



# Strengthening partnerships and relationships within the recreational fishing sector

Len Olyott and Doug Joyner

Project No. 2009/314



**Australian Government**  

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**Fisheries Research and  
Development Corporation**



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## NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

**2009/314 Strengthening partnerships and relationships within the recreational fishing sector**

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### OBJECTIVES:

- 1 Recfish Australia to host a preliminary, facilitated, meeting with AFTA, BIA, Sunfish Queensland and the Game Fishing Association of Australia to discuss the conditions of a funding agreement between industry and Recfish Australia and identify issues impacting the formation of a unified peak body.
- 2 Recfish Australia to host a facilitated, round table discussion of all current, past and potential members to discuss the funding proposal and business environment of Recfish Australia.
- 3 Recfish Australia to review its constitution, business case and strategic plan.

### NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY:

#### OUTCOMES ACHIEVED TO DATE

Two facilitated meetings were held: firstly with the members of allied industries (boating and tackle) on 5-6 April 2009 and secondly with the Recfish board alone (27-28 June 2009).

Discussion at the first meeting moved away from a funding agreement and focused on recommendations for how Recfish Australia could improve its operational procedures and membership arrangements. Opportunities for funding partnerships such as an annual forum or conference were discussed. A Consultant's report was provided and the Recfish Australia board were given the opportunity to respond to the recommendations. The suggestion of an industry alliance for the purpose of jointly presenting policy and positions to government was discussed and progressed.

The facilitated board meeting considered under what conditions Recfish Australia was prepared to enter into an alliance and what constitutional changes were needed to broaden our membership base.

The final outcome of these two meetings was the formation of the Boating and Fishing Council of Australia which consists of members representing boating, fishing trades and recreational fishers. The Council was formed in September 2009 and has been successful in securing meetings with several high profile politicians and senior decision makers. The immediate focus of the Council is in achieving positive outcomes for the industry in the Marine Bioregional Planning Process currently underway in Commonwealth Waters.

A workshop was held following the Recfish Australia AGM on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2009. Representatives of Recfish Australia member organisations: the Amateur Fisherman's Association of the Northern Territory; Recfishwest; TARFish; VRFish; NSW Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing; NSW Recreational Fishing Alliance; Australian National Sportfishing Association; Australian Underwater Federation and the Professional Fishing Instructors and Guides Association as well as previous members (Sunfish QLD, South Australia Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee, Native Fish Australia) and the Australian Fishing Trade Association were present.

New affiliate member, the Professional Fishing Instructors and Guides Association was present along with the NSW Council of Freshwater Anglers. Discussion focused on the merits of Recfish Australia joining the industry alliance (the Boating and Fishing Council of Australia) and how Recfish Australia might position itself over the next 12 months to deliver a high level of service to the Australian recreational fishing community.

Discussion also considered the proposed changes to the constitution designed to broaden our membership base. Following on from the AGM and the workshop, review of the Recfish Australia constitution is currently in progress.

**KEYWORDS: Recreational fishing, funding, partnerships, industry, strategic.**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Members of the Boating and Fishing Council of Australia provided positive feedback and guidance in the development of this project, in particular Don Jones of Marine Queensland. Recfish members and representatives from other peak bodies attended a one day workshop and provided many ideas and suggestions. The Recfish Australia board has supported and participated in this process.

## **BACKGROUND**

Currently across Australia there are a number of formal, non-formal and ad hoc or loosely aligned industry groups representing specific sectoral interests within the recreational fishing industry. These sectors include:

- Recreational fishers
- Tackle and industry
- Fishing media
- Guides, instructors, tourism and charter boats
- Environmental
- Game fishing
- Boating

While each group has a specific cause and unique constituency, unnecessary duplication, ineffective communication and poor lateral strategy on key policy issues affecting recreational fishing, occurs. This can lead to the following outcomes:

