



Marine Protected Areas Stocking the tool box for recreational fishers



Australian Government
Fisheries Research and
Development Corporation



RECFISH
AUSTRALIA



Marine Protected Areas

- stocking the tool box for recreational fishers

National Seminar Brisbane
4-5 November 2006

Compiled by Bill Sawynok, Recfishing Research

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Acknowledgements

The National Seminar on Marine Protected Areas was an initiative of Recfish Australia with the support of the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC).

The seminar was planned by a Recfish Australia committee comprising John Harrison, Bruce Schumacher, David Bateman and Bill Sawynok. Ian Cartwright was the facilitator for the seminar. Rhonda Farlow managed the detailed arrangements of the seminar for presenters and other participants, including advice on travel and accommodation, and the venue.

Funding for the seminar was provided by the FRDC with support from the Recreational Fishing Community Grants program.

The seminar proceedings were compiled by Bill Sawynok of Recfishing Research with the assistance of John Harrison, Bruce Schumacher, David Bateman and Ian Cartwright. The contribution of all presenters and seminar participants is also acknowledged.

The seminar was held over a weekend, and Recfish Australia acknowledges the outstanding contributions made by all presenters and participants who generously gave of their own time to make the seminar a success.

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1. Executive Summary

This seminar provided an opportunity for recreational fishers, fisheries agencies, academics, scientists, peak body representatives and others to meet and listen to presentations on the status of marine planning processes in Australia.

The Seminar was opened by the Commonwealth Fisheries Minister, Senator the Hon Eric Abetz who also provided some very useful comments and suggestions for the participants.

An exceptional collection of presentations greatly assisted the participants to gain an appreciation of the wide range of issues impacting on the recreational fishing sector through the introduction of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). The participants throughout the two days provided input through break out groups and were asked to address key questions associated with the objectives.

Key findings from the two day seminar included:

- ☐ Acknowledgement by the participants of the importance of MPAs as management tools;
- ☐ The need for biodiversity conservation;
- ☐ Inadequate consideration of socio-economic impacts of MPAs;
- ☐ Lack of understanding of impacts of MPAs by governments;
- ☐ MPAs are here to stay;
- ☐ Recognition of the impacts is sought through offsetting initiatives; and
- ☐ The inability of recreational fishers to influence MPA outcomes.

To assist recreational fishers in the MPA engagement process a number of initiatives were put forward:

- ☐ Establish clear unified position statements;
- ☐ Develop rules of engagement;
- ☐ Create a 'roadmap' to assist engagement;
- ☐ Enlist 'champions' to assist communications;
- ☐ Develop case studies on past good and bad examples of process;
- ☐ Guidelines on data collection for monitoring programs;
- ☐ Build capacity within the sector;
- ☐ Form strategic alliances where common ground exists; and
- ☐ Seek funding to support recreational fisher participation in MPA processes.

Research, Development and Extension (RDE) has been identified as a priority with the emphasis on D&E. The RDE needs were:

- ☐ Documenting case studies;
- ☐ Local baseline data particularly socio-economic pre MPA declaration;
- ☐ Initiate monitoring programs;
- ☐ Establish risk assessment processes for cost/benefits;
- ☐ Assess authenticity of spillover effects; and
- ☐ Establish performance audits on MPAs.

Recfish Australia will take steps to execute and develop the ideas and suggestions put forward. This will cover a wide range and will focus on the RDE needs as well as its specific roles identified by the seminar participants.

The presentations made at the seminar are available from www.recfish.com.au.

2. Background

Through Recfish Australia the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) initiated project 2005/322 "Establishing a recreational fishing working group to develop a national implementation plan for research, development and extension". Under this project, which is now known as Recfishing Research, a program of national seminars was proposed.

Recfish Australia has now initiated a program of holding a conference, seminar or workshop every second year to deal with key topical issues of interest to recreational fishers. This will be held in alternate years to the Seafood Directions conference program for the commercial sector and commenced in 2006. This seminar on Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) is the first of this bi-annual series.

MPAs have been implemented by the Commonwealth, State and Northern Territory Governments over the past few years and this program, including a review process of existing MPAs will continue over the coming years. Given that recreational fishers, along with commercial fishers, are the group most affected by the establishment of MPAs this was selected as the subject of the 2006 seminar/workshop.

3. MPA Program for Australia

The Commonwealth, State and Northern Territory governments have an agreement to establish a national system of MPAs that contain a comprehensive, adequate and representative sample of Australia's marine ecosystems. This is known as the National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas (NRSMPA). The establishment of MPAs is part of Australia's response to meet its obligations under the United Nations Convention on Biodiversity Conservation (UNCBC).

The Commonwealth, States and the Northern Territory have all established MPAs and are developing further marine plans to extend MPAs in areas under their jurisdiction.

It is important to recognise that MPAs are being established primarily for the purpose of conserving biodiversity and not for fisheries management however the zoning often impacts on fish resources and fisheries management, including recreational fishing.

The Australian Fishing Tackle Association and the Boating Industry Association commissioned Ernst and Young to produce a report titled "Australia's Marine Protected Areas: Challenging Times Ahead". This report includes a detailed summary of all MPAs and their status around Australia. The executive summary or the full report is available from www.recfish.com.au or www.afta.net.au.

As stated above, it is clear from the MPAs programs of the Commonwealth and State Governments that this process will continue for a number of years and probably indefinitely as the arrangements for MPAs are reviewed in the future.

The Australian Economic Exclusion Zone (EEZ) has been subdivided into five regions (*figure 1*) for the marine bioregional planning in Commonwealth waters. Some of this planning will include MPAs. The zoning of the South-East Marine Region is nearing completion. Following some changes to the zoning in

the Freycinet area the establishment of the South-East Marine Region has had little impact on recreational fishers.

The timeframe for the development of plans for the remaining regions has been reduced with planning for all remaining zones commencing in 2007 and plans expected to be in place by 2009. The Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH) has provided resources to Recfish Australia to assist recreational fisher involvement in this process.

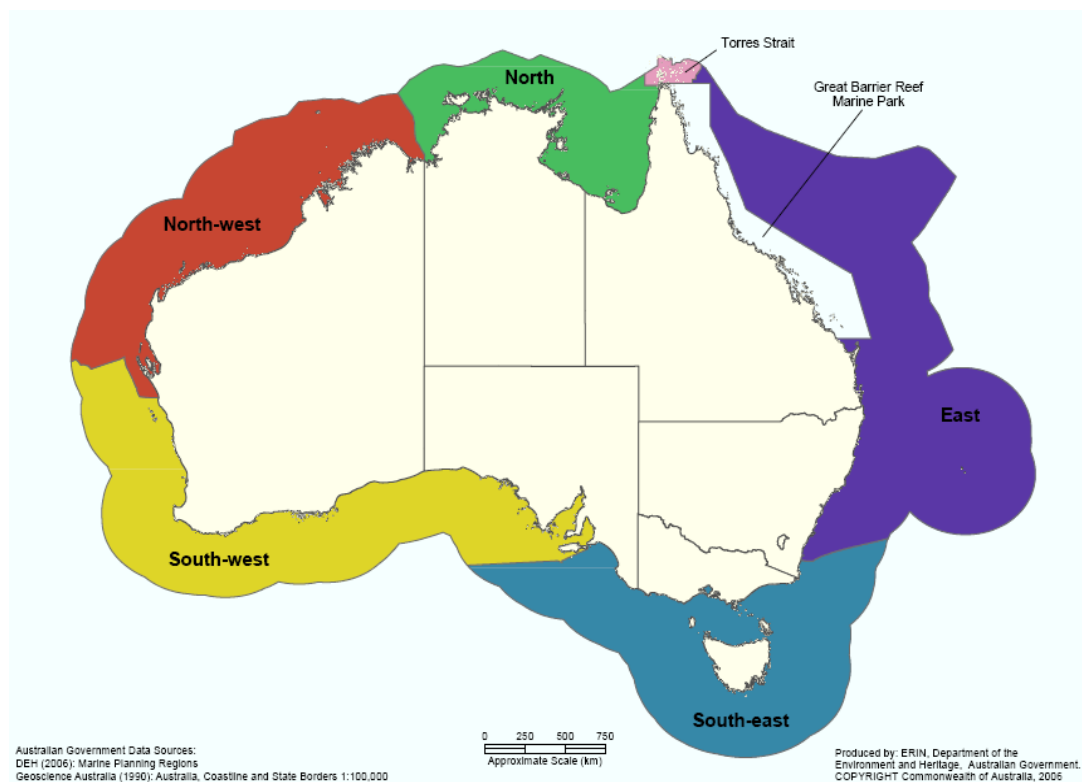


Figure 1: Australia's Commonwealth Marine Bioregional Planning Regions

4. Seminar Opening Comments

Minister for Fisheries Senator Eric Abetz

Minister Abetz officially opened the seminar and outlined the importance of MPA in the management of marine resources.

