

# NT Recreational Fishing Sector Participant Focus Groups

## Findings Report

### 1. Introduction

This report presents the insights and perspectives gathered from two focus groups of NT recreational fishers. The first group comprised casual fishers ('casuals') and the second group comprised self-identified avid fishers ('avids'). Both focus groups were held at the offices of the Amateur Fishermen's Association of the Northern Territory (AFANT) in Darwin on Tuesday, August 22, 2023. Participants were remunerated for their time with an incentive payment.

The objective of the groups was to hear from NT recreational fishers directly to understand their experiences with fishing in the NT. It was intended that the results of these discussions would help to inform the development of a wider questionnaire that goes out to a wider population of NT recreational fishers.

The group discussions focused on a range of aspects related to recreational fishing with topics including overall fishing experiences in the NT (such as best fishing spots, types of fishing, and challenges faced); overall satisfaction with fishing for barramundi (reasons for and against, including factors impacting satisfaction such as fishing regulations, biodiversity and fish populations, and accessibility and infrastructure); and overall satisfaction with fishing in the NT, more generally speaking.

In the following we provide top line findings from the groups. Tables have been prepared using OfficeReports and data entered from participant questionnaires utilised during the groups. Results are shown by total (n=12 participants) and differences highlighted when relevant when comparing the casual versus avid fishing group (n=6 participants each).

### 2. Overall Demographics

The demographics of the two groups were well balanced in terms of age with 25% in each of the 25-39s, 40-49s, 50-59s and 60-69s across the two groups. The casuals group had a more participants 50+, while the avids group had more participants under 50.

Q1. Age			
	Total	Casual Fisher Focus Group	Avid Fisher Focus Group
Base	12	6	6
18-24	0%	0%	0%
25-39	25%	17%	33%
40-49	25%	17%	33%
50-59	25%	33%	17%
60-69	25%	33%	17%
70 plus	0%	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Gender skewed towards males, with more than 80% across both groups identifying as male, while only 20% identified as female.

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This equated to each group having at least one female participant attend, which is more a reflection of the recruitment after cancellations and replacements.

Q2. Gender			
	Total	Casual Fisher Focus Group	Avid Fisher Focus Group
Base	12	6	6
Male	83%	83%	83%
Female	17%	17%	17%
Identify a different way	0%	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%

All participants were employed, with 50% in professional roles, 33% in white collar roles and 17% in blue collar roles.

Q3. Occupation			
	Total	Casual Fisher Focus Group	Avid Fisher Focus Group
Base	12	6	6
Professional	50%	50%	50%
White collar	33%	50%	17%
Blue collar	17%	0%	33%
Total	100%	100%	100%

### 3. Overall Fishing Preferences

The next few questions related to overall fishing experiences in the NT.

By and large the majority of participants' favourite type of fish to catch was barramundi, which was mentioned by more than 80% of the total participants across both groups. Other fish species mentioned by participants included Snapper, Jewfish, Coral Trout, Salmon and Mangrove Jack.

Q4. Favourite Type of Fish to Catch
Barramundi
Barramundi
Barramundi
Barramundi, Coral Trout, Snapper, Rock Cod, Jewfish
Barramundi, Jewies
Barramundi, Snapper
Barramundi, Snapper, Mangrove Jack, Shark
Golden Snapper
Jew fish, Goldies, Barra, Salmon
Red Emperor, Coral Trout, Barramundi
Snapper, Jewfish
Threadfin Salmon, Barramundi

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When asked where they most liked to fish, participants mentioned a range of fishing spots and locations, including Darwin Harbour, the Mary River and the Daly River as prime locations.

Q5. Where like to fish
Adelaide River
Blue Water (secret)
Coastal and river - South Alligator, Wessel Islands, Bynoe Harbour
Daly River Nhulunbuy
Daly River, South Alligator, Dundee, Kakadu Billabongs
Darwin Harbour - Charles Point
Darwin Harbour, East Arm, Finniss River, Adelaide River, Shady Camp
Dundee Beach/Fog Bay, Daly River, Finniss River
Fenton / Shady Camp
Kakadu
Mostly land-based around Darwin, Buffalo Creek Lee Point, Rapid Creek, Cullen Bay Darwin Harbour, Fisherman's Wharf
South Alligator, Dundee Area, Gulf Carpentaria

The majority of participants (92%) enjoyed fishing with others rather than on their own, indicating that fishing for recreational fishers might be viewed as more of a social activity than a solo-independent activity.