- Different groups and sectors work at cross purposes to each other often not knowing what the other is doing or saying in terms of key policy issues and decisions;
- Rather than setting the policy agenda for their sector within the 'policy cycle', a lack of strategy results in peak groups finding out later that policy is being made on their behalf - i.e. instead of the dog wagging the tail, the tail wags the dog; Therefore the overall lobbying effort is diluted and fragmented;
- Mixed messages channel down to core constituencies fuelling feelings of resentment and scepticism in process and representation;
- Governments receive mixed messages and have difficulty knowing who to trust let alone who to listen to – i.e. the squeaky wheel gets the grease, and;
- Peak groups inherently find themselves entangled in debates, which affect other sectors, when in fact they should keep out of such debates.

This project sought to identify pathways and structure that could facilitate more effective partnerships amongst peak bodies within the recreational fishing industry.

One of the key issues facing recreational fisher peak bodies compared to commercial industry associations is the apparent inability/unwillingness of fishers to directly contribute towards the administration costs of their peak body. Many peak bodies at a state level rely on grants from government. Some bodies, including the Game Fishing Association of Australia, Australian National Sport Fishing Association, Australian Underwater Federation and the Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW rely almost entirely on member contributions and operate without a full time paid executive. One aspect of partnerships involves an investigation into mutually beneficial funding arrangements or service delivery agreements between recreational fisher peak bodies and industry associations.

## **NEED**

In a recently completed study (2007/058 and R4041) into strategic funding options for the recreational fishing sector, options for the national peak body, Recfish Australia, appeared limited. In the face of decreased funding from the Australian Government (a three year funding agreement ended on 30 June 2008 with no commitment to continue), the association was advised to seek alternative funding.

An option of seeking funding from the fishing trade and boating industries is currently being investigated but there are several challenges that need to be addressed before funding can be secured.

There is a need for Recfish Australia to build trust with both industry and other recreational fishing organisations not currently part of the association. A clear business case and purpose for Recfish Australia that delivers benefits to recreational fishers and industry partners needs to be formulated and the details of any funding agreement need to be carefully considered.

What is clear is that there is an ongoing need for Recfish Australia to continue as a national peak body advocating on behalf of recreational fishers and engaging with Australian Government agencies and departments. Recfish Australia shares a unique partnership with the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation and provides advice about recreational fishing research, development and extension needs as one of the FRDC's gazetted representative organisations. In partnership with the FRDC, Recfish Australia has initiated Recfishing Research, which through a multidisciplinary steering committee, engages with the recreational fishing community to identify priority areas for investment.

Recfish Australia is also perfectly positioned to deliver on the national Recreational Fishing Industry Development Strategy which is due for release in early 2010.

Recfish Australia provides a valuable service and ensures that the needs and rights of recreational fishers are considered in discussions of issues such as marine protected area planning, biosecurity, research and development and in strategies to deal with the implications of climate and environmental change.

## **OBJECTIVES:**

- 1 *Recfish Australia to host a preliminary, facilitated, meeting with AFTA, BIA, Sunfish Queensland and the Game Fishing Association of Australia to discuss the conditions of a funding agreement between industry and Recfish Australia and identify issues impacting the formation of a unified peak body.*

Two facilitated meetings were held: firstly with the members of allied industries (boating and tackle) on 5-6 April 2009 and secondly with the Recfish board alone (27-28 June 2009). Both Sunfish Queensland and GFAA declined to attend the first industry workshop although David Bateman (Sunfish Deputy-Chair and former Recfish Australia committee member) did attend and offered valuable insight.

Discussion at the first meeting moved away from a funding agreement and focused on recommendations for how Recfish Australia could improve its operational procedures and membership arrangements. Opportunities for funding partnerships such as an annual forum or conference were discussed and industry participants seemed amenable to being involved.

A Consultant's report was provided and the Recfish Australia board were given the opportunity to respond to the recommendations. The suggestion of an industry alliance for the purpose of jointly presenting policy and positions to government was discussed and progressed.



