherie Kirkman	Secretariat, CommFish NSW
Apologies			
Stan Konstantaras	Region 3	Scott Massey	Ocean Hauling
Karl Mathers	Region 7	Steve Everson	Estuary Prawn Trawl

1. Member Welcome and Introductions

The Chairs of the Commercial and Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Councils welcomed all members to the first joint meeting. The meeting commenced with a round table of introductions.

2. Action needed to prevent black marketing of fish

Discussions commenced with reference by the CommFish NSW member (MFAC representative) to a report by Palmer in 2004. The report identified that fish theft is a major issue and that the extent of theft was extensive, exceeding that experienced by the cattle industry, i.e. fish theft is more frequent than cattle rustling; there is a high level of criminal activity.

It was noted that it is very difficult to identify this type of illegal activity, and that it cannot be easily determined whether fish has been caught recreationally or commercially once it is at a restaurant/cooperative.

The Palmer report recommends fin clipping as a means of identifying legal from illegal catch. Discussion was had in regard to the need for better identification as a means to prevent black marketing. Clipping and tagging were discussed as options. It was also suggested that higher penalties should apply for buying illegal fish. It was also stated that the Palmer report recommended that a reward for reporting a theft should be paid when the perpetrator is charged. Currently the reward is paid when convicted.

It was suggested that both CommFish NSW and RFNSW have a joint action to work towards preventing the sale of fish (to consumers, restaurants etc.) by those who are not authorised to do so, and that a joint recommendation be provided to the Minister in regard to the prevention of black marketing of fish.

Further discussion included that CommFish NSW has been actively involved in the development of a Penalty Demerit Scheme (PDS) to address those that may be involved in illegal fishing and selling in the Commercial sector. CommFish NSW relayed to RFNSW that the Council is very serious about reducing illegal activity because it is undermining the sustainable management of fisheries resources. The implementation of the PDS is ongoing, but CommFish NSW fully supports it and considers they have been thorough in reviewing the scheme. RFNSW considers a review of recreational bag limits of popular species, e.g., Snapper and Kingfish, under consideration by RFNSW to help rebuild stocks, will also limit the potential for illegal sale of these species. A joint collaboration between RFNSW and CommFish NSW would assist in expediting the change on this important black marketing issue.

The member for Sea Urchin & Turban Shell (SUTS) Fishery advised that CommFish has drafted a paper to recommend additional assistance to DPI Compliance. It was agreed that CommFish NSW and RFNSW would share the paper and work with DPI to make a joint recommendation to the Minister.

Action item: DPI Group Director, Recreational & Aboriginal Fishing and Group Director, Commercial Fishing & Aquaculture to form a sub group to jointly prepare a recommendation to the Minister on the prevention of black marketing of fish to be sent as a joint letter by the Chairs of CommFish and RFNSW.

3. Need for consistent size limits for commercial and recreational sectors

It was agreed that consistent size limits, applying to both the commercial and recreational sectors, need to be considered.

CommFish NSW (MFAC member) spoke of Blue Swimmer Crabs and that the main competitor for NSW is South Australia. With Blue Swimmer Crabs now managed by quota and a commercial size limit of six and a half centimetres, smaller crabs are less marketable. He also indicated that Wallis Lake fishers have been measuring crabs and confirm that larger sized crabs are not impacted much from handling. It was suggested that consideration should be given to progressively increasing the size each year, to deliver a better product to market and create a higher price. Increased minimum size is something that commercial fishers would like to see implemented for recreational fishers as well.

RFNSW would like to see the size limits for Snapper and Kingfish increased; specifically, considering increasing the size limit of Kingfish to 75 cm, and decreasing recreational bag limits at the same time. RFNSW asked for CommFish input.

Firstly the member for Ocean Trap & Line Fishery declared his pecuniary interest in Snapper prior to making comment. It was advised that an increase in size would impact commercial fishers financially, as they do not need to target such large fish; restaurants prefer smaller Snapper (around the current size limit) for the plate. The DPI member suggested that the science should inform the size limit management arrangements. Following further discussion, the RFNSW Chair indicated that the science should be considered carefully and should be used to determine the minimum legal size. Both Councils agreed that further discussion should be held as soon as convenient.