Q6. Fish on your own, or with others			
	Total	Casual Fisher Focus Group	Avid Fisher Focus Group
Base	12	6	6
On my own	8%	0%	17%
With others	92%	100%	83%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Participants typically fish with their friends and family, with some noting that they particularly enjoyed hosting interstate visitors. One participant had a friend who operated a charter boat and enjoyed going out with that friend whenever the opportunity presented itself.

Q7. Who do you fish with?
A friend
Brother in laws, Friends
Charter company or friends
Couple good friends
Family
Family (wife), Friends from Victoria
Family and friends, husband, son
Friends
Friends
Friends and family
Sons and mates

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Most participants (92%) tend to release some and keep some of the fish they catch, with 8% keeping all the fish they catch. The only distinction was one person in the avid group, a land-based fisher, who mentioned that they preferred to keep all the fish they caught. None of the participants released all fish, suggesting that many were happy to release the majority of the fish they caught and only keep a few for taking home and eating.

Q8. Typically release the fish you catch, or take home to eat?			
	Total	Casual Fisher Focus Group	Avid Fisher Focus Group
Base	12	6	6
I release all the fish I catch	0%	0%	0%
I release some, and keep some	92%	100%	83%
I keep all the fish I catch	8%	0%	17%
Total	100%	100%	100%

When asked to quantify this, a third of participants (33%) will typically release 80% or more of their catch, a third of participants (33%) will release between 60-80% of their catch and the remaining third will release less than 45% of their catch. Those in the avids group are much more likely to catch and release more of their catch, while casuals are more likely to keep their catch and release less overall.

Q9. Categories. Percentage of the fish caught that are released			
	Total	Casual Fisher Focus Group	Avid Fisher Focus Group
Base	12	6	6
0	8%	0%	17%
30	8%	17%	0%
40	8%	17%	0%
45	8%	0%	17%
60	8%	0%	17%
70	25%	33%	17%
80	8%	17%	0%
90	25%	17%	33%
Total	100%	100%	100%

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Half of the participants currently owned a boat and half did not. This was higher for those in the avid group (67% owned a boat), compared with casuals (33% did not own a boat).

Q10. Boat ownership			
	Total	Casual Fisher Focus Group	Avid Fisher Focus Group
Base	12	6	6
Yes	50%	33%	67%
No	50%	67%	33%
Total	100%	100%	100%

#### 4. Overall Fishing Satisfaction (Barramundi focus)

In the first activity presented to the groups, we asked participants to think about their most memorable barramundi fishing experiences in the last 12 months and to list their top three things that made these trips satisfying to them, as well as their top three things they would like to improve about their experiences.

The tables on the following page show the verbatim comments captured in order of mention for the top of mind elements that made participants' experiences most satisfying.

The most common mention across all mentions of what makes a fishing trip satisfying to participants was catching a few (33% of total mentions). Getting out in nature / away from it all and to experience a sense of relaxation was the next most common mention (17% of comments mentioned something relating to this theme). The third most common mention of what made the trip(s) satisfying related to the sense of community in terms of being with friends and family (14% of total mentions).

Other key themes for what made participants recent trips most satisfying included:

- Just being a good day all around
- Ease of access such as roads, boat ramps and facilities
- Enjoying a sense of remoteness
- Fish numbers / fish stock (i.e. there were lots of fish to catch)
- Weather

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### WHY SATISFIED - FIRST MENTION

Great weather
Getting out on the water, away from things
Natural beauty of the region, South Alligator River and lots of fish!
Went night fishing and hooked a barra 30cm from the shore
Great to get out on the South Alligator
Feeding time - all the boofs, noise, experience
A good day on the water
Getting away from work and relaxing
Scenic Views
Fishing a relatively new system and successfully finding fish
Being around other people who love the NT lifestyle
Remote areas away from people

