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[Fishing Stories](#)

Coral Sea – No Consultation and No Debate. Now What?



'Senator The Hon Ron Boswell, Nationals - keen boatie and fisherman.'

Marine Queensland has expressed dismay at the Government response to Senator Boswell's disallowance motion on the Coral Sea Conservation Zone in the Senate..

Marine Queensland General Manager, Don Jones said: 'First we find the declaration of the Coral Sea Conservation Zone

without any consultation with industry or the local communities. Now we find the Government and the Greens join forces in the Senate to gag any debate on this important motion.'

The motion was lost with a vote of 31 in favour of the motion and 31 against the motion. Senator Xenophon sided with the Government and the Greens to defeat the motion. Not one Labour Senator spoke on the motion.

'The aim of moving the disallowance in the Senate was to give Queenslanders the opportunity to look at the whole process and its ramifications rationally rather than be subjected to the political ram raid that seems to have dominated the process so far,' continued Jones. 'Unfortunately the gagging of all debate continues the pattern of total disregard for Queensland communities and the industry.'

Minister Garrett announced the introduction of the Heritage Park on the 14th May with no public consultation and with little consideration for the impact it would have on regional communities or industry. To further demonstrate his disregard for the opinions of the affected regional communities he chose to make the announcement at the Sydney Aquarium – far away from those the decision would directly impact.

'By taking this action, it sends a very clear message to local communities in Queensland,' Jones said. 'It leaves Industry with very little confidence in the Bio-regional Planning Process when the integrity of the process is compromised in such a significant manner.'

The future of the Bio-regional Planning Process does not bode well for industry or local communities given the approach of Government to date.

'What confidence can industry and local communities have in the outcomes of this process for the environment and the subsequent management regimes?' said Jones.

Recreational fishers, the commercial and charter fishing industry along with many other sectors of the public are sick and tired of Government's policy of restricting activities and access as one of the few methods of achieving environmental protection.

'In this day and age, you would expect a much more sophisticated approach to community engagement and environmental protection.' He said.

'It is clear Government is not interested in the views of the local community' said Jones, 'Given they are not interested, we intend to lead the local community consultation process ourselves to gauge the true views of industry and the local community,' said Jones. 'Unfortunately such a flawed process will now only result in polarised views in the community. This is a very poor result for industry, community and the environment.'

More at www.marineqld.com.au

www.powerboat-world.com/Coral-Sea---No-Consultation-and-No-Debate.-...

☐ Dry weather could make prawns scarce

Monday, 23 November 2009 11:09 AM

Dry weather could make prawns scarce

Friday, 20/11/2009

A Queensland prawn trawler operator warns if hot and dry conditions remain, as predicted, prawns could be in short supply .

Stephen Murphy, from Hervey Bay, says the state needs good run-off rain to sure up prawn catches.

He says come Christmas and early next year, the Aussie favourite could be scarce.

"It's a bit of a worry," he says.

"A dry summer generally means well you haven't got the rains to flush the prawns out of the estuaries and the rivers, which a lot of prawns use as nurseries as in their juvenile period."

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/200911/s2748449.htm>

☐ Wetlands flooding may be vital to fishery

Monday, 23 November 2009 11:09 AM

Wetlands flooding may be vital to fishery

Posted Fri Nov 20, 2009 2:26pm AEDT

- **Map:** [Karumba 4891](#)

Researchers believe the flooding of wetlands may be as important as nutrients in sustaining the Gulf of Carpentaria fishery.

The researchers, from Tropical Rivers and Coastal Knowledge, say record flooding this year presented a one in 50 year opportunity to study the effects of flood run-off in the region.

Associate professor Michelle Burford says the flooding of wetlands such as salt pans greatly increased the habitat and food source for juvenile fish and prawns.

Ms Burford says it is hoped the ongoing study will help gauge the impact of dams and other floodwater conservation projects on the fishery.

"That water that flows out to the sea isn't actually wasted it's actually promoting the productivity of the estuary and ultimately we want to know if you start taking water out for other purposes are we going to see a reduction in the prawn catch, are people's livelihoods going to be affected?" she said

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/20/2748893.htm>

☐ Marine parks spark overfishing fears

Monday, 23 November 2009 11:08 AM

Marine parks spark overfishing fears

Posted Fri Nov 20, 2009 10:02am AEDT

- **Map:** [Kiama 2533](#)

The New South Wales Opposition says marine parks are damaging the environment rather than protecting fish stocks.

The Opposition's primary industries spokesman, Duncan Gay, addressed about 80 fishermen at a forum in Kiama this week.

Mr Gay says he heard concerns from both recreational and commercial fishermen about the impacts of marine parks.

He says forcing fishermen out of the parks and into more concentrated areas will lead to overfishing.

"We are certainly firmly opposed to new marine parks at this stage, we believe there should be a moratorium on the creation of new marine parks and we believe sanctuary zones within marine parks should be based on real science," he said.

