

## NSW Government initial response to the Economic analysis and Social and Economic monitoring following the NSW Commercial Fisheries Business Adjustment Program

The NSW Government supports or supports in principle all four of the recommendations of the Economic analysis & Social and Economic monitoring following the NSW Commercial Fisheries Business Adjustment Program (BAP).

| Recommendation  | NSW Government Response   |
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| <p><b>Establish a social and economic monitoring framework for NSW commercial fisheries as a matter of high priority and urgency</b></p>  | <p><b>Supported</b></p> <p>The NSW Government will establish a social and economic monitoring framework for NSW fisheries as a matter of high priority.</p> <p>The Department of Primary Industries has initiated the process to engage an independent expert to establish ongoing social and economic indicator monitoring for NSW's commercial fisheries. DPI will consult with the Commercial Fishing NSW Advisory Council on this development. This will ensure that appropriate social and economic indicators are identified, monitored, reviewed if necessary and acted upon appropriately.</p>  |
| <p><b>Investigate further whether the levels of commercial debt incurred as a result of the BAP are damaging industry viability, and if so, consider interventions to alleviate that debt</b></p> | <p><b>Supported in principle</b></p> <p>The establishment of a social and economic monitoring framework will enable the ongoing monitoring of industry viability. The NSW Government encourages the NSW commercial fishing industry to participate in the monitoring of economic and social indicators to ensure that accurate data can be collected.</p> <p>The NSW Government provided significant and substantial financial assistance to the commercial fishing industry throughout the Commercial Fisheries Business Adjustment Program.</p> <p>This assistance included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A subsidised share trading market that provided an opportunity for fishers to buy or sell shares at a subsidised price ahead of new management arrangements;</li> <li>• Low interest rate loans for the purchase of a fishing business and/or shares;</li> <li>• Fishing business buyouts for fishers who wished to transfer all their shares and retire a fishing business;</li> </ul> |

- Grants for business advice and help with the subsidised share trading market;
- Grants for retraining assistance;
- Grants for fishing Co-operatives for professional advice;
- Waiver of boat licensing, share transfer and mortgage registration fees;
- Capping commercial fisheries management fees;
- Rent relief for fishing co-operatives;
- The Seafood Innovation Fund that provides low interest rate loans of up to \$500,000 to help the commercial fishing industry to invest in assets and infrastructure that helps ensure the long-term viability of their businesses. The application process for this scheme is being reviewed to make it more user friendly and easier for fishers to apply to the scheme;
- The Supporting Seafood Futures grants program that has supported a wide range of industry initiatives to better promote and raise awareness of NSW seafood.

The NSW Government has continued to support the commercial fishing industry, especially in light of industry disruption from COVID-19, by waiving management charges and licence fees for 12 months and providing further rent relief for fishing co-operatives located on Crown land.

The NSW Government will continue to support the commercial fishing industry by implementing the following initiatives:

- Supporting Seafood Futures and Seafood Innovation Funding programs to promote innovative and viable commercial fishing and aquaculture industries.
- Establish a formal partnership agreement with the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation to fund NSW seafood product innovation and development.
- Establish a formal partnership agreement with the NSW Seafood Industry Council to support NSW seafood industry promotion and marketing and improved community support and social license in fisheries.
- Digital Transformation Program to modernise the online catch reporting system, remove unnecessary reporting requirements and supply more accurate real-time information.
- Review of Fish Receiver requirements to simplify the regulatory and administrative environment for fish records and fish receivers.

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|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commercial Fisheries Business Efficiency Program to identify rules that can be amended or removed to improve operational efficiency and reduce unnecessary red tape for commercial fishers.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Consider instituting protections from changes to resource access in commercial fisheries management</b></p> | <p><b>Supported in principle</b></p> <p>The NSW Government will provide fishers with greater certainty and transparency in fisheries management decisions, through the development of tailored harvest strategies in direct partnership with commercial, recreational and Aboriginal fishers.</p> <p>The NSW Government is implementing harvest strategies to provide an increased level of certainty and transparency for all fisheries stakeholders in relation to how decisions are made in fisheries management. Harvest strategies will integrate the ecological, social and economic dimensions of fisheries management into a single framework for decision making.</p> <p>An overarching framework to promote further co-management of fisheries in NSW will also be developed.</p> |
| <p><b>Investigate more effective ways of doing consultation and policy development</b></p>                        | <p><b>Supported in principle</b></p> <p>The NSW Government is developing an overarching framework to promote further co-management of fisheries in NSW. In developing a Co-management Policy DPI will work closely with the various fishing sectors to improve governance, consultation and communication between Government and fishing stakeholders and to empower greater stakeholder involvement.</p> <p>The NSW Government will continue to support Aboriginal commercial fishers and will work with the Aboriginal Fishing Advisory Council, Ministerial Fisheries Advisory Council and Commercial Fishing NSW Advisory Council to address the perceptions mentioned in the report.</p>   |