The Minister made a number of observations to assist recreational fishers in their involvement in the MPA process. These points were:

- ☐ Ensure that information presented is factual and professionally presented;
- ☐ Do not present false or misleading information;
- ☐ Have your say even if you don't see need for change;
- ☐ Government needs to engage better with the recreational sector;
- ☐ Recreational sector needs to actively engage better;

- ☐ Keeping informed and participating in the process is important because silence will be taken as assent; and
- ☐ Avoiding disunity and a consolidated approach are more likely to be able to influence the outcome.

Dr Patrick Hone

Dr Patrick Hone, Executive Director of the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation, addressed the seminar and identified the priorities for the FRDC for Research, Development and Extension for the recreational sector. The key points raised by Dr Hone were:

- ☐ The emphasis is on Development and Extension;
- ☐ Need to build capacity within the recreational sector to ensure ability to respond;
- ☐ Must be a united voice from the sector;
- ☐ Communication networks are essential;
- ☐ Establish a common platform/framework for knowledge gathering; and
- ☐ Have a common theme with a simple message.

5. Key Seminar Findings

There were a number of key findings of the MPA seminar which are presented below:

In reviewing the current status of engagement by recreational fishers in the MPA process the Seminar concluded that:

- ☐ MPAs are seen by governments and the broader community, including many recreational fishers, as an important management tool for the management of the marine ecosystems;
- ☐ The primary purpose of MPAs is to conserve biodiversity and not to improve fisheries management; however, MPAs do have impacts on fisheries management and fishers and this needs greater recognition;
- ☐ Due to the focus on conserving biodiversity, the social and economic impacts on recreational fishers of the establishment of MPAs receives inadequate consideration;
- ☐ Commonwealth and State Governments have programs to establish new MPAs and review existing ones so MPAs are here to stay;
- ☐ Many recreational fishers believe that a number of MPA processes, especially those run by States and Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA), have marginalised recreational fishers by not properly considering or accepting the impact of establishing MPAs on recreational fishing;
- ☐ Recreational fishers are seeking recognition of the impact of MPAs on their activities. Consideration of initiatives such as artificial reefs and stock enhancement could offset those impacts; and
- ☐ Apart from a few local exceptions the ability of recreational fishers to influence the outcomes of the MPA process has been poor.

To improve the engagement of recreational fishers in the MPAs process recreational fishers need to:

- ❑ Work from a basis of accepting the establishment of MPAs rather than fighting their establishment, then seek to minimise their impact on recreational fishing, without compromising conservation objectives;
- ❑ Move from simply being consulted towards meaningful engagement through involvement and collaboration in the MPA process, especially where MPAs will have a significant impact on recreational fishing;
- ❑ Stop being reactive and be more forward thinking by ensuring that resources, time and energy are committed up-front and thereby lead the process towards more positive changes for recreational fishing;
- ❑ Ensure that the social and economic impacts of MPAs are given equal consideration along with the biodiversity benefits;
- ❑ Develop a united and unified approach and present well researched, credible alternatives that meet the objectives of MPAs but minimise the impact on recreational fishers;
- ❑ Get involved in the collection of baseline data including values, attitudes, opinions, desires etc of recreational fishers. Develop monitoring/evaluation programs on the effects of MPAs;
- ❑ Selectively form strategic alliances with other groups, including the commercial sector, and identify areas of interest where it would be beneficial for a common approach to be presented; and
- ❑ Become effective with lobbying but avoid political alliances.

To assist recreational fishers improve their engagement in the process a number of new or improved tools are suggested for the toolbox:

- ❑ Recfish Australia and State Peak Bodies need to establish clear, unified position statements that recognise the reality of MPAs and fairly represent the best interests of recreational fishers and related industries, and seek the endorsement of governments;
- ❑ Codes of conduct/rules of engagement need to be drawn up and agreed to by all parties prior to embarking on a MPA process;
- ❑ A 'roadmap' needs to be developed that can be used to guide recreational fishing bodies and fishers in their engagement in the MPA process, and thereby achieve better outcomes;
- ❑ Engage 'champions' whose opinions are respected in the fishing and broader community to get the recreational fishing messages out to the wider public and address community perceptions;
- ❑ Case studies need to be documented where there have been good and poor outcomes for recreational fishers and these made available to others involved in MPAs processes;
- ❑ Guidelines on how recreational fishing groups can collect biological, social and economic baseline data and how to become involved in monitoring the outcomes of management change e.g. the CapReef model;
- ❑ Build the capacity of recreational fishers to engage in the process through involvement in skills development and leadership programs; and
- ❑ Seek funding, possibly through an extension of the Recreational Fishing Community Grants Program, for support for recreational fishers to better participate in all aspects of the MPA process.

Some lessons learned from recreational fishers involvement were identified:

- ❑ The importance of a comprehensive study of socio-economic impacts and effective last minute lobbying at the political level which resulted in changes to the South East Marine park boundaries - these changes resulted in minimising the impact on commercial fishers and restoring an important recreational fishing ground in the Freycinet area;
- ❑ A case study of Capricorn section of the GBRMP as featured in the independent consultants report Futureye showed that a single community submission was influential in significant changes being made from the draft to the final plan that reduced the impact on recreational fishers;
- ❑ Groups such as Ecofishers in NSW and React in Queensland were able to present polarised views and gain considerable media exposure, however were not able to significantly influence the final outcome, but provided more moderate groups improved opportunities to negotiate sensibly and constructively;
- ❑ Understanding the political and bureaucratic imperatives associated with MPA proposals are important in identifying where and how to best engage in the process and influence the outcome; and
- ❑ The value of involving recreational fishers in understanding the impacts of MPAs through community monitoring programs such as CapReef which was established to monitor the effects of management change in the GBR.

6. Involvement of Recreational Fishers in the MPA debates

The fishing industry, both commercial and recreational, is the most impacted by decisions in relation to zoning of marine parks, particular those that use 'no fishing' areas as part of implementing MPAs. More and more in the process of establishing MPAs targets are being set for no fishing areas with some recently established including up to 34% of their area closed to fishing. This includes 34% in the Ningaloo Marine Park and 33% in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (GBRMP). DEH has not set targets for no fishing areas for the remaining MPAs in Commonwealth waters.

This level of impact should ensure that there is a high level of engagement of recreational fishers however there were very few examples where recreational fishers considered that their level of involvement was satisfactory. This was also the case even where those involved considered that they can have an influence on the outcome.

Preliminary results of a study of recreational fishers in Central Queensland, following the rezoning of the GBRMP, showed that while they were reasonably satisfied with the outcome almost 80% disagreed that the concerns of recreational fishers were adequately considered in the rezoning process.

Views expressed at the seminar as to what recreational fishers thought of their involvement in the MPA process included:

- ☐ Consultation was a waste of time as the decisions had already been made;
- ☐ Green and conservation groups had the greatest influence through the direction of voting preferences and recreational fishers views were not listened to;
- ☐ Recreational fishers are marginalised by the process and cannot influence the result;
- ☐ It is impossible for an individual fisher to influence the result; and
- ☐ Decisions were ultimately political and often outside the framework established for the consultation process.