This concept eventually crystallised into the formation of the Boating and Fishing Council of Australia which has the following members:

AFTA            the Australian Fishing Trade Association.  
AMEC            the Australia Marine Engine Council.  
AMIF            the Australian Marine Industries Federation being the representative organisation for the Boating Industry Associations in Queensland, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, and the Northern Territory.  
BIA NSW        the Boating Industry Association of NSW.  
OEDA            the Outboard Engine Distributors Association.  
Recfish Australia.

The facilitated board meeting considered under what conditions Recfish Australia was prepared to enter into an alliance and what constitutional changes were needed to broaden our membership base.

*2. Recfish Australia to host a facilitated, round table discussion of all current, past and potential members to discuss the funding proposal and business environment of Recfish Australia.*

A workshop was held following the Recfish Australia AGM on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2009. Representatives of Recfish Australia member organisations:

- Amateur Fisherman's Association of the Northern Territory;
- Recfishwest;
- TARFish;
- VRFish;
- NSW Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing;
- NSW Recreational Fishing Alliance;
- Australian National Sportfishing Association;
- Australian Underwater Federation and
- Professional Fishing Instructors and Guides Association

as well as past members (Sunfish QLD, South Australia Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee, and Native Fish Australia) and the Australian Fishing Trade Association were present. New affiliate member, the Professional Fishing Instructors and Guides Association was present along with the NSW Council of Freshwater Anglers. Discussion focused on the merits of Recfish Australia joining the industry alliance (the Boating and Fishing Council of Australia) and how Recfish Australia might position itself over the next 12 months to deliver a high level of service to the Australian recreational fishing community.

Discussion also considered the proposed changes to the constitution designed to broaden our membership base.

*3. Recfish Australia to review its constitution, business case and strategic plan.*

Following on from the AGM and the workshop, this is currently in progress. Proposed changes include removing the restriction on only one member from each state; changing the minimum membership number requirements of national organisations; allowing affiliate members a vote and changing the objectives to better reflect our focus on conservation initiatives.

## **METHODS**

A three stage process was conducted:

### **Stage I (5-6 April, BIA NSW, Sydney):**

A meeting of AFTA, BIA, Marine Qld and Recfish Australia to discuss how a partnership agreement may work and what changes would need to be affected to enter into a partnership.

#### **Attendees:**

Facilitator:	Dean Logan
AFTA:	Doug Joyner/ John Millyard
BIA NSW:	Roy Privett
Marine Qld:	Don Jones
Recfish Australia:	Len Olyott/ Adam Smith
Independent:	David Bateman

### **Stage II (27-28 June, Mercure, Brisbane)**

A facilitated board meeting to discuss the recommendations for reform from the first industry meeting and to critically assess what needs to be done to secure the future of Recfish Australia over the next 12 months.

#### **Attendees:**

Facilitator:	Ian Plowman
AFANT:	Chris Makepeace
ANSA:	John Burgess
NSWACoRF:	Bruce Schumacher
Recfishwest:	Des Wood
Recfish Australia:	Len Olyott
TARFish:	Mark Nikolai
VRFish:	Russell Conway

### **Stage III (20 September, VRFish, Melbourne)**

A workshop with all Recfish Australia member organisations and other past members to discuss proposed changes to our structure and operational environment.

## **DISCUSSION**

The initial meeting with industry certainly changed the direction of the project and steered us away from the focus on funding options and commercial partnerships. This change in focus was most likely necessary to reflect the views of the broader recreational fishing community but did mean that the focus shifted from Recfish Australia to a broader industry body (the alliance). In many ways, once the seed of an industry alliance was sown amongst industry and government stakeholders, it became difficult for Recfish Australia to not support the establishment of the alliance. Bound by a carefully crafted Memorandum of Understanding the alliance should prove a positive step for the recreational fishing industry generally and for Recfish Australia in particular. It is however, still unclear, how to leverage membership of the BFCA to access a secure funding stream for the association.