### WHY SATISFIED - SECOND MENTION

Excellent locations
Mateship - on the boat, at the pub afterwards
Good facilities at boat ramp - e.g. easy to get boat in and out and cleaning areas
Was sorting the boat to come in and hooked a barra
Camping with friends in Jabiru
The hunt, the wait, the reward and the end
Catch a few fish
The environment
Catching of barra
Using new technology to catch fish
Watching and celebrating the successes of everyone who was catching fish
Good fish numbers

### WHY SATISFIED - THIRD MENTION

Brought home food
Ease of access in some areas
Being able to fish without other boats around
Location & relaxing, hooking a few barra
My wife catching a barra
Catching and releasing back
Get a good fish
Catching fish is a bonus
Being with mates
Sharing time with my wife on the water and watching her share my passion
Spending quality time with people I love. Filling my cup
Good roads access

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When looking at the top of mind key reasons participants did not feel satisfied with their recent fishing trips, the top three key mentions included fishing pressure and too many people on the water (19% of total mentions), size and bag limit related comments (15% of total mentions) and restrictions on fishing location, including uncertainty about doing the right/wrong thing (15% of total mentions).

### WHY NOT SATISFIED - FIRST MENTION

Always want to catch more  
No nearby accommodation near ramps  
Snapped off almost right away  
Having my drinks stolen during the night with 8 people in the camp in Jabiru, out of my fridge  
Darwin harbour was not very exciting to fish, too hot, had to watch the tides and no lore  
Time of the year  
Other people  
Condition of roads  
Find bigger fish  
The uncertainty about whether we were doing the 'wrong' thing by being in the wrong part of the river  
Rubbish left by others, particularly around camping areas

### WHY NOT SATISFIED - SECOND MENTION

Lack of access in other areas  
Restrictions on where you can fish  
Friend grabbed the rod and brought it in  
That accommodation option close to South Alligator e.g. Aroura closed now for 5 years.  
No camp ground. Ramp facilities.  
Too many boats on the water  
How much water around  
I am still trying to catch a meter plus fish (Barra)  
Amount of people/Fishing pressure  
Number of boats on the water aggregated at the same spots

### WHY NOT SATISFIED - THIRD MENTION

Fuel cost  
All too small to keep  
Lorrela Springs being closed in the Gulf due to N.T.G. land claim issues. No support for tourist businesses  
At Shady Camp the traffic to get into the water is so long of a wait. There are a lot of hoons on the water.  
How many other people on the water  
Cost! Fuel, Ice, wear and tear  
Facilities near the ramp, lack of accommodation

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The next activity invited participants to rate a list of satisfaction statements relating to their recent fishing activities in the NT over the last 12 months by providing a score of 1-10 where 1 represented 'Very Unsatisfied' and 10 represented 'Very Satisfied'.



When looking at the mean score results, participants were most satisfied with the current size and bag limits imposed on various fish species you like to catch (8.33), the range of fish species available to catch (8.17), the number of fish you are able to catch in a single fishing trip (8.09) and the existing recreational fishing regulations in their area (8.00).