The Opposition is also concerned fishermen are receiving hefty fines for fishing in marine parks which are not clearly marked.

Mr Gay says the fishermen fear being caught in marine parks that do not have clearly visible boundaries.

He says there is no tolerance for people who inadvertently break the law.

"Many of these people have faced heavy fines and have gained a criminal record, yet there is no proper marking, buoys that are meant to be there are missing, markers can't be seen from the land, there isn't proper signage and even when you get your fishing licence there isn't an indication where the no-take zones are," he said

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/20/2748409.htm>

☐ Call for complete lobster closure callous

Monday, 23 November 2009 11:05 AM

Call for complete lobster closure callous

19 Nov, 2009 02:32 PM

A call for the WA rock lobster fishery to be closed for the foreseeable future is an outrageous and naive

attack by the Conservation Council and Wilderness Society on the livelihoods of fishermen. Agricultural Region MLC Brian Ellis said the two conservation groups seemed to be more interested in protecting lobsters than families, and appeared to lack a practical understanding of the industry.

Mr Ellis's electorate includes fishing ports such as Lancelin, Cervantes, Geraldton, Kalbarri, Port Dennison and Dongara.

Mr Ellis is concerned that the two conservation groups appear to be basing their argument solely on the basis of the puerulus count without taking into consideration other management measures.

"The fact that Greens leader Giz Watson supported the Fish Resources Management Bill without argument in the Parliament last week suggests that not all conservationists hold the extreme views of the Conservation Council and Wilderness Society," Mr Ellis said.

"It suggests to me that they are failing to take the whole management practice into account.

"The government is optimistic that the puerulus count is beginning to slowly increase, but has nevertheless taken a precautionary approach to sustaining the fishery.

"The Minister has reduced the catch to 5,500 tonnes for this year and the two following years, even though the sustainable catch for this year is estimated to be 6,500 tonnes.

"In the meantime, research is continuing into the effect of ocean currents and wind patterns on puerulus settlement to determine whether – as some fishermen believe – they may be settling further offshore, away from the collectors."

Dave Thompson from Indian Ocean Rock Lobsters in Cervantes said the government needed to look at the take of recreational fishers.

"It saddens me that we can be attacked by these organisation who obviously have no understanding of the industry, when we were the first industry to be accredited with the worldwide Marine Stewardship Council," he said.

"They have not talked to us, they have just come out and made this statement.

"The industry has undergone massive rationalization, which was needed, but the government still fails to recognise that the amateur fisherman are a lot bigger concern for our juvenile stock.

"Commercial fishers have had massive cut backs, but the amateurs have not been restricted.

"It has been stated that amateur fishers only take about five per cent of the stock, but it is much higher than that.

"The restrictions placed on a commercial fishery is unfair compared to the amateur having no restriction at all and can pull pots any day of the week.

"The number of juvenile stock being targeted and unchecked, would be closer to 70 per cent."

A major issue at the recent worldwide Marine Stewardship Council's annual audit of the WA lobster fishery was the management and research response to address low settlements.

Mr Ellis said the Fisheries Department continued to be internationally accountable for its management practices.

He said that, if it is good enough for a world-recognised sustainability body to take a broad management approach, local conservation groups should at least wait for the outcome before calling for a century-old industry to be abandoned on the basis of one factor in the process.

The MSC Auditor has requested clarification on what the effort reduction measures are estimated to yield in breeding stock terms over the next five years.

The auditor is also likely to request an independent, transparent and robust risk assessment to determine whether the poor settlements are breeding-stock induced.

Mr Ellis said the Conservation Council and Wilderness Society had jumped the gun and were shooting down the livelihoods of about 400 families.

Mr Ellis said it was impractical and heartless to expect fishermen to dispose of multi-million dollar assets at sale prices – and then find the money to start up again in a few years.

"It is better for fishermen to ride out a few rough waves over the next few years on a smaller catch until the full picture is known than to send their livelihood to the bottom of the ocean before the research is complete," he said

www.centraladvocate.com.au/news/local/news/general/call-for-complet...

☒ Lobster fine welcomed

Monday, 23 November 2009 11:05 AM

Lobster fine welcomed

Posted Thu Nov 19, 2009 1:13pm AEDT



Dobney sold lobsters on the black market. (Ros Thomas)

- **Map:** [Geraldton 6530](#)

The WA Fisheries Department has welcomed the \$36,000 fine handed to a Mid-West fishermen for selling rock lobster on the black market.

39-year-old Garth Dobney was caught in March delivering more than 200 western rock lobster to a Perth hotel.

Yesterday, the Perth Magistrates Court heard Dobney sold the lobsters to the Manager of the hotel for about \$1,500.

Fisheries Compliance Manager John Looby says it is a serious breach of the Fisheries Act.