Some clear recommendations were provided to the Recfish Australia board to consider. The recommendations and the board responses are included:

*Recommendation 1 – Establish the Australian Boating and Fishing Council (ABFC)  
It is recommended that a peak representative body titled the ‘Australian Boating and Fishing Council’ (ABFC) be established within the next 12 months.*

The Board agreed that there would be value in an alliance of Recfish Australia, the Boating Industry of Australia and the Australian Fishing Tackle Association and has agreed to pursue this alliance in further meetings with you.

*Recommendation 2 – Recfish Name Change: The Australian Recreational Fishing Federation (ARFF)*

*As part of the restructure process and in the interests of adopting a fresh start, it is recommended that Recfish change its name to The Australian Recreational Fishing Federation (ARFF).*

The Board did not agree with this recommendation on the basis that our current name is simple and well recognised and any change would be both confusing and expensive.

*Recommendation 3 – Recfish Board (renominate all positions)*

*In the interests of the recreational fishing industry it is recommended that all current Recfish Board members relinquish their positions and a new round of appointments, voting and Board appointments take place as a matter of priority.*

It was not necessary for the Board to reach any conclusion on this recommendation as, under the existing constitution, all Board positions become vacant at the time of the next Annual General Meeting in Sept/Oct this year.

*Recommendation 4 – Independent Chair*

*It is recommended that the new look Recfish The Australian Recreational Fishing Federation (ARFF), appoint an Independent Chair Person to the Board with equal voting rights of any other Board Member.*

The Board did not agree with this recommendation as the Chair position has specific hands-on responsibilities for Recfish operations and a person with direct knowledge of recreational fishing and Recfish Australia is required. Also, from past experience dealing with an independent Board position, the Board is not confident that an independent chair could be recruited.

*Recommendation 5 – Company Structure*

*Currently Recfish is governed under and by the Associations Act of the ACT. With recommendations in this report advising ARFF to adopt a truly state-based representative model, the new Board should seek legal advice on restructuring as a Company Limited by Guarantee.*

The Board did not agree with this recommendation as it could see no particular advantage with the change and significant disadvantages with the more onerous and expensive procedural and reporting requirements of a company limited by guarantee.

*Recommendation 6 – Constitution*

*It is recommended that the new ARFF Board, as their first priority, re-visit the organisations constitution to bring the constitution inline with the new strategic direction and vision of the organisation.*

The Board agreed with this recommendation and there will be specific meetings to discuss the changes in the next few months.

*Recommendation 7 – Public Relations Strategy*

*It is recommended that the new ARFF Board instruct the CEO to implement an immediate public relations strategy informing senior policy makers, Ministers and relevant Politicians, past and current members and key industry groups of the changes.*

The Board agreed to develop and implement a new public relations strategy as resources permit.

*Recommendation 8 – CEO*

*It is recommended that the current CEO be maintained by ARFF.*

The Board agreed to extend the appointment of the current CEO for as long as our financial position prudently permits it.

*Recommendation 9 – Process and Identity (focus on recreational fisher issues only)*

*The new ARFF mandate and strategic purpose should be to specifically address issues and concerns associated with ‘recreational fishers’, not other sectors like boating or tackle – as an example.*

The Board agreed with this recommendation noting that this was the current situation.

*Recommendation 10 – State-Based Model*

*It is recommended that the new ARFF Board instruct and support the CEO to establish - through an expression of interest and public relations process – a state-based representative model*

The Board was concerned to ensure that any revised structure would not duplicate state/territory peak recreational fishing structures. It was also concerned at the practicality of establishing regional structures that may include some but not all of a particular state or territory.

*Recommendation 11 – Policy Committees*

*It is recommended that the new ARFF Board establish a clearly defined and robust national policy committee framework to allow state-based members access to ARFF policy development and decision making processes.*

The Board agreed that this could be a worthwhile initiative and it will be considered in our plans for the future.