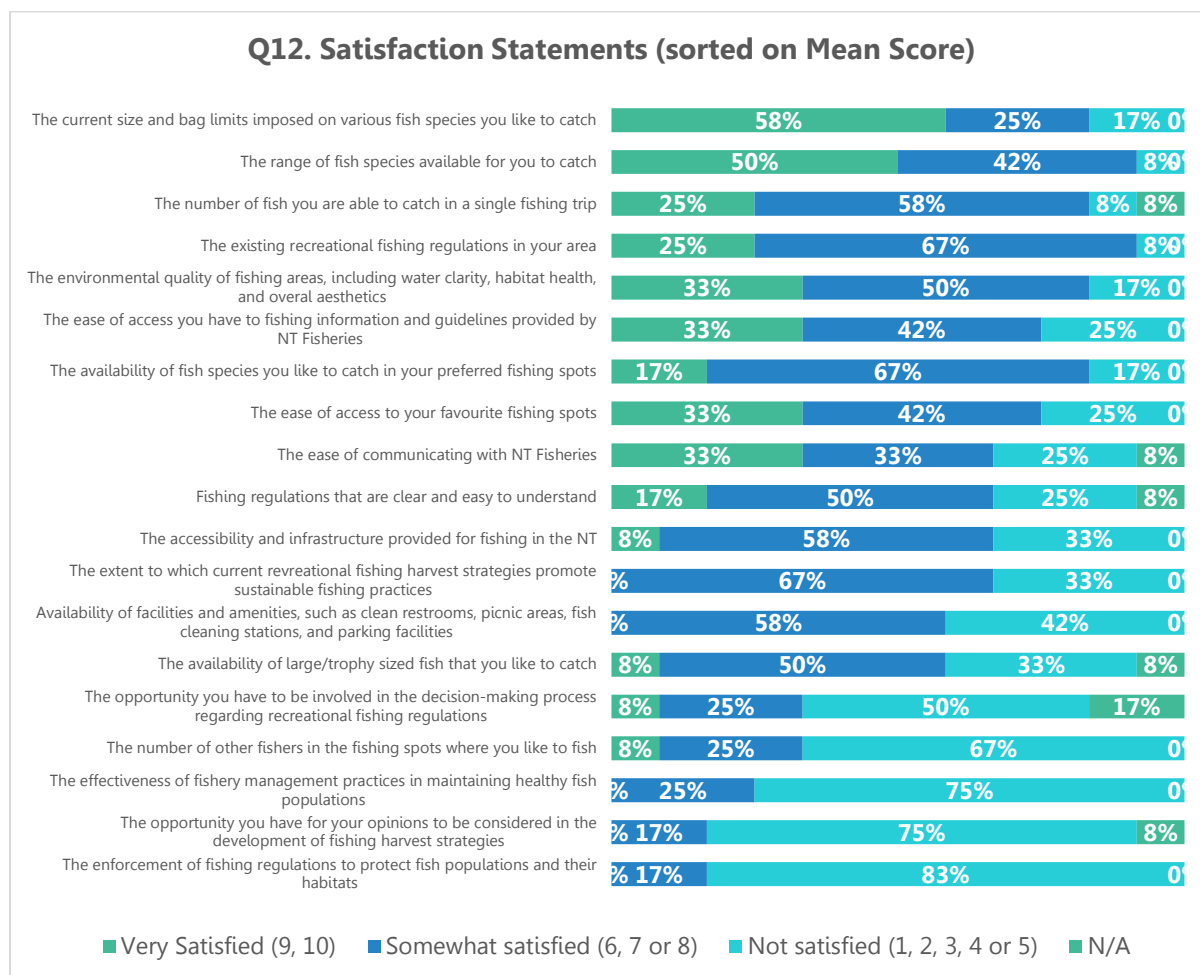
By contrast, the least satisfied elements included the enforcement of fishing regulations to protect fish populations and their habitats (4.00), the opportunity for your opinions to be considered in the development of fishing harvest strategies (4.18), the effectiveness of fishery management practices in maintaining healthy fish populations (4.83) and the number of other fishers in fishing spots where you like to catch fish (4.92).



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The table below shows the same results to the previous question but this time the results are represented via a grouped satisfaction percentage (Very Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied and Not Satisfied).



