

Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Council (RFNSW)



Chair's Summary (Meeting 20)

The 20th meeting of RFNSW was held at the Branksome Hotel, Sydney on 12 May 2021. It was a highly productive meeting with members providing advice on various recreational fishing matters. Key outcomes from discussions of agenda items are given below.

Update from the Deputy Director General, DPI Fisheries and Game Licensing

RFNSW received an informative update from Mr Sean Sloan on a number of projects and work priorities being undertaken by the Department, including updates on the implementation of a Harvest Strategy framework in NSW, the marine park management planning process currently underway across the five mainland marine parks, and the implementation of the Fish Passage Strategy.

Recreational Fishing Trust expenditure

Council reviewed advice from the Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee regarding two applications from the Recreational Fishing Trust. Council endorsed the advice provided by the Expenditure Committee and will now pass this advice on to the Minister for consideration.

Dusky Flathead

RFNSW received correspondence from recreational fishers relating to concerns about the quality of recreational fishing opportunities for Dusky Flathead. Council restated its position on this species, which includes a reduction in the bag limit from 10 to 5 and the introduction of a slot size limit of 36 – 70cm.

Harvest Strategies

DPI provided an update on the implementation of Harvest Strategies in NSW, including the progress being made by the Trawl Whiting and Lobster Harvest Strategy Working Groups. Members welcomed the news about the establishment of the Mulloway Harvest Strategy Working Group and advertisement of an expression of interest for membership of the Group. It was also noted that Working Groups for the Spanner Crab and Abalone fisheries were currently being established.

Proposed Fisheries and Aquaculture regulation amendments

DPI advised that the community consultation period on a range of proposals to amend fisheries and aquaculture regulations had now closed. Council supported the proposed regulatory amendments relating to recreational and charter fishing.

Fish Screening update

DPI updated Council on the roll out of fish-screening technology in NSW. RFNSW members were pleased to hear about the excellent progress being made with the introduction and uptake of this technology by some key irrigators in the Murray Darling Basin. Council once again strongly highlighted the importance of fish screening to achieve better native fish outcomes for recreational fishers and complementary technology benefits for irrigators. RFNSW members acknowledged the achievements of DPI in this area and encouraged the Department to continue working closely with the irrigation sector to extend the benefits of fish-screening technology across NSW.

DPI presentation on FishGen Research

Members welcomed a presentation by DPI on tracing stocked fish to assist with maintaining the genetic integrity of wild fish stocks and improved broodfish management. Members expressed support for this exciting project and invited DPI to provide details of the funding needed to scale-up this work, and to undertake a broader assessment of the management of fish stocking.

Out-of-Session meeting

Council also held an out-of-session meeting on 9 June 2021 to consider various issues, including a pathway for progressing its position on Snapper and Kingfish. Council concluded that a further update on the stock status of both species by DPI would be needed at its next meeting to finalise recommendations to the Minister. Council also discussed the proposed use of Bromadiolone to control mice and the flow-on impacts on native fish (and wildlife in general). RFNSW requested that the Chair write to the Minister to express its deep concerns about the proposed use of Bromadiolone.

Professor Johann Bell (Chair)