*Recommendation 12 – Annual Conference*

*It is recommended that ARFF consider establishing an annual conference in line with the state-based representative model.*

The Board agrees and will attempt to do this although it may not be possible for 2009 due to current resourcing issues and noting that, to date, the conference is planned on a biennial basis.

*Recommendation 13 – Continue to Push for Government Funding*

*ARFF should continue to push Governments to provide sufficient funding for recreational fishing initiatives and directly fund organisations like ARFF that implement programs*

The Board agrees and continues to do this.

*Recommendation 14 – Pursue Research and Commissioned Work*

*With a nationally aligned network and pool of resources, in terms of human capital and expertise, the opportunity for ARFF to provide Government with research outcomes, or to undertake commissioned research work - that Governments and other private entities pay for - should not be underestimated.*

The Board agrees.

*Recommendation 15 – Pursue all Membership Avenues*

*Consideration should be given to other levels of membership for instance mum and dad fishers, scientists and academics, and non-traditional membership sources.*

The Board has agreed in principle and will meet in the next few months to consider this and other constitutional issues.

*Recommendation 16 – 15% Fundraising Incentive*

*With the opportunity to grow the membership base, it was argued at the Sydney meeting that ARFF consider adopting a 15% fundraising incentive where-by state based members, or official office holders, secure a 15% commission incentive for every additional dollar value of membership or revenue they bring into the organisation*

The Board agreed that this would be appropriate for independent people or professional fundraisers but does not believe it would be appropriate for Recfish staff, Board members or members due to Conflict of Interest concerns.

*Recommendation 17 – In-kind Support (at trade shows and fishing expos)*

*Recfish currently receive in-kind support through organisations like the Boating Industry Association of Australia who provide them with free space at boating shows to run fishing clinics, etc. Similar options should be vigorously pursued at other industry trade shows not necessarily as a direct revenue raising exercise but also as a PR, marketing and membership opportunity.*

The Board agrees.

*Recommendation 18 – Editorials There is an opportunity for ARFF to secure editorials in fishing magazines and publications.*

The Board agrees and it will be considered as part of the public relations strategy referred to in Recommendation 7.

*Recommendation 19 – Programs and Services*

*A number of programs and services should continue, be re-vitalised or adopted as both a revenue raising and PR opportunity by ARFF.*

The Board has agreed to consider these and other initiatives as opportunities arise.

*Recommendation 20 – Revitalize Annual Forum*

*The Recfish Annual Forum should be re-vitalised under the new ARFF structure.*

Agreed as per Recommendation 12.

*Recommendation 21 – Pursue all Merchandise and Cross Promotional Opportunities Without being too 'half smart', ARFF should look at developing over time a suite of ARFF specific merchandise products.*

The Board agrees and will seek opportunities for such cross-promotion.

When considering the recommendations, the board gave due consideration as to what was in the best interests of member organisations; what was feasible and what would realistically deliver funding security for Recfish Australia. As an umbrella organisation made up of different member bodies, each with their own constituency and members, it is vital that decisions that Recfish Australia makes reflect a democratic process within the organisation. Realistically, for any national peak body in Australia, there is a fine line between democracy and due process and making decisions that are in the best interest of the peak body itself. Any peak body runs the risk of alienating its support base when they choose to take risks and explore new opportunities.

At the facilitated board meeting, the board was confronted with a new method of board communication and discussion led by Dr Ian Plowman who has significant interest in the

operation of boards and what constitutes successful associations. Ian's methods revolved around the use of focusing questions and prioritisation of issues such that only the most important matters were addressed. This was achieved through a controlled system of timed speaking to issues and voting. This system resulted in a more efficient board meeting and allowed the board to focus on the most important issues and decisions.