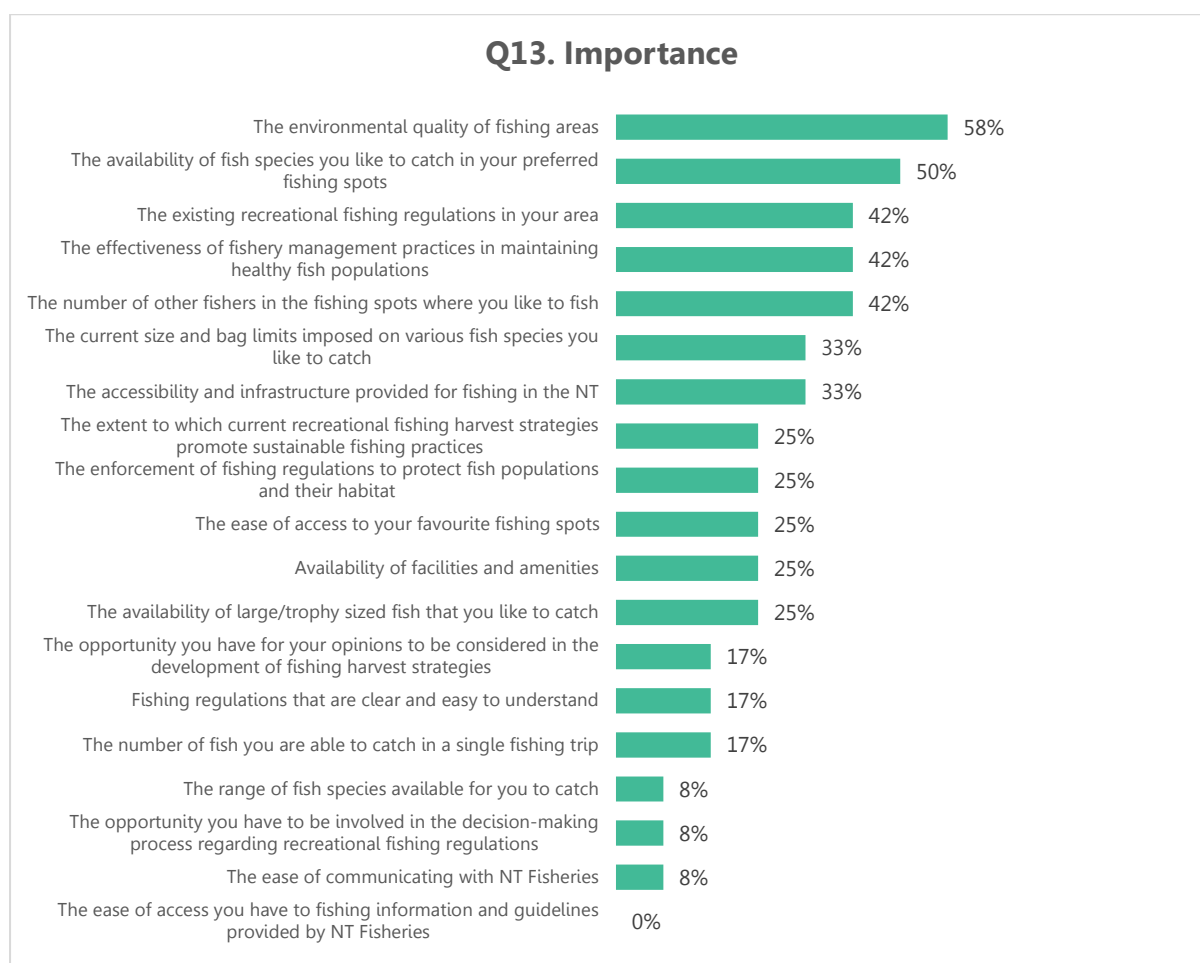
Other key elements driving satisfaction include the environmental quality of fishing areas, including water clarity, habitat health and overall aesthetics; the ease of access you have to fishing information and guidelines provided by NT Fisheries, the ease of access to your favourite fishing spots; and the ease of communicating with NT Fisheries.

Other key elements driving dissatisfaction include the (lack of) opportunity you have to be involved in the decision-making process regarding fishing regulation and the (lack of) availability of facilities and amenities, such as clean restrooms, picnic areas, fish cleaning stations, and parking facilities.

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In the third activity, we asked participants to rank their top five most important elements to them (using the same list from before).



The environmental quality of fishing areas was ranked most important (58% total importance mentions) while the availability of fish species you like to catch in your preferred fishing spots was ranked second most important (50% total importance mentions). The existing recreational fishing regulations in your area; the effectiveness of fishery management practices in maintaining healthy fish populations, and the number of other fishers in the fishing spots where you like to fish tied for third most important (42% per statement total importance mentions).

Less important to participants was the ease of access you have to fishing information and guidelines provided by NT Fisheries (nobody mentioned this in their top five importance); followed up the ease of communicating with NT Fisheries, the opportunity to be involved in the decision-making process regarding recreational fishing regulations and the range of fish species available to catch (8% of total importance mentions).

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The following table shows the results in a satisfaction by importance grid, which is grouped broadly by high, medium and low satisfaction, versus high, medium and low importance.

