



Monash Avenue, Tuross Head, NSW 2537 Phone: 02-44738186
Email: turossheadfishingclub@bigpond.com

Department of Primary Industries

27 March 2018

Re : Public Consultation Paper – Transitioning the NSW Southern Fish Trawl Restricted Fishing to Commonwealth Management

Dear Sir/Madam,

Members of the Tuross Head Fishing Club, which has in excess of 100 members, have reviewed the Public Consultation Paper relating to Transitioning the NSW Southern Fish Trawl Restricted Fishery to Commonwealth management and make the following observations:

- The document fails to recognise the significant economic and social impacts of recreational fishing. Any commercial fishing proposal that reduces size limits on fish species and improves security will have a detriment impact on all the benefits associated with recreational fishing.
- Improving data collection is acknowledged and should be a priority
- A process should be developed that addresses actions that will occur if disturbing data is captured and subsequently analysed. For example, if protected species are being caught or there is a large percentage of bycatch, what actions will be implemented to address?
- The consultation paper mentions “sustainable” fishing frequently however members question the practicality of commercial fishing within the specified zone being sustainable at all
- Members believe it is important to learn from over fishing exploitation both within Australia and overseas. Perhaps there should be comment about mis-management of fishing stocks in Australia?
- Observations of fishing club members suggests that in excess of 75% of fish caught outside are returned to the ocean due to size limits, bag limits, personable choice, edible quality of the fish and fishing restrictions. Members are concerned at the huge wastage associated with commercial fishing. What percentage do commercial fishing return, alive ?
- With improved data collection there should be a reporting process implemented
- Members believe that there should be NIL commercial fishing within 3 nautical miles of the NSW coastline
- Tuross Head is a small coastal village 320km south of Sydney and 200km east of Canberra. Tourism is the main industry in this region. Sustainable recreational fishing and pristine environmental factors are major reasons for attracting tourists and also residents. Watching trawlers pillage our shoreline is difficult for many to comprehend. We appreciate that commercial fishing is a proud industry that generates employment, investment, quality products etc. However, we believe that the 3 nautical mile zone should be zoned non-commercial fishing.

- We believe bureaucrats need to conceptualise the impact commercial fishing will have now and in the future. Is fishing within 3 nautical miles sustainable? When will the benefits of recreational fishing be truly recognised? Will bureaucrats only act when fish stocks are severely depleted? Who is mindful of future generations and the attraction of fishing as a healthy, sustainable recreational activity? Generations of fisho's have learnt fishing and social skills from family and friends. There has been many a story about the pride in catching a "big one" or an unusual species. Hopefully these stories will continue in an era of increasing investment returns, aggressive fishing, agenda's and politics.

Regards
Bruce Kennedy
Secretary
Ph 0497 639 500