

Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Council (RFNSW)



Chair's Summary (Meeting 22)

The 22nd meeting of RFNSW was held on 23 November 2021 at the Fullerton Hotel, Sydney. The Council welcomed the Hon. Adam Marshall, Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW and the Deputy Director General, DPI Fisheries, to the meeting. Members greatly appreciated the opportunity to discuss several recreational fishing priorities with the Minister. The key outcomes from the meeting are summarised below.

Session with the Hon. Adam Marshall, Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW

The Minister briefed Council on community consultation regarding the Draft Management Plan for the NSW Mainland Marine Park Network (2021-2031), developed to guide management of the State's five existing mainland marine parks. RFNSW emphasised that it was keen to see low-impact fishing activities included in certain marine park areas as part of the development of new park management plans.

The Minister also advised that NSW has embarked on a process of developing tailored Harvest Strategies for key fisheries, in direct partnership with commercial, recreational and Aboriginal fishers. Harvest Strategies will provide all sectors with greater certainty and transparency in fisheries management decisions. RFNSW highlighted prioritisation of Snapper and Kingfish for harvest strategy development because both species are considered to be of significant importance to the recreational and commercial sectors, and because the best fisheries management decision-making frameworks need to be in place for these species.

Members informed the Minister about a key RFNSW initiative involving development of a strategy to drive recreational fishing forward. This strategy includes a range of new initiatives to boost recreational fishing over the next 10 years. The Minister stated that he looked forward to receiving and considering the draft strategy.

DPI Fisheries Deputy Director General update

RFNSW received an update from Mr Sean Sloan on various issues, including the proposed release of the inaugural Recreational Fishing Trust Annual Report 2020/21, the drafting of the Fisheries Co-management Policy, the DPI response to QX detection in oysters in Port Stephens and DPI's input into the draft National Fisheries Plan.

Research priority areas for Kingfish and Snapper

Members discussed priority research areas and knowledge gaps for Snapper and Kingfish, including the need to identify spawning areas and investigate the use of 'close kin' genetic techniques to enable fishery-independent stock assessments. Council recommended development of an East Coast multi-jurisdictional research project proposal, covering key knowledge gaps for Kingfish (and then other key species such as Snapper). This project should also include investigation of potential funding sources at both the Commonwealth and State levels.

Inland Fisheries Compliance update

DPI provided an update on local compliance activities in the inland, and advised that a recent compliance operation involved confiscation of a significant number of illegal fish traps in western NSW. DPI also advised that a Fisheries Officer recruitment process is nearing completion, and that it was trialling temporary inland mobile squads (TIMS) to respond to illegal fishing hotspots and issues. DPI reported that initial trials with TIMS have worked well and will be continued into the new year.

Recreational Fishing Trust expenditure

Council reviewed advice from the Recreational Fishing Trust Expenditure Committee regarding an 'out of session' Saltwater application made to the Recreational Fishing Trust. Council endorsed the advice provided by the Saltwater Expenditure Committee and will now pass this advice on to the Minister for consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Johann Bell', is positioned above the printed name of the Chair.

Professor Johann Bell (Chair)