Lessons learnt from involvement in the MPA consultation process included:

- ☐ MPAs will happen and the focus should be on minimising the impact on recreational fishing rather than attempting to stop them;
- ☐ Local 'champions' whose opinions are respected by recreational fishers can be effective in guiding recreational fishers to an acceptable outcome;
- ☐ Well presented alternatives to draft zonings that met the plan's objectives and are widely supported by recreational fishers are more likely to be influential;
- ☐ Individual submissions were unlikely to have any influence on the outcome;
- ☐ Having factual information to support claims being made was very important and more likely to influence the outcome than emotive arguments;

- ☐ Ensure that social and economic effects are considered as well as the biological outcomes;
- ☐ MPAs can be positive for fish stocks and fishing however claims of benefits made by politicians and conservation groups of spillover effects from no fishing areas are not necessarily supported by the science;
- ☐ Public consultation meetings need to be better planned to avoid confrontation and hijacking by fringe interests; and
- ☐ Involvement in the process is resource and time intensive and there were often unrealistic timelines and very few resources provided to assist recreational fishers.

7. Tools to Improve Recreational Fishers Engagement

It was clear that the majority of recreational fishers wanted to be able to influence the outcome of a MPA process but had little understanding of how to go about that. Given the impact of MPAs on recreational fishers it is important to seek greater involvement in the process rather than just consultation.

There are a range of benefits to improved engagement both for agencies undertaking the MPA process and to recreational fishers.

Benefits to agencies:

- ☐ Identify diverse stakeholders and their values;
- ☐ Increase public understanding, support and confidence;
- ☐ Increased compliance;
- ☐ Reduce and resolve conflicts;
- ☐ Collect information; and
- ☐ Meet legislative requirements.

Benefits to recreational fishers:

- ☐ Ensure fishers' values, expectations, needs, etc are considered;
- ☐ Increased understanding of the issue;
- ☐ Minimise negative impacts on the recreational fishing sector; and
- ☐ Increased 'ownership' of management initiatives.

Some of the tools suggested that would improve the ability of recreational fishers to engage in the MPA process and influence the outcome included:

- ☐ Develop a clear unified position statement on MPAs from the recreational sector at a national level and seek endorsement from governments;
- ☐ Develop a 'roadmap' to assist recreational fishers to effectively engage in the MPA process;
- ☐ Document case studies for good and bad outcomes from MPAs that consider social and economic as well as biological impacts/benefits;
- ☐ Engage champions to get messages out to the wider public;
- ☐ A concise framework/set of rules for engagement/participation in MPA processes that are agreed by all groups at the start of the process;

- ☐ Form strategic alliances with the likes of gas and oil industry/conservation groups/commercial sector/tourism and other stakeholders where common outcomes are being sought;
- ☐ Obtain greater recognition of the need for resources to be provided to recreational fishers to assist their engagement in the process;
- ☐ Seek recognition of the need to provide resources to assist recreational fishers through the Recreational Fishing Community Grants program; and
- ☐ Guidelines for data collection to cover biological, social and economic data.

8. Research, Development and Extension Priorities

There were a number of RDE priorities identified by the seminar. These were:

- ☐ Documenting case studies where there have been good and poor outcomes for recreational fishers, and making these available to others involved in MPAs processes;
- ☐ Collecting and assembling local baseline data about recreational fishing, including social and economic, prior to the MPA process getting underway;
- ☐ Monitoring to collect data on a before and after (MPA establishment) basis to assist in understanding the effects of management changes (CapReef was seen as a good model in involving recreational fishers in monitoring);
- ☐ Incorporating risk assessment into the evaluation of the costs and benefits of establishing MPAs;
- ☐ Involving recreational fishers in the science surrounding MPAs;
- ☐ Research to understand changes in fishers' behavior following the establishment of MPAs;
- ☐ Determination of any 'spillover' effects from no take zones; and
- ☐ Development of performance audits for existing MPAs.

9. Role of Recfish Australia and Recfishing Research

Recfish Australia will take responsibility for the progression of actions arising from the seminar. These actions will include:

- ☐ Develop a clear unified position statement for the recreational sector at a national level and seek endorsement from Governments;
- ☐ Develop a code of conduct, or rules of engagement, for involving recreational fishers in the MPA process;
- ☐ Continue to strongly advocate on behalf of recreational fishers but to remain apolitical;
- ☐ When requested, assist States with their State MPAs processes;
- ☐ Seek increased funding to support recreational fisher involvement in all aspects of the MPA process, initially through greater recognition and an increase in funding through the Recreational Fishing Community Grants program;
- ☐ Develop financial strategies including tax deductibility for contributions to Recfish to gain additional resources for recreational fishers to be engaged in the MPA process;

- ❑ Develop a 'roadmap' that can be used to guide how recreational fishing bodies and fishers can become effective in their engagement in the process;
- ❑ Advocate RDE for Commonwealth managed fisheries to obtain data on recreational fishing in Commonwealth waters;
- ❑ Establish a means of assessing the rigour of MPA literature;
- ❑ Maintain a watching brief on proposals to establish MPA in freshwater areas; and
- ❑ Work towards the establishment of performance audits of MPAs.

The role for Recfishing Research will be to incorporate the RDE priorities into its Business and Investment Plan and play a catalytic role in the development of projects to address those priorities.

10. Communications

A number of actions were identified in relation to improving communications on the matter of recreational fishing and MPAs. These were:

- ❑ Engage 'champions' whose opinions are respected in the fishing and broader community to get the recreational fishing messages out to the wider public and address community perceptions;
- ❑ Promote the availability of the Ernst and Young report 'Australia's Marine Protected Areas: Challenging Times Ahead';
- ❑ Develop positive and simple articles for the fishing media which focus on the success stories; and
- ❑ An overall strategy needs to be developed on how to deal with mis-information.

11. Extension

A number of priority areas were identified for extension:

- ❑ Providing a 'roadmap' that can be used to guide how recreational fishing bodies and fishers can become effective in their engagement in the process;
- ❑ Providing case studies where there have been good and poor outcomes for recreational fishers; and
- ❑ Providing guidelines on how recreational fishing groups can collect biological, social and economic baseline data and how to become involved in monitoring with the CapReef model as an example.

12. Action Plan

Recfish Australia will develop an Action Plan to address the key issues identified during the seminar. That action plan will identify what is required to address those priorities and a timeline for achieving action.

Appendix 1 – Seminar Program

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RECFISHING RESEARCH NATIONAL SEMINAR ON MARINE PROTECTED AREAS - stocking the tool box!

Sat 4 & Sun 5 November 2006

Mercure Hotel Brisbane

Facilitator – Ian Cartwright

SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

1. Understanding of the current and projected future status of MPAs (state and commonwealth)
2. To define engagement and develop processes and guidelines for adequate and early engagement of the recreational sector in the MPA debate.
3. To identify the effects (especially social and economic) of MPAs on recreational fishers and fisheries, and develop alternative access arrangements in lieu of 'lockouts'
4. To identify and articulate the gaps in knowledge and understanding of recreational fishing activity in MPAs and develop strategies and programs for Research, Development & Extension (R, D & E) to address them.
5. To identify and develop the best tools and methods for recreational fishers to use in presenting their case for the rational establishment and review of MPAs

SEMINAR PROGRAM

Saturday 4 November 2006

Time	Activity	Responsibility
from 0830	Registration and coffee	
0900	Welcome	Chair Recfish Australia Bruce Schumacher
0905	Opening	Minister for Fisheries Senator Eric Abetz