"Well I think the disappointing thing was that most commercial rock lobster fishermen we know are very honest, hard working people who are suffering hard times and it is very disappointing that a commercial fishermen making his living out of this, would then engage in such activity," he said

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/19/2747479.htm>

☒ First trip for Spencer Gulf prawn fishers

Monday, 23 November 2009 11:01 AM

First trip for Spencer Gulf prawn fishers

SOPHIE WANDEL
19 Nov, 2009 12:30 AM



LOADING UP: Engineer Steven Davies, deckhand Lincoln Ford (middle) and skipper Jack Davies (far back) loading stores onto the Lunar Sea in preparation for the first prawn fishing trip of the season. The Lunar Sea is one of 39 boats in the fleet that headed out on Tuesday night.



LOADING UP: Engineer Steven Davies (front) and at back skipper Jack Davies (left) and deckhand Lincoln Ford loading stores onto the Lunar Sea in preparation for the first prawn fishing trip of the season. The Lunar Sea is one of 39 boats in the fleet that headed out on Tuesday night.



LOADING UP: Engineer Steven Davies, deckhand Lincoln Ford (middle) and skipper Jack Davies (far back) loading stores onto the Lunar Sea in preparation for the first prawn fishing trip of the season. The Lunar Sea is one of 39 boats in the fleet that headed out on Tuesday night.



LOADING UP: Engineer Steven Davies, skipper Jack Davies and deckhand Lincoln Ford loading stores onto the Lunar Sea in preparation for the first prawn fishing trip of the season. The Lunar Sea is one of 39 boats in the fleet that headed out on Tuesday night.

PRAWN fishers left the Port Lincoln marina on Tuesday night for their first fishing trip of the 2009/10 season.

The Spencer Gulf prawn fleet of 39 vessels is hoping for a good season opener, which would see plenty of local wild caught prawns available for Christmas lunches.

Nine vessels left on Monday night to complete a two-night stock survey, which will direct where fishing will take place. This ensures that fishers catch prawns that are of optimum size and abundance.

Fishers will be on the water for about a week and there is a second trip planned before Christmas. A third trip will not be until March next year.

Prawn fishers are suggesting people stock up on their Christmas prawns now or place an early order.

Engineer on prawn boat the Lunar Sea Steven Davies said demand for prawns was usually pretty high at this time of year.

"Our conservative fishing strategy will be governed by the stock survey, but to make sure you have prawns for Christmas, it's probably a good idea to order them now," he said.

Port Lincoln has several local seafood retail outlets where good quality, sustainable Spencer Gulf prawns can be ordered from

www.portlincolntimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/first-trip-for-...

☐ Waterspouts spotted off Darwin coast

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:59 AM

Waterspouts spotted off Darwin coast

By Jano Gibson

Posted Thu Nov 19, 2009 12:00pm AEDT

Updated Thu Nov 19, 2009 12:42pm AEDT



Just dropping in ... one of the waterspouts off the coast of Darwin. (Leading Seaman Helen Frank, HMAS Coonawarra, Royal Australian Navy)

- **Video:** [Water spouts sweep Darwin Harbour \(ABC News\)](#)
- **Map:** [Darwin 0800](#)

It looked like an American tornado sort of thing

– ABC listener

A number of waterspouts have been spotted over Darwin Harbour this morning.

Senior forecaster at the Bureau of Meteorology, Graeme King, said there were reports of up to four of the twisters forming off the coast.

"There was more than one - probably three or four we are getting told now," he said.

"So one good one and a few smaller ones."

He said water spouts were not strong enough to suck up fish or boats.

"I think they are a little bit weak for that," he said.

"I know there's reports of tornadoes doing that, but waterspouts are a really, really weak cousin to tornadoes."

He said there was a chance of a shower or thunderstorm in Darwin this afternoon.

"What those waterspouts do tell us is it's unstable.

"Whether we actually get [a storm] the next couple of days is not guaranteed.

"It becomes a bit more guaranteed next week by the looks of it."

A 105.7 ABC Darwin listener who was fishing on the harbour said the largest waterspout looked like something more menacing.

"It looked like an American tornado sort of thing, but in a smaller [way]," he said

www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/19/2747362.htm?section=justin

Simple measures 'could cut emissions'

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:57 AM

Simple measures 'could cut emissions'

AAP

November 19, 2009 04:40am

SIMPLE measures by businesses to cut emissions could make up one-third of the cuts required so Australia meets its proposed 2020 carbon emissions target, a study has found.

- Participants in the Victorian [Economic Chamber](#) of Commerce and Industry's Grow Me The Money sustainability program found businesses on the program cut their carbon dioxide emissions by an average of 15.4 per cent and saved an average of \$6600 a year on current water and energy prices.

VECCI chief executive Wayne [Kayler-Thomson said](#) that if the program was applied to businesses across Australia, the nation's carbon emissions would be cut by 46 million tonnes a year.

That figure is equal to 33.3 per cent of the cuts Australia needs to make to reduce its carbon dioxide emissions to the proposed figure of 5 per cent below its 2000 carbon dioxide output.