The board agreed on the following issues:

The three critical questions needed to address were:

- **How do we best position ourselves for all potential stakeholders in the next 6 months?**
- **What is the best structure for the organisation?**
- **How do we get all State and National Bodies to be Recfish members?**

To best position Recfish with members, the recommendations are:

- **Intensify communication with major stakeholders to garner support.**
- **Change our membership criteria to be as inclusive as possible.**

To best position Recfish with Government in the next six months, the recommendations are:

- **Prove that we are fully representative**
- **Get Service Agreement with FRDC for representative organisation activities**
- **Establish alliances**

Key functions of Recfish will include:

- To represent to Government on the national interests of recreational fishers.
- Drive national policy and practices on recreational fishing.

The Board agreed that future membership needed to be as inclusive as possible but there was consideration given to existing members and recognition of their longstanding support of Recfish Australia. Constitutionally, membership of Recfish Australia was historically confined to a single peak body from each state/territory *"believed by Recfish Australia to be the most representative of recreational fishers in that state."* National peak bodies were constrained by minimum membership criteria and operation in a minimum of five states or territories. The current representative basis of board appointment whereby every full member organisation has a board position could potentially create an unwieldy board structure if membership grew significantly as a consequence of a changed constitution. Nevertheless, most members supported the proposed changes which will be the topic of a Special General Meeting.

The third stage of the project consisted of a workshop held to coincide with the Recfish Australia Annual General Meeting. All member organisations attended and additional attendees were present from other industry peak bodies (see Appendix 3 for a list of delegates).

Workshop attendees were asked the same questions that were asked of board members at the facilitated meeting. Some of the responses are detailed below.

**Question 1:** *What is working really well and we should seek to preserve?*

Commonwealth Government recognizes Recfish as the peak national body for recreational fishing.

Support and passion for recreational fishing, vision for fishing to be sustainable, joint agreement regarding concerns regarding access, joint agreement that Government is not doing enough to support fishing...

Recent invitation to join Boating and Fishing Council of Australia, once AGM is over – a very positive step to join this.

**Question 2:** *What is not working so well and we need to address?*

This is reflected in loss of funding and not represented by all states. Inability to get all states to join. **Previous limited membership base.**

A dominance by some members = possible frustration, **higher profile needed** as many fishers still do not know who Recfish are, a need to convince anglers they need to support the bigger picture not just their patch, highlight what can be potentially lost, lack of representation, convince anglers and State Governments of the need for financial support for Recfish irrespective of politics.

### **Lack of full representation.**

Funding strategies – membership fees may discourage valuable members.

Past mistakes that may have been rectified – changes need to be communicated.

**Question 3:** *Is there “an elephant in the room” and if so, what is it?*

Those with greater knowledge or stronger personalities dominated the discussions; this is not uncommon however there comes a point when enough is enough! In some regard I felt there was “no elephant” in the room because there were important states/groups not attending – therefore we lacked “weight”

The “elephant” is green – loss of access due to “green” activity is the big issue – how can we work with “greens” but not continue to lose out – are we mutually exclusive organisations?

What happens if Recfish does rejoin all States but fails to gain funding anyway?

**Question 4:** *If Recfish Australia were to vanish overnight, then (a) who would notice and (b) how would the world be different as a result?*

Commonwealth departments and agencies – they would need alternate multiple contacts. One level of protection for recreational fishing would be missing. The next level (state bodies) would need to step up to fill the void.

Probably no one would notice except for the few currently involved. State organisations would continue the fight, but who knows how the Federal Government would react.

Maybe the Feds would see this as a green light to begin the process of banning recreational fishing as a legitimate activity in its waters, and also influence the State Govt's to follow.

There was clearly widespread support for the retention of a national peak body but it was comforting that the issues identified by the board were the same issues identified by the broader recreational fishing community. It was also clear that there were some very significant areas where Recfish Australia was failing.

