
From: Craig Christie
Sent: Tuesday, 18 April 2023 3:27 PM
To: Fishing Enquiries
Subject: Gday fellas

Thank you for accepting this submission for the Harvest Strategy Policy for Tasmanian Wild Fisheries. Please note I want this submission to be accepted under my name and not grouped as a joint effort or to be tabled with other submissions with the same or similar themes; the reason being I want to be included as a voice to support recreational fishing in Tasmania.

Fisheries management in Tasmania has marginalised recreational fishers for too long, many in the recreational sector have grave concerns about the decline in fish stocks around the state and the ever decreasing recognition that is given to recreational fishers through cuts and changes to the way we enjoy the wild fish harvest. Many fisheries in Tasmania have been mismanaged and many more, in Commonwealth waters, are also depleted through failure of management structure and practice to protect and preserve fish stocks in a way that ensures recreational fishers can continue to enjoy access and share of our fish. In short I want recreational fishers to have a voice at the table that has the same decision making responsibility as the commercial sector, further I want that same voice to be heard across all fisheries managed in Tasmanian waters and those waters surrounding Tasmania that are managed by the Commonwealth.

The history of failure is long and significant, we are currently suffering biomass of Southern Rock Lobster below 20% in five of the eight management areas, on the East Coast these pathetic levels are despite a ten year long strategy to rebuild stocks. To typify failure we see the highest harvest tonnage, for Rock Lobster, coming from area five which has a biomass of 12%; clearly we need to see decision making capacity shift from those that have a profit motive to set allowable catch or other management tools to protect this valuable resource from unsustainable fishing practice. The decline seen in Rock Lobster and Abalone cannot be seen as isolated when the same flawed decision making is likely to prevail and we are forced to suffer the incompetence of fishery managers that enable a harvest methodology that depletes our shared resources to the point of failure and then punishes the recreational sector with access and bag cuts that are never ever returned!

The representation or advice for the recreational sector is provided through committees that are either selected by the minister or funded through government grants. Many in the recreational sector want a more democratic process used to select representatives for our voice at the table, simply giving appearance to a couple of hand picked members on a meaningless committee is well short of a fair voice for recreational fishers in this state. As the recreational community we make a significant contribution to consolidated revenue as a part of the reported \$300 million dollar spend, per annum, by recreational fishers in Tasmania. From a fisheries management perspective the promotion of recreation is the most environmentally friendly way to develop economic activity and sustainable business. Tasmania has emerging fisheries including Snapper, King George Whiting and Yellowtail Kingfish as well as established fisheries such as Southern Calamari and Southern Rock Lobster... all naturally occurring and drawing increasing interest from locals and international spectators. Now is the time to act in favour of Tasmanians and Tasmanian fisheries!

While we have the same people making decisions on behalf of fishers that have been instrumental in the demise of recreational fishing why would we expect a different outcome? If you want people

to believe in the process first you must have people in positions that will be open and transparent then you empower recreational fishers to look after and manage their fish.

Fisheries management needs to change, we are stuck in a never ending cycle of fish-down followed by the urgent need for action, read reduce recreational bag limits etc.. There are few restrictions on commercial fishers in Tasmania, indeed I understand the only fisheries that are quota managed are Banded Morwong, Southern Rock Lobster and Abalone; the rest are without structured management plans or actions. Outside our 3 miles of state waters we allow trawlers to access fisheries that remain important to the recreational sector but there seems to be zero regard for us, certainly there is no open inclusion in decisions made. Across both state and commonwealth waters we see unrestrained catch until a limit reference point of 20% of biomass. It needs to be understood that catch allocation guarantees the 20% threshold will be reached! Once the limit reference point is reached we then see an urgency to rebuild that often places a higher than reasonable responsibility on recreational fishers. That responsibility is in the form of drastic cuts to our share. Additionally if stocks ever do rebuild there has never been a return of share to the recreational sector. There needs to be a protected share and first access right for Tasmanians to access their own fisheries. There needs to be a limit point where commercial activity stops to enable rebuild, I suggested 40% as a reasonable level, when commercial activity should cease. We've seen agonisingly slow rebuilds for species like Southern Rock Lobster and Blue Warehou, both important recreational species, both fished to the point of collapse by the commercial sector. Retaining the higher minimum would increase the probability of successful rebuild.

So in short we, the recreational fishers of Tasmania, own the fish, make a higher contribution to government coffers, place a higher value on every kilogram of fish harvested, are more committed to environmental outcomes and fishery protection and we want a say. So let's see an elected body working on any future Harvest Strategies, let's make fishery management fair and transparent and supportive of Tasmanians. Give us a go - we deserve at least that much!

Signed

Craig Christie