"By undertaking a range of straightforward sustainability measures, businesses have made large savings of carbon and money," Mr Kayler-Thomson said.

"There is a great incentive for all other Australian businesses to do the same. Together, the Australian business community can cut targeted emissions by one-third by picking sustainability's low-hanging fruit."

Many of the initiatives cost little or no money, such as changing to low-energy fluorescent lights, resetting thermostats and installing motion sensors to activate lights, Mr Kayler-Thomson said. Card-activated switches ensured lights and airconditioning could not be left on by guests leaving their rooms at Melbourne's four-star Alto On Bourke Hotel, he said.

Paper recycling bins were placed in rooms, which cut landfill by 20 per cent.

Energy, water and waste-saving initiatives were saving the business \$50,000 a year, he said.

VECCI has employed business sustainability ambassadors - owners of small and medium-sized businesses - to spruik the benefits of the program and the sustainability measures they have taken.

Excluding the fishing, agriculture and forestry sector, businesses account for 50 per cent of Australia's total carbon emissions, VECCI figures said

<http://www.news.com.au/story/0,27574,26370634-29277,00.html>

Black market crayfish sale results in big fines

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:55 AM

Black market crayfish sale results in big fines

STAFF REPORTER

November 18, 2009



Big fines have been handed out for blackmarket crayfish sales.

A black market crayfish sale has resulted in two men being fined more than \$30,000 each in a Perth court.

A former Green Head man, Garth Adrian Dobney, 39, pleaded guilty late last month to two offences that occurred in March this year.

He admitted to selling more than 200 rock lobsters to another man while under surveillance from Fisheries and marine officers.

Today he was ordered to pay fines, costs and a penalty totalling more than \$36,000.

The other man, Vince Gangemi, of Roleystone, was ordered to cough up a mandatory penalty of about \$33,000 after pleading guilty in May this year to failing to make a record of the lobsters purchased.

The court was told Dobney drove from Green Head to Bayswater on March 29 this year where he delivered nine eskies full of rock lobsters to a hotel where Gangemi was working as the manager.

Gangemi was acting as an individual and the hotel was not charged with any offences.

Fisheries compliance manager John Looby said the two convictions had dealt with a significant black market transaction.

"The rock lobsters the offender sold were caught under a recreational licence in the two months prior to the illegal sale and today's fines will be welcomed by both recreational and commercial lobster fishers who stick to the rules," Mr Looby said.

"At the end of the day, with what this has cost Mr Dobney, it definitely wasn't worth the deal of around \$1500 he was hoping to get from the purchaser for the illegal sale."

Mr Looby said the case came about after members of the public notified the authorities.

Anyone with information on illegal fishing is urged to call Fishwatch on 1800 815 507

www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/black-market-crayfish-sale-results-in-bi...

☐ Lobster racketeer fined

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:54 AM

Lobster racketeer fined

Posted Wed Nov 18, 2009 7:37pm AEDT

Updated Wed Nov 18, 2009 7:56pm AEDT



Stung: Garth Dobney was handed a big fine for trying to sell hundreds of lobsters to a Perth hotel.

- **Map:** [Perth 6000](#)

A recreational fisherman from the Mid West has been fined more than \$36,000 for selling rock lobster on the black market.

39-year-old Garth Dobney was arrested in March after an extensive surveillance operation by the Fisheries Department.

Officers watched Dobney drive from his home in Green Head, about 300 kms north of Perth, and deliver more than 200 rock lobsters to the Bayswater Hotel in Perth.

In return, Dobney was to be paid about \$1,500.

The hotel's manager was fined more than 30-thousand dollars earlier this year for receiving the lobster

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/18/2746794.htm>

☐ Dolphin deaths still a mystery

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:51 AM

Dolphin deaths still a mystery

Posted Tue Nov 17, 2009 8:13pm AEDT



One of the stricken Swan river dolphins.

- **Map:** [Perth 6000](#)

The WA Environment Minister Donna Faragher says researchers are yet to determine whether a virus contributed to the deaths of several Swan River dolphins.

Researchers have found two of the six dolphins which died between June and October this year had become tangled in fishing line and at least four showed signs of being immuno-suppressed.

The minister says it is yet to be determined whether they were affected by a virus known as dolphin morbillivirus.

She says seasonal changes in water quality and the long term exposure to contaminants, including high levels of the banned pesticide dieldrin, may have contributed to the deaths, but were not the direct cause.

Ms Faragher says she has also been advised there is no scientific evidence the dredging program planned for the Port of Fremantle will affect the health of dolphins.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/17/2745579.htm>

☐ Scottish wild fish organisations condemn WWF's aquaculture stewardship scheme

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:49 AM

Scottish wild fish organisations condemn WWF's aquaculture stewardship scheme



Tuesday, 17 November 2009 12:20

REPRESENTATIVES of Scotland's wild fish interests have condemned the salmon dialogue process backed by WWF, saying it is naïve, vague and without teeth.