The member for SUTS advised that the size limit for Abalone had been adjusted over time and noted that having more robust estimates of the recreational take of abalone and rock lobster would greatly benefit the management of these shared resources.

Action item: DPI to summarise the science on the most effective way of optimising increasing the spawning biomass, and market prices, of Snapper and Kingfish and forward to RFNSW and CommFish for further discussion

4. The Mulloway recovery program and the need for monitoring

There was overall applause for the Mulloway recovery actions. Discussion focused on the next steps.

- RFNSW identified that it will be requesting regular monitoring to determine whether the recovery programme is increasing the spawning biomass of Mulloway, and whether the removal of mesh net registrations is increasing the catch of large fish. The CommFish NSW Chair suggested that DPI also review the number of fish caught, not just the tonnage, as the increase in fish size will increase the tonnage.
- RFNSW acknowledged that there was an urgent need to quantify how many Mulloway were caught by recreational fishers each year.
- RFNSW noted the impact of the removal of mesh net registrations is largely unknown at this stage. CommFish advised that if they need to provide recommendations in the future to further reduce fishing mortality, they will do so.
- Both RFNSW and CommFish members are both highly focused on sustainability and ensuring recovery of the species. Therefore, it was suggested that the science needs

to dictate how this should be managed through monitoring the biomass, size, catch location, habitat and the quantity taken. The member for Southern Fish Trawl Fishery suggested that there is a need to build on the harvest management framework that is already in place.

- Members asked what actions DPI is taking with regard to Mulloway; the DPI member indicated that commercial catches are being monitored monthly and that independent surveys are being undertaken and modelled. Statewide recreational catch surveys are also underway.

Action item: DPI to provide regular updates on Mulloway.

Action item: Unanimous support to invite Campbell Davies from the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) to the next joint meeting to discuss what research CSIRO are doing on the application of 'close-kin' genetic techniques as a tool to measure the rebuilding on spawning biomass in overfished stocks.

Action item: Support to invite to the next joint meeting a CSIRO expert and DPI scientists to inform members about the methods used to develop harvest strategies.

5. Need for overall catch limits and better measures of catches by all sectors to improve the management of shared resources

- CommFish advised that commercial fishers are currently still highly regulated by input controls noting the additional controls recently implemented by the Business Adjustment Program.
- CommFish are looking to review some of the current commercial fishing regulations; it was suggested that RFNSW and CommFish NSW should form a joint group to look at red tape reduction.
- Discussion involved the need to ensure sustainability and equitable access to our fisheries resources across all sectors. RFNSW advised that all sectors are custodians of our fisheries resources and should be collectively involved in their future management.
- In addition to current surveys of recreational fishing, it was suggested that Compliance Officers may be able to collect additional recreational fishing catch information when undertaking compliance activities to increase the amount of available recreational information. Another option was the potential implementation of a catch log for fishers.
- RFNSW Chair suggested that Recreational Fishing Trust funding be requested to engage a think tank to look at how to enhance recording of the recreational catch. This was supported by both Councils.

Action item: Investigate the formation of a joint RFNSW and CommFish NSW group to reduce red tape associated with fishing regulations.

Action item: Facilitate a Recreational Fishing Trust application to engage a think tank to recommend additional, cost effective methods to measure the recreational fisher catch.

Other concerns:

CommFish shared concerns that whilst Australian Salmon are caught for lobster bait, it was suggested Australian Salmon may be predated Whiting in large numbers. RFNSW questioned whether commercial fishers are required to record fish caught for bait, which was confirmed. It was also mentioned that there was no export market for Salmon at present. Concerns were expressed by CommFish that more Salmon are being observed further up the east coast.

Next Meeting

It was recommended that CommFish NSW and RFNSW meet at least once a year.

Meeting Close

Both Chairs closed the meeting at around 12 noon, thanking all Council members for their contributions.