Time	Activity	Responsibility
0920	Objectives and outline of the next two days	Ian Cartwright
0935	What are the R, D & E needs – what is FRDC looking for regarding the recreational sector and Research, Development and Extension associated with MPAs?	Patrick Hone, FRDC
	Objective 1 - Understanding the current and projected future status of MPAs (state and commonwealth)	
0950	Keynote address Recreational Fisheries and MPAs in Australia - setting the scene.	Colin Buxton, UTAS
1030	A government perspective - MPAs and recreational fishing and why governments are taking the MPA path?	Donna Petrachenko, DEH
1055	Morning tea	
1120	Objective 2 - To define engagement and develop processes and guidelines for adequate and early engagement of the recreational sector in the MPA debate.	
	Elements of effective engagement by stakeholders in the MPA planning process; examples of good and bad practice	Steve Sutton, JCU
1140	Wrap up	Ian Cartwright
1150	Break out groups – what steps and processes should be included and used in consulting with the recreational sector during marine planning and MPA introduction? Is there a model that can be used and what should it include? Group Leaders – Bill Sawynok, Adam Smith & Frank Prokop	
1230	Break out groups report back	
1250	Wrap up	Ian Cartwright
1300	Lunch	

Time	Activity	Responsibility
	Objective 3 - To identify the effects (especially social and economic) of MPAs on recreational fishers and fisheries, and develop alternative access arrangements in lieu of 'lockouts'	
1345	Social impacts on recreational fishers resulting from the loss of traditional recreational access as a result of MPAs	Steve Sutton, JCU
1415	Economic impacts of MPAs on recreational fishing, infrastructure, tackle industry, boat industry, accommodation and other services	Alistair McIlgorm, NMSC
1445	Alternative access options	Frank Prokop, Recfishwest
1505	Afternoon tea	
1525	Wrap up	Ian Cartwright
1530	Break out groups - What initiatives can be established to overcome the socio-economic impact on recreational fishing from MPAs? What alternate access options and/or programs can be developed? Group Leaders – Bruce Schumacher, Chris Makepeace & David Bateman	
1630	Break out groups report back	
1650	General discussion/wrap up session	Ian Cartwright
1700	End day 1	
1900	Awards dinner Mercure Hotel	

Sunday 5 November 2006

Time	Activity	Responsibility
from 0800	coffee	
0830	Summary of Day 1 and outline of Day 2	Ian Cartwright
0845	Objective 4 - To identify and articulate the gaps in knowledge and understanding of recreational fishing activity in MPAs and develop strategies and programs for Research, Development & Extension (R, D & E) to address them.	
Time	Activity	Responsibility

Time	Activity	Responsibility
	Building the case: current knowledge gaps in respect of recreational fishing effort (e.g. monitoring) in MPAs	Julian Pepperell, Pepperell Research
0905	The role of R, D & E in addressing knowledge gaps	Bill Sawynok, Recfish
0925	Wrap up	Ian Cartwright
0935	Break out groups – what are the priority areas for R, D & E, how and when (agenda) should the identified gaps be filled and, are there any other gaps? Group Leaders – Bill Sawynok, Adam Smith & Frank Prokop	
1015	Break out groups report back	
1045	Morning tea	
1110	Objective 5 - To identify and develop the best tools and methods for recreational fishers to use in presenting their case for the rational establishment and review of MPAs Presenting the case: The future of MPAs and suggestions for how the recreational sector can best prepare for it	Colin Buxton, UTAS
1130	What does the average fisher need to have in the MPA debate?	Dene Moore, Fisherman
1150	Australian Underwater Federation Model – can it work for all disciplines?	Adam Smith, AUF
1210	wrap up	Ian Cartwright
1215	Break out groups – What tools and aids does the sector need and what should be the policy position on recreational sector engagement in MPAs? Group Leaders – Bruce Schumacher, David Bateman & Chris Makepeace	
1240	Break out groups report back	
1300	Lunch	
1345	Plenary session – what have we missed?	Panel of speakers
1515	Afternoon tea	
1530	Where to from here, timeframes, resources needed, who does what, etc.	Ian Cartwright
1550	Closing comments	Patrick Hone FRDC
1600		Close

Appendix 2 - List of Seminar Participants

FIRST NAME	Last Name	Organisation
Bruce	Alvey	Australian Fishing Tackle Association
Bob	Arthur	Moreton Bay Boat Club
Matt	Barwick	Fisheries Research and Development Corporation
David	Bateman	Sunfish Queensland
Justin	Bell	Bell Digital
Les	Bell	Moreton Bay Boat Club
Grant	Bennett	Redlands Boat Club
Eve	Bunbury	WA Fisheries
John	Burgess	Australian National Sportfishing Association
Rod	Burston	NSW Fishing clubs Association
Colin	Buxton	TAFI, UTAS
Ian	Cartwright	Talassa Consulting
John	Clark	NSW ACoRF
Brett	Cleary	Recfish Australia
Nat	Cooper	BCF Australia
Col	Cordingley	Amateur Fisherman's Association of NT
Peter	Cox	Nhulunbuy Regional Sports Fishing Club
John	Diplock	NSW Department of Primary Industries
Jon	Emmett	SA Department of Environment and Heritage
Rhonda	Farlow	Recfish Australia
Gary	Fooks	Shafston College
David	Foster	Department of Environment and Heritage
Terry	Fuller	Recfishwest
Paul	Garrett	Department of Environment and Heritage
Lindsay	Grenfell	Boating Industry Association of VIC
Shane	Griffiths	CSIRO
John	Harrison	Recfish Australia
Graham	Harrison	RFSTEC
Sara	Hennessy	Broome Fishing Club
Tony	Heugh	Australian Underwater Federation
Barry	Hibberd	Boating Industry Association QLD
Patrick	Hone	Fisheries Research and Development Corporation
Margaret	Hope	Mackay Sunfish Branch
Phillip	Ingram	Anglers Action Group
Greg	Jenkins	Aquaculture Management Unit Challenger TAFE WA
Jon	Jenkins	NSW Parliament
John	Johnston	Sunfish Queensland
Lionel	Jones	RFSTEC
Evan	Jones	QLD Game Fishing Association
Tricia	Kelman	NT Fisheries
Bob	Kennedy	Sunfish North Queensland
Joshua	Ker	Darwin Game Fishing Club
Matt	Koopman	Australian Underwater Federation
Anissa	Lawrence	OceanWatch Australia

FIRST NAME	Last Name	Organisation
Jeni	Lerch	Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee WA
Marcus	Lincoln-Smith	The Ecology Lab Pty Ltd
Neil	Loneragan	Centre for Fish and Fisheries Research Murdoch University
Harold	Lonsdale	NSW Game Fishing Association
Chris	Lude	BCF Australia
Tracey	MacDonald	NSW Department of Primary Industries
Murray	MacDonald	DPI Fisheries VIC
Chris	Makepeace	Amateur Fisherman's Association of NT
Alistair	McIlgorm	National Marine Science Centre
Dene	Moore	Eurobodalla Coast Tourism
Aimee	Moore	QLD Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries
Kane	Moyle	Recfishwest
Jeff	Murphy	NSW DPI Fisheries Research Centre
Patrick	O'Leary	NT Government
Randall	Owens	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Mark	Pagano	Recfishwest
Julian	Pepperell	Pepperell Research & Consulting Pty Ltd
Donna	Petrachenko	Department of Environment and Heritage
Malcolm	Poole	Recfish Australia
Frank	Prokop	Recfishwest
Lowri	Pryce	OceanWatch Australia
Andrew	Read	NSW Department of Primary Industries
Bill	Sawynok	Infofish Services
John	Schulter	Australian Underwater Federation
Bruce	Schumacher	Recfish Australia
Craig	Shepard	Australian Underwater Federation
Richard	Sisson	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Adam	Smith	Australian Underwater Federation
Shelley	Spriggs	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Aldo	Steffe	NSW DPI Fisheries Research Centre
Wayne	Sumpton	DPI&FQ Southern Fisheries Centre
Steve	Sutton	James Cook University
Richard	Taffs	Solitary Islands Marine Park Advisory Committee
Bill	Talbot	DPI NSW
Jayne	Teasdale	Environment Protection Authority
Ken	Thurlow	ECOfishers NSW
Paula	Tomkins	Department of Environment and Heritage
Bryan	van der Walt	NSW Department of Primary Industries
Lindsay	Walsh	Central Coast Recreation Conservation & ECOfishers Inc
Howel	Williams	TAS Department of Primary Industries and Water
Paul	Williams	Palmerston Game Fishing Club
John	Wilson	Fisheries Research and Development Corporation
Des	Wood	Recfishwest

Appendix 3 – Seminar Papers

PRESENTATION OUTLINES

Colin Buxton (University of Tasmania): Keynote address: Recreational Fisheries and MPAs in Australia - setting the scene

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are being proclaimed around the world at an increasing rate. The National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas (NRSMPA) is at the centre of the Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council's (ANZECC) plan to secure the long term future of Australia's marine ecosystems. The main focus of this plan is the conservation of biodiversity through a comprehensive, representative and adequate system of Marine Protected Areas.