Note: the work to be done in Phase 2 of the research project will use a more sophisticated method of analysis to understand the quantitative results. The table below maps where fishing expectation (importance) is meeting experience (satisfaction), and where it is not (improvement is needed when importance is high, but satisfaction is low).

	High Importance	Medium Importance	Low Importance
High Satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The existing recreational fishing regulations in your area</li> <li>- The current size and bag limits imposed on various fish species you like to catch</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The number of fish you are able to catch in a single fishing trip</li> <li>- The range of fish species available for you to catch</li> </ul>	None
Medium Satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The environmental quality of fishing areas, including water clarity, habitat health, and overall aesthetics</li> <li>- The availability of fish species you like to catch in your preferred fishing spots</li> <li>- The accessibility and infrastructure provided for fishing in the NT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The ease of access to your favourite fishing spots</li> <li>- The extent to which current recreational fishing harvest strategies promote sustainable fishing practices</li> <li>- Fishing regulations that are clear and easy to understand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The ease of communicating with NT Fisheries</li> <li>- The ease of access you have to fishing information and guidelines provided by NT Fisheries</li> </ul>
Low Satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The number of other fishers in the fishing spots where you like to fish</li> <li>- The effectiveness of fishery management practices in maintaining healthy fish populations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Availability of facilities and amenities, such as clean restrooms, picnic areas, fish cleaning stations, and parking facilities</li> <li>- The availability of large/trophy sized fish that you like to catch</li> <li>- The enforcement of fishing regulations to protect fish populations and their habitats</li> <li>- The opportunity you have for your opinions to be considered in the development of fishing harvest strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The opportunity you have to be involved in the decision-making process regarding recreational fishing regulations</li> </ul>

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### 5. Overall Fishing Satisfaction (NT in general)

In the final exercise, participants were asked to rate their current satisfaction level with recreational fishing in the NT. Ratings varied among participants, ranging from 5-10 on a scale of 1 to 10.

The mean score for all participants was 7.25/10. This was slightly higher for avids at 7.50 compared with casuals at 7.00.

Q14. Overall satisfied are you with recreational fishing in the NT			
	Total	Casual Fisher Focus Group	Avid Fisher Focus Group
Base	12	6	6
1 - Very unsatisfied (1)	0%	0%	0%
2 (2)	0%	0%	0%
3 (3)	0%	0%	0%
4 (4)	0%	0%	0%
5 (5)	8%	0%	17%
6 (6)	17%	17%	17%
7 (7)	33%	67%	0%
8 (8)	25%	17%	33%
9 (9)	17%	0%	33%
10 - Very satisfied (10)	0%	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Mean	7.25	7.00	7.50

When asked for reasons why participants rated their satisfaction that way, accessibility to fishing, scenery and the natural environment were among the top reasons for feeling satisfied. Overcrowding, restrictions to areas and wanting more policing of regulations were reasons for not rating satisfaction as high.

Q15. Why did you rate your satisfaction that way?
Able to fish in amazing places, but some restrictions to some areas/waterways, and hard to get permits. Need better policing of regulations requirements.
Access
Catching, the scenery and untouched of most waterways
Fishing is a main reason why I live in the Northern Territory. It is first class but needs to be protected
Guaranteed to catch something
Just catch a feed, don't go to native areas, not interested
Policing the regulations needs to be looked at
Popularity of NT fishing makes the waters exhausted of the desired fish of queenies, barra and jewies.
Roads and access is reasonable enough and when it's not it keeps the crowds away, sometimes better
The natural environment is exceptional and most of the facilities around Darwin are good
The uncertainty of access and the future of our lifestyle removes so much joy and satisfaction
Things are getting there but need a little more direction

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When asked for ways to improve satisfaction with fishing in the NT, participants mostly wanted better management of fisheries sustainability, boat ramp infrastructure upgrades and certainty about the future re access to various waterways.

Q16. Ways to improve satisfaction
Better understanding of fisheries size and sustainability, could we close a river or reef for a period of time to restock. Fish nurseries to release fish to replenish stocks.
Boat ramps need improvement
Boat ramps need improvement, better lighting, toilets
Certainty on the future
Licensing charges to pay for restocking and replenishing fish stocks - both boat licenses and fishing licenses
More focus and funding to recreational sector. Education of general public for good fishing practices. Environment enforcement - Artificial reefs
Not close off any more spots, and improve management
Open up more waterways, access to more land
Restocking, access to fishing stocks
Security and cleaning/rubbish

## 6. Other Comments

During the discussion about overall satisfaction with fishing in the NT, a variety of other comments and observations were recorded. The following contains example quotes from each of the groups.

