Mako sharks’ winter habits

Mako sharks off south-eastern Australia have made their usual seasonal showings off central and southern NSW during winter and early spring, and off the Victorian coast over summer.

Three mako, originally tagged near the Brown Mountain seamount directly east of Sydney in August and September, were all recaptured in Victorian waters with its new marine parks. The record distance travelled for a mako tagged under the DPI program currently stands at 2777 nautical miles. This individual was tagged off NSW and recaptured off the Philippines after a shade under 12 years – a record time at liberty. The NSW DPI Game Fish Tagging Program issues tags to individuals fishing clubs using funds from the NSW Recreational Fishing Trust. If you would like to get involved in the program, please phone (02) 9741 4712 or email: gametagging@dpi.nsw.gov.au

The DPI tagging program has revealed that mako sharks can travel great distances, with a number of fish being recaptured in tropical waters after being tagged in the more temperate waters of NSW, Tasmania and Victoria. However, there also appears to be some ‘site fidelity’ with fish being recaptured in a location similar to where they were first tagged, even after a lengthy time at liberty.

Australia’s marine park update

The Keep Australia Fishing (KAF) organisation, assisted by members of the Australian Fishing Trade Association (AFTA), has been running a national ‘Don’t Lock Us Out’ campaign to lobby Australia’s Federal Government to reverse its decision to lock anglers out of huge tracts of Commonwealth waters with its new marine parks. The KAF says the campaign has been a huge success, resulting in more than 35,000 submissions sent to the Federal Government, and more than 30,000 ONE’s were made to Tony Burke, the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, and his colleagues telling them “Don’t lock us out”.

However, the campaign is not over and the Government is still determined to implement their marine park plans, which will see Australia’s recreational anglers locked out of 1.3 million square kilometres of seafood. Of particular concern are the marine reserves in the Coral Sea, Cairns local, Capt Daniel McCarthy, a well-known charter skipper and President of the Cairns Professional Game Fishing Association has battled with politicians and Green groups over this issue for years and has now nominated to sell as a senator a national “Don’t Lock Us Out” campaign to lobby Australia’s Federal Government to reverse its decision to lock anglers out of huge tracts of Commonwealth waters with its new marine parks.

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