But MPAs may be proclaimed for a variety of other reasons. As harvest refugia, MPAs have also been advocated as having a range of potential benefits for fisheries. Included are the protection of spawner stock; a source of propagules and surplus adults; areas for research; and insurance against the failure of conventional management. The fishing sector's response to these arguments centre on concerns that access to resources will be diminished and/or that remaining stocks will be pressurised as a result of shifting effort patterns.

This paper provides a background to the MPA concept in the context of sustainable fisheries management and sets the scene for the seminar on the impact of MPAs on recreational fisheries in Australia.

Donna Petrachenko (Department of Environment and Heritage): A government perspective - MPAs and recreational fishing and why governments are taking the MPA path?

The paper outlines the Australian Government's marine protected area programme in Commonwealth waters and ways in which MPAs and recreational fishing can be mutually supportive.

- ❑ **MPAs status report:** provides background on global and domestic efforts to establish networks of representative MPAs;
- ❑ **What is an MPA?:** defines what we mean by an MPA and the scope of MPAs as a tool for marine biodiversity conservation;
- ❑ **Domestic and international obligations:** outlines the key agreements and conventions that establish the Australian Government's mandate to establish MPAs;
- ❑ **Achieving the Commonwealth Reserve System through Bioregional Marine Plans:** Describes the Australian Government's new approach to Bioregional Marine Plans under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. Includes the advantages of using this framework for MPA development;
- ❑ **The need for and benefits of MPAs:** Examines the growing support for the establishment of MPAs as a tool for biodiversity conservation, and potential fisheries benefits and opportunities for recreation and tourism etc;

- ❑ **Achieving compatible use:** Describes some of the ways that recreational fishing activities may be regulated within MPAs;
- ❑ **Fostering mutual support - snapshot of the Commonwealth MPA program:** discusses opportunities for a positive relationship between the Commonwealth MPA program and recreational fishing through minimising impact on resource users and flexible design rules to meet biodiversity conservation objectives; and
- ❑ **Seeking recreational fishing sector input:** describes why early and constructive engagement is the key to successful MPAs and how the Australian Government is supporting the input of the recreational fishing sector to the MPA programme.

Steve Sutton (James Cook University): Elements of effective engagement by stakeholders in the MPA planning process; examples of good and bad practice

Recreational fishers are one of the stakeholder groups most affected by changes in access to fisheries resources due to MPAs. However, if MPAs are effective at enhancing conservation of marine resources, recreational fishers may also potentially benefit from MPAs. Consequently, there is a clear need to ensure that the recreational fishing sector is meaningfully engaged in the MPA planning and management process.

There are clear benefits to both the recreational sector and the implementing agency to having meaningful engagement of recreational fishers in the MPA process. However, it is still not clear how best to engage the recreational community in the MPA process. The level of stakeholder engagement in resource management ranges from informing and consulting stakeholders (where information is exchanged but stakeholders have little or no real power to influence decisions) to more complex power-sharing arrangements where stakeholders hold some decision-making power and accountability. Currently, most fisheries-related stakeholder engagement programs in Australia rely on methods such as public meetings and submissions programs to collect information from members of the public. A number of studies evaluating the use of these methods by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority to consult the public over the recent re-zoning of the marine park have highlighted inadequacies of these methods for meaningfully engaging recreational fishers in the MPA planning process. In particular, it is clear that only a minority of recreational fishers take advantage of the opportunity to have input through these processes, and those who do are not representative of the majority who choose to not get involved.

To be more meaningfully engaged in the MPA planning process, the recreational fishing sector should:

- a) Collect data on recreational fishers' values, attitudes, opinions, desires, etc. regarding MPAs, and data on the effects of MPAs on recreational fishers;
- b) Push for public participation programs with clear goals and evaluation of those programs relative to those goals;
- c) Expect public participation programs and methods tailored to the recreational sectors; and
- d) Have realistic expectations about the outcomes of public participation programs.

Steve Sutton (James Cook University): Social impacts on recreational fishers resulting from the loss of traditional recreational access as a result of MPAs

Recreational fishers and recreational fishing activity are impacted when access to fisheries resources is altered through the implementation of Marine Protected Areas. Potential impacts of MPAs on recreational fishing include: changes in recreational fishing frequency, satisfaction, and participation rates (and associated flow-on economic impacts on the communities and businesses that support recreational fishing), changes in the spatial distribution of catch and effort, and changed attitudes towards and support for management agencies. Documenting and understanding these impacts is important for a number of reasons including: understanding the full range of costs and benefits of MPAs; remedying negative impacts on recreational fishers; minimizing impacts of future MPAs on recreational fishing; and ensuring recreational fishers that their interests are being considered in the MPA planning and management process.

A project funded by the CRC Reef Research Centre is investigating the effects of the recent rezoning of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park on the recreational fishing community. Preliminary results of in-depth interviews with 30 recreation fishers in the Rockhampton-Gladstone area indicate that about half of the fishers interviewed report having lost favourite fishing areas due to the rezoning. Of those fishers losing areas, most report compensating by finding new areas and/or fishing more at areas where they already fish. All fishers interviewed offered strong support for the general idea of the rezoning of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park; however, not all fishers approved of the size, number and location of the new no-take zones in their area. Most of the fishers interviewed believe that recreational fishers were not adequately consulted about zoning changes in their area.

We will soon be expanding this study to interview recreational fishers in other areas of the GBR coast. When completed, this study will provide detailed and comprehensive data about the effects of MPAs on recreational fishers and recreational fishing activity that will help inform future MPA planning.

Alistair McIlgorm (National Marine Science Centre): Economic impacts of MPAs on recreational fishing, infrastructure, tackle industry, boat industry, accommodation and other services

Recent years have seen the establishment of a range of MPAs and a growth in the recreational fishing industry and in recreational fishing as a popular pastime. The establishment of MPAs has not generally considered the recreational sector with the attention of policy makers concentrating on commercial industry. Government has been in the midst of a strange climate of fishery failure, desperation and blind faith in MPAs and their espoused benefits, including economics. The economics has been unfunded /ignored, and the supporting evidence for many of the political claims surrounding MPAs and their economic benefits, would not cover the back of a postage stamp.

The NSW Recreational Fishing Licence has commissioned several studies of recreational fishing expenditure and its benefits to rural Australian communities. These show the tourism contribution from the sport and contrast with the allocation conscious approach of the National Survey. Similarly there is survey evidence the recreational fishing industry has had a boom time- a plethora of new fishing and camping shops have emerged recently. Can all this be reconciled?

The author will take a slightly different approach to these issues and wishes to set in train a more positive framework and context for future MPA and recreational fishing economic value studies. This draws on international research and a national data on the "marine economy" and will include and reconcile aspects of commercial fishing, MPAs and recreational fishing.

Frank Prokop (Recfishwest): Alternative access options

The marine park planning process is seen by most recreational fishers as the valley of death for their aspirations and recognition of their needs. Handicapped by apathy, a lack of property rights, a shared vision and cohesive support for quality processes, many marine park plans have evolved into recreational fisheries management plans.