### Group 1 – Casuals

- Fisheries are good, I don't want to spend big money on a boat – as a young person you want to catch a fish and bring them home.*
- I don't know what fisheries do. They need the data. Fishery is not fishing the way it used to. I think they are trying their hardest. Fisheries are healthy, but not as healthy as they could be.*
- Terri [The Territory] is still a good place. The availability to go anywhere in the territory is quite difficult. Lorella springs isn't open this year, and it is a business. It has rivers, different types of fish. Went there just before it closed. 20 queenies, wife was having a ball learning how to fish. Political reasons, personal gripe with the gov. improve access.*
- It feels like the amount of fish you catch has decreased compared with 15 years ago.*
- There needs to be an upper limit on the catchment size. A bandwidth. Keep it decent. 55-80 is the best range.*

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- *The practices [in terms of rules and regulations] in place are great. How they police it needs to be looked at they [other fishers] will just take everything home.*
- *Makes sense to have restrictions so you don't limit fishing for everyone.*
- *It is essential to have bag limits etc.*
- *Professional fishing involves a net across the river mouth. Commercial goes in and it's just pure carnage, it's not equal.*
- *How much fish can you eat? I prefer to eat it fresh rather than in a freezer. If it is once or twice a month... I think the numbers are quite reasonable [re bag limits].*
- *It's not well policed.*
- *People being dishonest, catching lots of fish – we don't have restrictions on crabs, there are no rules / checking.*
- *Restrictions are there for political reasons not for fishing reasons. Fishing people would be much happier if it was for fishing reasons not political reasons. Beaches and riverfronts have always been for everybody. Someone can't own part of the river. It is a huge argument area. Restriction of waterways really does irk me. I can go far enough afield. The permit system is fine, but it's not even policed. Cancelled during Covid, then this was cancelled and then it was changed again. Rules and regulations are not well thought out. They are confused.*
- *NT doesn't have licences... the only place in Australia I know people will be super opposed. It is a very good source of income – I always buy one in Vic, don't necessarily use it.*
- *I don't venture out to the inaccessible areas where you are likely to require permits and stuff. I don't really know where you can and can't go. I am close proximity, don't need to worry about getting permits land councils – I don't want to go to the landowners' areas. I just want to catch a bit of feed. I have always loved fresh fish.*
- *They [the fish] are not as big and not as many, having to go further afield – Darwin harbour used to be so easy to catch a feed. Half a mile off the boat, click a line into the reef, coral trout, 10 mins and back on the BBQ. The problem with Darwin is that it's being well over fished.*
- *I'm sure the fish quantities are reducing. You have to work for it, right time right place. It's not like it used to be when I got up here 10 years ago. Duck out for lunch time to catch a feed – can't do it anymore. Fish aren't swimming up there anymore...*
- *For an occasional fisher, I can go out there, guaranteed to catch something. The average tourists, they can come up here and have a good time.*

### Group 2 – Avids

- *When it's on it's on, being in the right spot at the right time – clear water, offshore, at a certain time of the year...it's just great.*
- *Boat ramps are mostly good. Lighting and toilets could be improved. Shady camp there is no lighting at night.*