## **AGREED ACTIONS**

After considerable discussion, a list of actions for Recfish Australia to pursue was identified:

### **Actions**

1. Communicate to Alliance – we will join

2. Meetings with Ministers
  - We are making progress
  - Positive discussions with Sunfish etc
  - Ask for assistance to develop a business plan
3. Continue to discuss issues surrounding access
4. Go back to jurisdictions about state contributions (NSW and Victoria)
5. Pursue funding options
  - Credit Card
  - Conference
  - Projects
6. Look at Conservation Organisation Status (requires constitutional change)
7. Seek out partnerships with conservation organisations
8. Get the social and economic data we need (quick list)
9. National clean up your fishing spot day – around Australia
10. Community benefit programs
  - Government support
  - Community benefits
  - Media opportunity
12. Take the Corporates Fishing (consider inviting heads of major corporations on fishing trips)
13. Improve marketing and communication of Recfish Australia
14. Recfish Australia to coordinate Fish Care program nationally
15. Get the champions (identify patrons and ambassadors for recreational fishing)
16. Work closely with Marine Education Centres Network

While it was acknowledged that this was a comprehensive list of activities which could keep the association busy for the next five years, it was noted that there was currently only one full time employee. For many of these projects to work, there would need to be extra staff or Recfish members would have to take on a share of the workload.

Strong support for a change to the constitution was evident and a discussion paper on the proposed constitutional changes was circulated to workshop participants.

The Recfish Australia board and CEO have been provided with significant guidance on what is needed to deliver an efficient and effective peak body for recreational fishers.

The challenge will be to incorporate the suggestions into the Recfish Australia Strategic Plan and to then develop an appropriate Annual Operating Plan to guide the activities of the association. The development of a business plan is beyond the scope of the current project and will require additional resourcing.

Opportunities to grow strong and constructive partnerships with industry have been identified and will be explored. The benefit of having facilitated meetings greatly assisted the progress of this project by focusing the discussion and development of an action plan.

## **BENEFITS AND ADOPTION**

The knowledge generated from this project will be an example of how industry and stakeholder organisations can form effective partnerships. This knowledge will be of benefit to the entire seafood industry and not just the recreational sector.

For Recfish Australia and its members, there will be immediate adoption of the recommendations arising from the project.

## **FURTHER DEVELOPMENT**

The next step in the process requires a special meeting to formally change the constitution. The next important development will be the preparation of a business case that reflects the contemporary focus of Recfish Australia.



## **PLANNED OUTCOMES**

This project will be of direct benefit to recreational fishers as well as the associated boating and tackle related industries. With a more coordinated approach and pooling of resources, there is a real opportunity to make progress on a range of issues that impact on the recreational fishing sector on a national basis. By identifying important issues and concerns of members and potential members, Recfish Australia is able to adapt (by changing its constitution and reviewing its strategic plan) to the needs of the recreational sector and deliver a more responsive and focused peak body.

Two specific outputs will support this process:

1. This final report which serves as an example of the process leading to building better partnerships.
2. An updated Recfish Australia constitution which reflects our new focus and broadens the membership base.

## **CONCLUSION**

This project was about strengthening partnerships and relationships. In any industry environment, this is an ongoing journey rather than a once off project. Just as with individuals, relationships define the health of an organisation and industry. Any peak body or industry that is struggling to form relationships or is bedevilled by bad relationships from the past is unlikely to be effective.

This project sought to draw together a wide range of potential partners and to identify synergies and form a commitment to work together to the benefit of the industry. Significant progress has been made but there is still a long road ahead – especially when it comes to building relationships with government who are a significant stakeholder in the recreational fishing industry.

## **REFERENCES**

- Logan, D 2009: Combined meeting of representatives of the marine, boating, tackle and recreational fishing industries regarding the future of Recfish Australia, a report prepared for Recfish Australia. Recfish Australia, Brisbane, Australia
- Plowman, I 2009: Report on Recfish Board Meeting 27-28 June 2009 – a report prepared for Recfish Australia, Recfish Australia, Brisbane, Australia

## **APPENDIX 1: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

N/A

## APPENDIX 2: STAFF

Project management: Len Olyott (Recfish Australia)  
Project support and report writing: Len Olyott (Recfish Australia)

## APPENDIX 3: WORKSHOP ATTENDEES

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