Unfortunately there has been inadequate or no meaningful engagement of recreational fishers in the process and the outcomes. Paternalistic and dogma driven processes and proscriptive outcomes, meeting the needs of a few are considered by most recreational fishers to have been the result to date. Borthwick was scathing in these paternalistic processes for the Great Barrier Marine Park implementation; often unnecessarily.

Many recreational fishers see themselves as conservationists and have frequently advocated for risk averse management, even when scientific evidence was lacking. Recreational fishers are confused as to why they are often the front line aquatic conservation advocates in fresh water and estuarine environments yet are singled out for exclusion in marine management and especially in marine parks.

The author proposes a collective discovery phase for marine park planning which recognises among other things the different expectations and outcomes of such a diverse sector and the need for compromises to be worked through.

At the very least there will be a sense of natural justice which is currently lacking and at least some 'champions' will emerge for a responsible suite of management options.

A management hierarchy is suggested which allows differing sector needs to be addressed is suggested.

1. No access by anyone – TRUE scientific reference areas.
2. Sanctuary zones where ALL risks are addressed objectively – e.g., anchoring and flipper damage.
3. Catch and release zones. Particularly important if part of designed mark-recapture experiments.
4. No Take-away zones – e.g., Recfishwest Wilderness Fishing Policy.
5. Limited bag limits or time specific zones. True fisheries management as part of conservation planning, e.g., Coral trout spawning aggregations.
6. Recreational fishing zones.
7. Open fishing zones with bag and size limits as primary tools.

These options must be transparently and objectively assessed to determine their cost effectiveness and to aid with future marine planning processes. Currently, recreational fishers believe that previous sanctuary zoning serves only to determine a baseline which must be exceeded if the new process is to be considered a success.

This has resulted in many recreational fishers being labelled as irresponsible when in reality they feel disempowered.

The need for core recreational values to be acknowledged and the support of the wider recreational fishing community is essential for future processes to succeed.

This means that new tools and trust must be developed.

Julian Pepperell (Pepperell Research): Building the case - current knowledge gaps in respect of recreational fishing effort (e.g. monitoring) in MPAs

In the discussions, dialogue and debate leading to the establishment of MPAs in Australia, much is said and written about the current and potential impact of recreational fishing on sensitive and not so sensitive habitats and species. Much is also said and written about the benefits that the establishment of MPAs, in particular, large sanctuary zones, will provide to recreational fishers. On the other side of the coin, recreational fishers argue that they have little localized impact on many of the fish species, especially those which might use MPAs on an occasional basis. The problem of course is that little evidence is offered to support most of these contentions.

Gaps in knowledge and understanding of these issues include

- ❑ Information prior to planning or zoning information on area specific recreational catch and effort and species composition data;
- ❑ Recreational fishing methods used and effects of these on core MPA species and habitat;
- ❑ Information after establishment of MPAs on their actual effects on recreational fishing in the immediate and less proximate areas;
- ❑ Residences times of pelagic fishes and their ecological role in MPAs; and
- ❑ Information on actual impacts of recreational fishing on grey nurse sharks.

Hopefully, some advice in suggesting how to address some or all of these gaps will be proffered.

Bill Sawynok (Recfish Australia): The role of R, D & E in addressing knowledge gaps

There is an important role for research, development and extension in the debate about Marine Park planning however to understand that role it is important to understand what is driving decisions on Marine Parks. The establishment of Marine Parks and management arrangements are largely being driven by political decisions. Politicians are reflecting the broad community support, largely influenced by conservation groups, for effective management of our marine resources and environment. Because of uncertainty in the most effective way to manage the marine environment conservation groups and scientists advocate a precautionary approach and use the establishment of MPAs as an "insurance policy" in case other management options are ineffective. Much debate has been about how big that insurance policy should be and there is little hard science but plenty of scientific opinion on what the insurance premium should be.

The certainty is that irrespective of the science more Marine Parks will be implemented and more MPAs will be established. Whether MPAs work or not is

secondary to what recreational fishers need right now to effectively influence marine park planning processes to minimise their impact. Much of the science will occur post the establishment of Marine Parks once the decisions have been made.

A huge amount of energy has been expended by recreational fishers in trying to influence the outcome of the planning process but with very few successes. A key requirement is to document case studies of groups that have been successful and to make that available to others groups engaging in the debates. The second requirement is for fishers to get involved in monitoring the effects of those changes, don't leave that just to the scientists, if you really want to understand what is happening in your back yard. Understanding the decision framework driving marine park planning should influence what emerges as the key research, development and extension priorities.

My back yard is the Great Barrier Reef and in Central Queensland we were able to influence the zoning arrangement to minimise the impact on recreational fishers and have set up CapReef a community based monitoring program called CapReef to collect information on the effects of management changes on fish and fishers.

CAPREEF: INVOLVING FISHERS IN UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECTS OF MPAS

In the last few years the most significant changes in history have been made to the management of the Great Barrier Reef (GBR). Major changes resulted from:

- ❑ Adoption of the Trawl Management Plan in 2001;
- ❑ Rezoning of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (GBRMP) in 2004;
- ❑ Zoning of the State Coastal Marine Park (SCMP) in 2004; and
- ❑ Adoption of the Reef Line Fisheries Management Plan (RLFMP) in 2004

The review and rezoning of the GBRMP resulted in overall 33% of the entire park closed to fishing and 20% of the inshore area closed. The inshore area is the area primarily used by recreational fishers. The zoning of the SCMP between high and low water resulted in zoning that largely reflected the zoning in the GBRMP. The review of the RLFMP resulted in changes to size and bag limits and the introduction of seasonal spawning closures.

The review of the GBRMP involved extensive consultation prior to and following the release of a draft zoning plan. In Central Queensland in the area of Rockhampton and Gladstone Capricorn Sunfish and the Local Marine Advisory Committee undertook their own consultation process with local fishers and developed a single submission that met the political and management imperatives of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA). The final plan reflected about 98% of what was in that submission. This approach resulted in local fishers having a significant influence on the final plan.

GBRMPA commissioned an independent consultant to produce a report on the RAP process and the following is an extract from their Futureye report:

Futureye

Case Study 5.1 Capricorn Community

Members and representative organizations in the Capricorn region coordinated their activities to conduct a highly successful parallel consultation during the RAP process which resulted in the recreational and commercial sectors in Capricorn getting more than what

they asked for. Capricorn Sunfish Inc. and the Local Marine Advisory Committee amongst others facilitated two community meetings with more 200 people during RAP. A key message of the first meeting was that the rezoning was going to happen, they needed to "accept the rules of the game" and create consensus in order to win. The purpose of the community meetings was to provide information, encourage and facilitate discussion and gain a consensus position to be presented to GBRMPA. These meetings allowed fishermen who were concerned to vent their feelings and then moved onto identifying their concerns so they could build a consensus input about what zoning would be preferred. Consensus was needed because, as perceived by Kim Martin, President of Capricorn Sunfish, "as an individual fisherman, the chances of having input into the final outcome of RAP is next to nothing."

The final submission did not reflect anyone's personal view. Nor did it reflect Capricorn Local Marine Advisory Committee nor Capricorn Sunfish Inc nor Sunfish Queensland's view. It was the view of the community. The submission blended together an entire range of views and almost 100 per cent of what they asked for was delivered.

What makes the Capricorn Coast example unique to many other regions in Northern Queensland is that the community took ownership of the process and was extremely happy with the outcome. They understood that RAP wasn't something that could be prevented therefore worked to reach an acceptable outcome. Local figures such as the local elected representatives including the Livingstone Shire Mayor, Bill Ludwig, Capricorn Sunfish President, Kim Martin and LMAC Chair, Graham Scott were involved and lent their support to the process.