Scotland's leading wild fish interests, the Association of Salmon Fishery Boards (ASFB), the Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland (RAFTS) and the Salmon and Trout Association (S&TA), have issued a highly critical response to proposals by the international conservation organisation WWF, to accredit salmon farm companies with "environmentally, socially and economically responsible" operations. Draft Indicators for the 'Salmon Aquaculture Dialogue' scheme have just been published and are due to be finalised following a meeting convened by WWF in Bergen on November 16th and 17th.

The Scottish wild fish organisations say that the Steering Committee for the US-inspired accreditation scheme is dominated by salmon farming companies with the companies providing all the necessary funding. Scotland's wild fish interests are adamant that the criteria that the fish farm companies will need to meet for accreditation are no more than woolly aspirations and that they will do nothing to alleviate the existing impact of salmon farming on stocks of wild salmon and sea trout.

Paul Knight, Executive Director of S&TA, said: "It is astonishing that the world's leading independent conservation body is on the threshold of finalising an accreditation scheme for salmon farming, which will give the recipients a valuable badge of environmental respectability, without proper consultation with European, let alone Scottish, wild fish interests. Indeed the only wild fish interests represented on the Steering Committee are from Chile and British Columbia. Given the failure to consult with Scottish wild fish interests, it is hardly surprising that the concerns that we have been voicing for years have not been addressed".

Mr Knight continued: "The Draft Indicators as published threaten to standardise flawed operating procedures, rather than tackling the deep-rooted problems associated with salmon aquaculture. Indeed there is little in the document that acknowledges the severe impact salmon aquaculture has inflicted on wild salmon and sea trout and the surrounding freshwater and marine aquatic environment. WWF is playing into the hands of those governments and sections of the industry which continue to deny any adverse impact, despite the wealth of peer reviewed scientific literature to the contrary. Furthermore WWF's proposed '7 Point Plan' is far too vague and without teeth. Its underlying principle seems to be the need to prove parasite and disease impact on wild salmonids against ambient natural levels before any action is required."

Andrew Wallace, Managing Director of ASFB and RAFTS, commented: "WWF has an important role as an environmental NGO. However this document will go nowhere near attracting support from the main wild fisheries bodies such as ourselves, unless it is prepared to target, articulate and address some of the obvious existing problems associated with negative interactions between wild fish and farmed fish (whether in the Atlantic or the Pacific). If WWF is not resolute on these matters then its reputation and international credibility will suffer immeasurably. One of the most significant concerns about salmon aquaculture is the impact on wild fisheries. Indications are that this report will not address those concerns as adequately and robustly as we would have expected from one of the world's largest and most respected environmental NGOs."

www.fishnewseu.com/latest-news/scottish/2285-scottish-wild-fish-org...

☐ Beach-haul netting review

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:43 AM

Beach-haul netting review

17 Nov, 2009 08:37 AM

THE State's beach-haul netting industry will be reviewed following an incident at Crowdy Head last month that left possibly thousands of Australian salmon dead on the beach.

Less than 24 hours after alerting the NSW Parliament to the incident, member for Port Macquarie, Peter Besseling, has been assured by Premier Nathan Rees that an investigation will be launched.

During question time on Friday, Mr Besseling again took the opportunity to alert the government to the failed beach-hauling exercise at Crowdy Head, and called for an investigation into the practices of interstate beach-haul netting crews working along the NSW coastline.

"The Premier, Nathan Rees, advised that in response to the Crowdy Head incident, NSW Fisheries would now undertake further investigation, and would bring forward a review of best practice in the beach-haul netting industry," Mr Besseling said.

The Premier also assured Mr Besseling the government would work with the fishing industry to ensure the environmental and economic sustainability of the State's fisheries resources

www.manningrivertimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/beachhaul-nett...

☐ Slow start to Victorian cray season

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:43 AM

Slow start to Victorian cray season

Tuesday, 17/11/2009

The Victorian cray fishing season started this week but fishers are reporting low catch rates.

Port Fairy cray fisher Howard Sharp says he only caught eight crays from 50 pots.

However, he says the price is good, with the going rate \$50 a kilo.

"Not seeing much product out there, you don't feel like a fisherman," he says.

"You're not doing what you're meant to be doing."

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/200911/s2744835.htm>

☐ Australia. Offenders net fish penalties in excess of \$10,000

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:42 AM

Australia. Offenders net fish penalties in excess of \$10,000

Monday, 16 November 2009

More than \$10,000 in fines have been issued this year for people fishing in closed waters in the Brisbane Valley.

Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Rural and Regional Queensland Tim Mulherin said it was disappointing people continued to ignore the rules.

"Closed waters are in place to protect fish at a vulnerable stage in their lifecycle or species that may be subject to over-fishing," Mr Mulherin said.

"If you are caught fishing in these areas you may face a \$400 on-the-spot fine."

Mr Mulherin said signs informing people of the closures had also been vandalised at sites along the Brisbane River.