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- *People have no shame; they will run right beside you. There are sometimes up to 300 boats on the water. Not all of them know what they are doing.*
- *You have to go a long way to find a barra these days. Between commercial, and Finnis being properly closed and policed, I just don't think it's fair. I don't think they check boats enough. A lot of people take more than what they should.*
- *They bought every commercial fishing licence back in Sydney and the fishing got better in 5 years.*
- *I like the environment here. Most of the places you go to are clean and tidy. You don't find too much rubbish around. When you have to park more than 20 mins away, you are never sure what you are going to come back to. Places we fish are clean, but the carparks are filthy, there are broken bottles. When you bring visitors or family, it's not a good look.*
- *There is pretty good access, it's gorgeous, everywhere you go there is nature. You can still catch fish. You work hard for it you can get fish.*
- *80% has been deemed under native title and is subject to claims for ownership, and subject to each individual landowner deciding whether or not to allow access. There have been negotiations with gov with limited other stakeholder consultation, but it's tough. Finnish river it's the biggest one. People still fish there even though you are not supposed to.*
- 
- *If you spend the money, there are opportunities... [but I would] like to open up the waterways and get access to the land.*
- *Condition of some of the roads, and costs [are not good].*
- *Enjoying exploring more areas. It's [The Daly] a very special river, challenging, it costs a lot of people a lot of money. But we go because it's wild and it's dangerous.*
- *It's a challenge that's everywhere. The biggest challenge is land rights and access, it's so uncertain. We are losing more and more waterways. It's a huge industry and our accessibility.*
- *People still break the rules because there is no enforcement.*
- *[Technology] is a new advancement that has flipped the industry on its head. The trawlers are outnumbered by the livescopers at Shady Camp. It's addictive because you are watching it right there and can see a 1.2m – but you have three boats watching it at the same time and not being aware of their surroundings (like people walking around with their faces glued to their iPhones and unaware of their surroundings). But you have to adapt with technology – you need it now because otherwise it could be hours that you would be out there dropping a line and getting nothing.*
- *You will see the photos and think there is a lot of fish, but we don't know if that's just because we are getting better at finding them. Fish numbers seem to have improved. They took the netting out. But the size was down. 1.2m barra are rare now.*
- *It is a first-class fishery. There is a lot of cloud over it all with the land rights issues, the overcrowding and so on. But I can't move away, it's just too special. It needs to be protected. [I am a] glass half full. I won't let it drag me down – we funding to the rec sector to give its true just. It is worth so much more than what the government recognises.*

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- *Fisheries have royally messed up – other states are doing things, like building reefs, educating kids, charging licence fees... We need better funding, especially in light of the environmental issues we are / will be facing in the future. We need a better management team.*
- *It's not regulated enough in terms of the commercial aspect – it needs to be considered particularly in light of the access restrictions, which systems are commercially fished, and which aren't if access is going to continue to be a problem. You are putting pressure on systems which are being netted.*
- *Uncertainty around the access. There is a lot of work to be done to improve it. There is a lot of work to be done to unite the parties. There is too much focus on the commercial and economic benefit as opposed to the social and emotional benefit. That has not been a big enough part of the conversation about access. Research that shows that people who go out into the environment respect it and love it. It's really disappointing that we are at a point in our lives, access for me. I fished the Finnis river growing up and I can't do that with my son, it breaks my heart.*
- *I don't think fishing licences are a bad thing. As a whole, the money has to come from somewhere. It should come from us.*

## 7. Summary

This report has documented the top line outcomes of the two focus groups with casual and recreational fishers in the NT. Held on August 22, 2023, the focus group discussions explored fishing preferences and experiences as well as overall satisfaction with fishing in the NT, and fishing for barramundi more specifically. The focus groups' objective was to inform the development of a questionnaire for a forthcoming survey targeting recreational fishers, focusing on the Barramundi fishery.

Key insights from the focus group discussions has indicatively shown that the number of fishers in the fishing spots where you like to fish and the effectiveness of fishery management principles in maintaining healthy fish populations are among the most important but least satisfied elements related to barramundi fishing to NT fishers.

Other important elements, with medium to low levels of satisfaction include the environmental quality of fishing areas, including water clarity, habitat health, and overall aesthetics; the availability of fish species you like to catch in your preferred fishing spots; and the accessibility and infrastructure provided for fishing in the NT.

Important elements with high levels of satisfaction include the existing recreational fishing regulations in your area and the current size and bag limits imposed.

Overall satisfaction with fishing for the focus group participants in the NT is 7.25/10.



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### **8. Conclusion**

The recreational fishing discussions provided a good understanding of the preferences, experiences, and satisfaction with NT recreational fishing and barramundi fishing in particular. The insights provide valuable information in terms of how we might shape the longer questionnaire and design the Max-Diff analysis so that it reflects and captures the specificities of the Barramundi fishery.