Martin believes the Capricorn Coast consultation worked because there was an external model for integrating silo-driven interest groups and because people took ownership of the process and ultimately became champions. GBRMPA was prepared to take on the elements of the public forums. These were considered to be an essential tool for getting people involved and doubts people would have participated otherwise.

During that local consultation phase two issues were continually raised that needed to be addressed. One was enforcement of the new management arrangements and the other was monitoring to understand the effects of the management changes. Also during that consultation phase it became clear that there was a large gap between the knowledge and understanding of local fishers and the knowledge held by government and researchers. This limited the ability of the local community to articulate their views.

Formal scientific studies were proposed by GBRMPA to monitor the effects of the zoning changes following the traditional model of using researchers and research institutions to undertake the work. This model is good for informing government and management agencies but it has been poor at informing the broader community. It was felt that a new approach was needed and the concept of involving fishers in community based monitoring was developed. That concept was developed into a program that has become known as CapReef which commenced in 2005/06.

The purpose of CapReef is to improve community involvement and knowledge in management of the Capricorn part of the Great Barrier Reef ecosystem by monitoring and analysis of the local effects of management changes on the Great Barrier Reef ecosystem.

CapReef is very much community owned and community driven but it is a partnership between the community, government and science which is clearly demonstrated by the groups involved. Another unique aspect of CapReef is that its establishment was funded by the Fitzroy Basin Association, the local regional strategy group for the Fitzroy River catchment so that links were established with the land based effects on the GBR.

CapReef is managed by a Steering Committee that has equal representation from the community and government, including researchers. This Steering Committee established the partnership arrangements and oversees CapReef.

Another important point of difference with CapReef is its management arrangements. Unlike most other programs or projects CapReef does not have a full time coordinator and that was a deliberate decision. Everyone working on CapReef works part-time, casually or voluntarily and the mix changes to suit the needs of the program at any time. This approach was taken to ensure that the knowledge gain is distributed widely through its participants and not reside with a single individual. This has attracted a broad range of people to work on elements of CapReef and has improved the distribution of knowledge significantly.

While CapReef provides links to all research being undertaken in its area its primary focus has been on the collection of data on recreational fishing and fishers as this group, along with commercial fishers, has been the most heavily impacted group by the management changes.

CapReef is collecting data that will help the local community understand changes that are occurring to fish and fishers. That includes the collection of data on catch and effort, fish sizes, fish assemblages and movement.

Data on catch and effort is being collected through boat ramp surveys and from the records of individual fishers. In 2005/06, the first year of data collection, details of 1,300 fishing trips were obtained and the target for 2007/08 is 2,000 trips. Because CapReef is a community based program fishers are more willing to provide us with data than if it were a government program.

CapReef is working with the Suntag program in the tagging of fish to monitor movement and growth. Data on fish population structure, growth and movement is being collected in the Shoalwater Bay Training Area with the full support of the Department of Defence.

Historical data is being collected from fishing clubs and other sources to develop a picture of what the fishery looked like prior to the management changes. We have obtained data from one fishing club that has 30 years of continuous data and from another club with 10 years of continuous data. A report has been produced with the support of researchers and is available under the CapReef section at www.info-fish.net. Data is being sought from other clubs to expand the available information.

As well CapReef is collecting data on fish assemblages through the use of Baited Remote Underwater Video (BRUV) to make comparisons between fished and non fished areas (green zones). This has proven to be of immense interest to fishers and we are currently developing an educational DVD using footage that has been obtained. The BRUV work is being carried out with the support of the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS).

CapReef is also working with researchers from James Cook University (JCU) to understand the effects of the management changes on fisher behaviour. We are also working with other JCU researchers to examine if a "spillover" from the no fishing areas can be detected. We are also working with researchers from Central Queensland University on larval drift as they are developing techniques to identify larval fish using DNA technology. CapReef is also undertaking water quality

sampling on the Capricorn Coast to assist AIMS in their water quality monitoring program.

Regular community forums are held to feed back information to fishers and the broader community as well as presentation to fishing clubs, seminars, workshops and conferences but with emphasis on getting the information back to the community. A regular weekly briefing is sent out to advise all those interested as to what is happening.

CapReef is a clear demonstration that with the right approach the community can become better informed about the effects of management change. It is our intention that CapReef will continue through to the next review of the GBRMP which is expected in about 8 years time. When that occurs the community will be well informed, able to articulate its views and lead the debate on any further management changes.

Colin Buxton (University of Tasmania): Presenting the case: The future of MPAs and suggestions for how the recreational sector can best prepare for it

The SE Region was the first to go off the rank under the National Oceans Policy agenda to establish an NRSMPA in Australia and DEH has announced a plan for the roll-out in the remaining four regions by 2012.

The recreational sector was conspicuously absent throughout much of the protracted debate on the network of reserves proposed for the region, until it became apparent that MPAs proposed on the east coast would have a significant effect on the sector.

This talk examines the lessons learnt to date in the SE Region as a basis for moving forward and stocking the toolbox.

Dene Moore (Fisherman): What does the average fisher need to have in the MPA debate?

This talk will focus the experience on the South Coast of NSW with the announcement of the Bateman's Marine Park. It will outline how well meaning but ill-prepared fishers have been able to be exploited by various political agendas. They have allowed themselves to be "divided and conquered".

Public meetings have allowed emotion to overrule reason and anglers have often fallen into the trap of appearing as a disorganised bunch of loud mouths.

While the process is still not complete, it is clear that fishers need some guidance in formulating key arguments, devising basic lobbying strategies and skills in refuting some of the more outlandish claims made by various conservation groups. They could also be assisted by some basic guidelines in dealing with the media.

Some of the arguments used to support the establishment of Marine Parks make claims about the apparent positive experiences in other areas. On further investigation these claims have proven to be open to dispute. Fishers could benefit from some independent reviews of key literature and some balanced assessment in relation to the real state of fish stocks. An objective review of claims in relation to the so-called "spill-over effect" would also be helpful. I would also query where the tackle and boating industries stand in the debate.

Adam Smith (Australian Underwater Federation): The Australian Underwater Federation Model – can it work for all disciplines?

The Australian Underwater Federation (AUF) has had some moderate successes and some spectacular failures in dealing with decision makers on Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). We are a minority group and have become an easy target and the most restricted of all recreational fishers.

We will certainly be further restricted by MPAs in Australia and in some areas our activity has been fully excluded and to fight for our future access we have a strategic plan with six aims.

1. To increase membership of the AUF by 10% pa;
2. To improve communication about freediving and spearfishing;
3. To raise the profile of the sport by involvement in community activities;
4. To raise awareness of safety and improve training;
5. Participate in major competitions; and
6. Develop partnerships with industry and peak groups.

The AUF would like to talk further about two of these aims: communication, and partnerships, as we believe these are vital for the future of our activity in MPAs.

The AUF communicates about our needs in MPAs with Ministers, Government agencies, fishers, divers and conservationists using meetings, media and websites. Our experience with public consultation processes and Government agencies have been that many of us have different opinions and the final results are often influenced by one or two individual views. In reality we are volunteers and do not have the expertise and funding of conservation and other lobby groups. Our current focus for more consistent communication is working with Recfish Australia and to address our different opinions we have a Draft *National Policy on Spearfishing in MPAs*.

The old management style between fishers and managers was confrontational but we aim in future to develop partnerships with governments and key stakeholders. We recognise that we will have to concede some areas but a partnership is about understanding each other's needs and a "win-win" outcome. Spearfishers are now

members of key advisory committees in several MPAs. Did you know that we now have access to yellow zones in the GBRMP and we have the same access as fishers in the Solitary Islands Marine Park (SIMP)?

Potentially, one of the most controversial issues is targets for sanctuaries areas by different groups (spearfishers, government, conservation, SCUBA) and the advantages and disadvantages. Our draft policy statement *National Policy on Spearfishing in MPAs* is that the "AUF will support MPAs that provide reasonable use- This will vary in different locations but as a framework preferably 80-90% of shallow reef areas allow spearfishing". Should we have a percentage target that can be easily understood and used by managers, stakeholder and opponents and that is realistic and can be measured or are other tools more successful?