"The vandalism of signs in addition to the high number of Fisheries Infringement Notices (FINs) show some people have no regard for measures designed to protect fish stocks for everyone.

Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol officer Hayley Meiers said the closures for this area were not new and fishers should be aware of the rules.

"The river offers great freshwater fishing for people in the south east, but closed waters are in place for certain areas of the river including Mount Crosby weir," she said.

"The closed area extends from a point 200m upstream to a point 400m downstream of the weir.

"The Brisbane River is also closed at the Old Mount Crosby weir to 50m downstream of the weir and at Wivenhoe dam to 600m downstream of the dam wall.

"The closures protect vulnerable fish congregating at weirs awaiting flows in order to migrate up or downstream to breed.

"Twenty-seven FINs have been issued in Brisbane Valley since January 2009, despite three new signs being erected to replace those that were vandalised."

For more information on closed waters to fishing contact the Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries Business Information Centre on 13 25 23 or visit www.dpi.qld.gov.au to download the fishing rules.

Last Updated (Monday, 16 November 2009)

<http://www.bymnews.com/news/newsDetails.php?id=62839>

Cray season off to slow start

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:39 AM

Cray season off to slow start

Posted Mon Nov 16, 2009 10:12am AEDT

- **Map:** [Mount Gambier 5290](#)

The Primary Industries department has tallied the October catch for the southern rock lobster zone and confirmed fishing crews's concerns about their slow start to the season.

In October last year, south-east cray fishermen landed more than 196,000 kilograms of fish.

This year the figure for the same month was just over 170,000 kg.

Many licence holders are not surprised by the drop, saying it is a clear reflection of their small daily hauls.

For some, these have been as low 10 kg.

Fisheries SA director Martin Smallridge is offering little comment on the low catches, saying it is too early in the season to speculate.

But with the beach price remaining buoyant, many crews are optimistic that the season overall will still prove to be successful.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/16/2743638.htm>

Swan River dolphins in danger of 'dying out', say researchers

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:31 AM

Swan River dolphins in danger of 'dying out', say researchers

Article from: PerthNow

Aaron Fernandes

November 14, 2009 10:00am



SWAN RIVER ICON: Dolphins have been found dead from suspected contamination. Picture: **Murdoch University**

PERTH'S Swan River dolphins are in danger of dying out with at least six dead in eight months, some from a suspected contamination by a banned pesticide.

Perth icon in danger

A team of researchers from Murdoch University have carried out post mortems on four of the bottle nose dolphins.

Some of the infected bodies found were covered by severe skin lesions.

"The concentrations of dieldrin reported were considerably elevated and compare to some of the highest levels reported globally in marine mammals at the present time," said Murdoch University biologist Hugh Finn.

"The four were found to have been infected with 'opportunistic' pathogens... and at least one of the other two from serious injuries from discarded fishing line."

Dieldrin has been banned in WA since 1988. Four of the mammals are suspected to have died from 'immunosuppression', where the dolphin's immune system breaks down leaving it open to infection and viruses.

Researchers said one possible cause for the immune system breakdown is a long term exposure to contaminants.

A spokesperson for Murdoch University said urgent talks between government and research agencies were scheduled to discuss plans to protect the remaining Swan River dolphin community, now estimated to be as low as 13.

www.news.com.au/perthnow/story/0,21498,26349262-2761,00.html?...ic_rss

☐ South Pacific 'ghost fishing' ban expected

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:30 AM

South Pacific 'ghost fishing' ban expected

Kerri Ritchie reported this story on Saturday, November 14, 2009 08:12:00

[Listen to MP3 of this story \(minutes\)](#)

Alternate [WMA version](#) | [MP3 download](#)

ELIZABETH JACKSON: Environment groups are celebrating the news that, come next year, it looks certain that fishing boats in the South Pacific waters will no longer be able to use gillnets.

The ban is expected to be announced later today.

These deep-sea nets can be more than 100 kilometres long, and if cut lose, can drift for years continuing to catch fish and marine life indiscriminately.

Australia and New Zealand have been pushing for the ban, after Spanish fishing boats were seen using gillnets in waters between the two countries earlier in the year.

Our New Zealand correspondent Kerri Ritchie reports.

KERRI RITCHIE: Environmentalists hate gillnets. Duncan Currie, from Greenpeace, says they're attractive to fisherman because they're cheap - but they're also very cruel.

DUNCAN CURRIE: They simply drop down these nets, which quite frankly they buy very cheaply, and they go down as far as 1500 metres then if they snag on coral and so on which is down there, then they may all just cut them lose and made of mono filament they may fish for dozens of years or longer, an effect called ghost-fishing which catches all sorts of marine life for decades.

They also can do some damage to the bottom and they almost certainly will be catching deep sea sharks and other long-lived species that are slow to reproduce.

KERRI RITCHIE: Duncan Currie has been in Auckland, attending a week-long meeting of 150 delegates from Latin America, Asia, Europe and North America.

They've been nutting out a plan to manage fishing in the South Pacific. Fredrico Silva travelled to Auckland for the meeting. He's the President of the National Society of Fisheries in Chile, which represents the companies and people who are doing the fishing.

FREDRICO SILVA: One of the things that happened in Chile, and I'm talking about the Chilean fishing sector now, is that in the last year we get convinced that we will have... we must be acting like - we call us a responsible fisheries.

We are fishermen, yes, we catch fish, yes, but we understand that we cannot do it openly and freely. We cannot destroy the natural resources because of the greedy or commercial interests from certain people or companies.

Definitely this sort of equipment, of nets goes against any rationality.

KERRI RITCHIE: Two Spanish boats were recently using gillnets in waters between Australia and New Zealand.

Duncan Currie says it's crucial that the ban is permanent and total.

DUNCAN CURRIE: One has to be very careful about the Spanish boats, for example, don't re-flag under another flag or come back in some other form. So I think it is really important that we make sure this is a real long-lasting ban that makes sure that no boats come down and try to do this in the Pacific again.

I think, unfortunately, that the history of fishing shows that if boats think a buck can be made then they'll try to use whatever loophole they can to come down here.

KERRI RITCHIE: The ban is expected to be in force by February.

This is Kerri Ritchie in Auckland, reporting for AM

<http://www.abc.net.au/am/content/2009/s2742796.htm>

Deepest-dwelling fish in Southern Hemisphere photographed

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:29 AM

Deepest-dwelling fish in Southern Hemisphere photographed

8:03 PM Friday Nov 13, 2009

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Expand

Notoliparis kermadecensis survive in total darkness and near freezing temperatures and are subject to immense water pressure. Photo / NZPA

New Zealand scientists have photographed the deepest fish in the Southern Hemisphere - over 7km down.

The scientists with colleagues from Britain and Japan caught on camera a dozen snailfish - scientifically called *Notoliparis kermadecensis* - at a depth of 7561 metres while "fishing" in the Kermadec Trench, northeast of New Zealand.

Some species of snailfish live in shallow water and even rock pools, but these live only in trenches and on the abyssal plain of the ocean floor, below 6000 metres.

They survive in total darkness, near freezing temperatures and immense water pressure - the Kermadec fish were swimming at pressure of about 8000 tonnes per square metre, equivalent to that of 1600 elephants standing on the roof of a Mini car.

They feed on tiny shrimp-like creatures that scavenge the carcasses of dead fish and detritus reaching the ocean floor, and gathered sociably around a bait impaled below a camera dropped over the side of the research vessel Kaharoa.

Dr Ashley Rowden, of National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (Niwa), said the fish were strikingly similar to the deepest fish ever caught on film - another snailfish known as *Pseudoliparis amblystomopsis* - at 7700m in the Japan Trench in 2008.

Researchers said the two trench-dwelling species must share a common ancestry, but were isolated geographically by thousands of kilometres.

They could only survive at the immense pressure found at these depths and had no apparent means of travelling between the trenches.

A specimen of the Kermadec fish has only been caught once, in 1952 by the Danish Galathea expedition, and in 2007 it was photographed at a shallower depth of 6900m.

The voyage leader, Dr Alan Jamieson from Aberdeen University in Scotland said: "It's fascinating to find these large aggregations of fish which are so similar yet incredibly isolated from one another.

"Why these delicate fish have chosen to inhabit such immense depths is still a mystery."

The Kermadec Trench expedition was the sixth by the HADEEP project, a joint project between Aberdeen's Oceanlab and the Tokyo University's Ocean Research Institute. It was funded by the Nippon Foundation and supported by Niwa.

- NZPA

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10609170

Fisherman caught out at Nelson

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:29 AM

Fisherman caught out at Nelson

Posted on November 14, 2009, 9:09am and updated on November 15, 2009 at 9:51 am

A Port MacDonnell man is the first commercial rock lobster operator from the South East of South Australia to have his boat seized for illegally fishing in Victorian waters for nearly 30 years.

The 54-year-old professional fisher faces likely charges after fisheries officers from Portland seized his boat on Thursday after discovering 14 illegal rock lobster pots two kilometres from the Glenelg River mouth.

The commercial fisher, who is expected to face a Victorian court over what has been described as a serious

offence, had no licence to fish in Victorian waters.

Fisheries Victoria officers were alerted to the alleged illegal activity after a tip-off from the public.

The Victorian rock lobster fishing season does not open until November 16.

The offence comes amid rock lobster catch rates in South Australian waters being among the lowest in the history of the fishery.

It is understood some fishermen in South Australia are only hauling in 10kg from some days out to sea, compared with 60kg during a bumper year.

Commercial fishers have been fetching prices around \$50 per kilogram.

Fisheries Victoria senior fisheries officer Charlie Cooper said he believed the alleged offender, whose name has not been released, was the first to be caught illegally fishing in Victorian waters from South Australia since 1980.