Appendix 4 – Addressing the Seminar Questions

There were four questions posed as part of the seminar that were addressed by smaller breakout groups which reported back to all seminar participants. The following is a summary of the key points made by the groups in relation to each of the objectives. A plenary session also wrapped up the seminar and agreed to a number of key items and actions.

Question 1 – What steps and processes should be included and used in consulting with the recreational sector during marine planning and MPA introduction? Is there a model that can be used and what should it include?

The following were the main points made by the breakout groups:

- ☐ As the national peak body Recfish Australia needs to have a unified position on MPAs;
- ☐ Recreational fishers should be included in the planning process for MPAs where there is likely to be an impact on recreational fishing activities;
- ☐ Having factual and credible data on recreational fishing (fishing club records are a good source of information) including effort, catch, fishing locations and the economic and social value to affected communities is important;
- ☐ Identification of areas of importance to recreational fishers is important;
- ☐ Political lobbying is important however alliances with political parties is likely to be detrimental;
- ☐ Agencies managing the MPA process need to clearly define expectations and ground rules at the start of the process;
- ☐ Greater honesty and trust in the process is required;
- ☐ Funding needs to be available to recreational fishers and other stakeholders to work with management agencies, particularly in relation to state MPA proposals (some funding is available for Commonwealth MPAs);
- ☐ Engagement of recreational fishers may need to be at all levels including local, regional, state and national depending on the particular proposal;
- ☐ Support was expressed for the Commonwealth non-GBRMPA MPA process while there was less support for State processes, especially those in NSW; and
- ☐ Recreational fisher involvement needs to be stronger than consultation given that they are one of the groups most affected by MPA decisions.

Question 2 – What initiatives can be established to overcome the socio-economic impact on recreational fishing from MPAs? What alternative access options and/or programs can be developed?

The following were the main points made by the breakout groups:

- ❑ Options such as catch & release, no take away limitations, seasonal openings, rotational closures, lures only, trolling for pelagics or no anchoring should be considered rather than total no take closures;
- ❑ Artificial reefs and FADs should be considered in areas where substantial loss of access by recreational fishers has occurred;
- ❑ Restocking or providing access to new areas may need to be considered in areas where fishing has been concentrated into smaller areas by closures;
- ❑ Before and after surveys should be undertaken to assess changes in fisher behavior as a result of closures;
- ❑ Potential socio-economic impacts on fishers and local communities should be considered as part of any assessment of closures as well as the biodiversity benefits;
- ❑ Need an understanding of employment in the recreational sector and the impacts of closures on employment;
- ❑ Improved understanding of the economic value of recreational fishing (eg use of the National Accounts); and
- ❑ Other users groups such as commercial fishers and tourism bodies should be engaged to understand their issues and expectations and to find areas of common ground.

Question 3 – What are the priority areas for R, D & E, how and when should the identified gaps be filled and are there any other gaps?

The following were the main points made by the breakout groups:

- ❑ Baseline and historic data about recreational fishing, including socio-economic, needs to be collected and assembled prior to the MPA process getting underway;
- ❑ Monitoring and evaluation are very important to understanding the effects on fish and fishers of management changes;
- ❑ Risk assessment needs to be incorporated into the evaluation of establishing MPAs;
- ❑ The social and economic benefits (use of National Accounts) of recreational fishing and jobs in the industry need to be known at a national level as well as at a regional level;
- ❑ Social and economic data is important if a case for compensation (offsets rather than monetary) is to be developed;
- ❑ A top priority is engaging recreational fishers in the science process;
- ❑ CapReef was seen as a good model in involving recreational fishers in monitoring;
- ❑ Data collected through the MPA information process should be independently evaluated;
- ❑ There needs to be consistency in the methods used for data collection;
- ❑ There is a need to understand changes in fishers behavior following the establishment of MPAs; and
- ❑ The flow on information from science to managers needs to be improved.
- ❑ Use of the precautionary principle should not be an excuse not to do research and monitoring.
- ❑ \$1m should be added to the Recreational Fishing Community Grants Program to involve fishers in the science and monitoring.

Question 4 – What tools and aids does the sector need and what should be the policy position on recreational sector engagement in MPAs?

This question was addressed as part of the plenary session and not in groups with the main points being:

Role of Recfish Australia:

- ☐ Develop a clear unified position statement for the recreational sector at a national level and seek endorsement from Governments;
- ☐ Develop a code of conduct, or rules of engagement, for involving recreational fishers in the MPA process;
- ☐ Continue to strongly advocate on behalf of recreational fishers but to remain apolitical;
- ☐ When requested will assist States with their government State MPAs processes;
- ☐ Seek increased funding to support recreational fisher involvement in all aspects of the MPA process, initially through greater recognition and an increase in funding through the Recreational Fishing Community Grants program;
- ☐ Develop financial strategies including tax deductibility for contributions to Recfish to gain additional resources for recreational fishers to be engaged in the MPA process;
- ☐ Develop a “roadmap” that can be used to guide how recreational fishing bodies and fishers can become effective in their engagement in the process;
- ☐ Advocate RDE for Commonwealth managed fisheries to obtain data on recreational fishing in Commonwealth waters;
- ☐ Establish a means of assessing the rigour of MPA literature;
- ☐ Maintain a watching brief on proposals to establish Protected Areas in freshwater areas; and
- ☐ Approach the CERF Steering Committee with a view to the development of a mechanism for the performance assessment of MPAs.

Engagement strategies and communications:

- ☐ Engage “champions” whose opinions are respected in the fishing and broader community to get the recreational fishing messages out to the wider public and address community perceptions;
- ☐ Community perceptions of the role of recreational fishers in the MPA debate need to be addressed;
- ☐ A concise framework/set of rules for engagement/participation in State and Commonwealth MPA processes be developed for all participants and agreed to prior to an MPA process commencing;
- ☐ Recreational fishers need to move from consultation towards collaboration and empowerment if they are going to influence the outcome of MPAs;
- ☐ Further resources need to be provided for the Commonwealth liaison and coordination process, similar to current arrangement between DEH and Recfish;

- ❑ Form strategic alliances with other stakeholders such as tourism/conservation groups/commercial sector and oil and gas industry and identify common areas where a common approach can be presented;
- ❑ Develop positive and simple articles for the fishing media which focus on the success stories;
- ❑ Develop performance audits for existing MPAs;
- ❑ Promote the Ernst and Young report "Australia's Marine Protected Areas: Challenging Times Ahead";

Resources will be required to improve the level of involvement of recreational fishers and a number of potential sources were identified including:

- ❑ Recreational fishing and boating industry bodies, including licence trust funds;
- ❑ Department of Environment for Commonwealth MPAs;
- ❑ Fisheries Research and Development Corporation for RDE;
- ❑ Recreational Fishing Community Grants Program;
- ❑ Tourism bodies;
- ❑ Commercial partners, possibly oil and gas; and
- ❑ Benefactors.

It was also recognised that there will need to be capacity building if recreational fishers were to improve their ability to influence the outcome. This would be based around:

- ❑ Leadership development programs such as the Next Generation of Leaders program currently being run by Recfish;
- ❑ Identification of quality skilled people at all levels including local, state and national and promotion of skills development; and
- ❑ A recruitment strategy that promotes the attractiveness of working within the recreational fishing industry.

Recfishing Research will incorporate the RDE priorities into its Business and Investment Plan and play a catalytic role in the development of projects to address those priorities.

Some of the success stories that were identified and the lessons learnt from those successes.

- ❑ Changes to the South East Marine part based on input relating to the impact on commercial fishers and in the Freycinet area to account for the interests of recreational fishers;
- ❑ Case study of Capricorn section of the GBRMP as featured in the independent consultants report FutureEye; and
- ❑ CapReef community monitoring program established to monitor the effects of management change in the GBR.