"It has been a long, long time," Mr Cooper said.

Regarding the alleged incident, he said fisheries officers did not know what the motivation behind the offence was.

"Victorian fisheries officers seized the 14 pots," said Mr Cooper, who explained no lobsters were found inside the pots.

He said officers also undertook a conditional seizure of his commercial boat.

"This is a serious offence; he had no licence to operate in Victorian waters," Mr Cooper said.

He said the alleged offender would likely to appear in a Victorian court.

"We will develop a brief of evidence to submit to court," Mr Cooper said.

"The fisherman was detected after a call was made by a member of the public to Fisheries Victoria's reporting hotline."

He said there were up to 14 licensed Victorian rock lobster boats that operated from Port MacDonnell, but the fisherman detected had a South Australian licence only.

Mr Cooper said Fisheries Victoria was working to create a more viable and sustainable future for all rock lobster fishers.

"It's important that we protect our rock lobster stocks and the closed season has been determined to protect the species during the breeding season," he said.

"In a bid to further protect our rock lobster stocks, the Victorian Government recently reduced the total allowable catch in the western zone

<http://www.borderwatch.com.au/archives/5340>

☐ Lobster fishers warned to obey laws

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:27 AM

Lobster fishers warned to obey laws

Posted Fri Nov 13, 2009 1:28pm AEDT

- **Map:** [Port Macdonnell 5291](#)

The Victorian Department of Primary Industries (DPI) hopes poor catch rates in South Australia will not lead to an increase in illegal rock lobster fishing this season.

Earlier this week, fisheries officers found a man from Port MacDonnell with 14 lobster pots in the water near the mouth of the Glenelg River.

The DPI's Charlie Cooper says lobster quotas have been reduced this year, but that should not encourage people to try to catch them illegally.

"Generally commercial rock lobster fishermen have fantastic behaviour," he said.

"It's very rare for this type of thing to occur amongst commercial lobster fishermen."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/13/2742125.htm>

Deep-sea gillnet ban on the cards

By New Zealand correspondent Kerri Ritchie

Posted Fri Nov 13, 2009 3:10pm AEDT

Updated Fri Nov 13, 2009 3:35pm AEDT



It is expected the gillnets fishing ban will be announced tonight or tomorrow (NZ Maritime Surveillance Patrol)

- **Related Story: Illegal toothfish gillnet found off Antarctica**
- **Related Story: Australia to pursue EU over gillnet fears**

A ban on the use of massive deep-sea fishing nets in South Pacific waters is about to be announced.

Gillnets, which can be 100 kilometres long, are banned in European waters but are allowed in the South Pacific.

Australia and New Zealand proposed the ban after two Spanish boats were spotted fishing with gillnets between the two countries.

A meeting is underway in New Zealand and it is expected the ban will be announced tonight or tomorrow, and will be in force by February.

Duncan Currie from Greenpeace says the ban must be total and long-lasting.

"Unfortunately the history of fishing shows that if boats think a buck can be made then they will try to use whatever sort of loophole to come down here," he said.

"There was a deep-sea gillnet found in Antarctic waters which measured in total 130 kilometres long; these things do have to be watched very carefully."

Deadly nets

A week ago the ABC reported that gillnet was bulging with 29 tonnes of Antarctic toothfish and a significant bycatch of skates.

Toothfish stocks in the Southern Ocean are under threat and the two species of toothfish - antarctic and patagonian - are seriously depleted.

Australian authorities found the illegal net in the Southern Ocean, in an area managed by the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR).

Gillnets target fish species that live on the bottom of the ocean such as the beleaguered deepwater dogfish.

Australia's deepwater migratory sharks and other fish species are likely to be caught in the nets, including harrison's dogfish, which is considered to be critically endangered due to overfishing.

The gillnet fleets are targeting sharks for their meat and for liver oil which is used around the world in cosmetics. The oil from the deepwater dogfish is highly prized.

Gillnets are a particularly lethal form of fishing. If the fishing net gets lost, it acts like a "ghost net" and continues to catch fish as it bobs about in the ocean.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/13/2742298.htm>

Fishing horror revealed as gillnet ban looks likely

By [Eloise Gibson](#)

4:00 AM Friday Nov 13, 2009

Huge deep-sea fishing nets which can be cut loose and left to keep catching fish as they float may be banished from South Pacific high seas.

Efforts led by New Zealand and Australia to ban gillnet fishing were close to succeeding last night after revelations that an illegal 130km-long gillnet bulging with Antarctic toothfish was spotted in the deep ocean off Antarctica.

New Zealand officials have been concerned about gillnets since two Spanish vessels were reported fishing with long, deep versions between Australia and New Zealand this year.

The nets, about 100km long, are indiscriminate fishers and are used to target deep-sea sharks and other species.

The Antarctic discovery was revealed as 150 representatives from Latin America, Asia, Europe and North America met in Auckland to negotiate the final stages of a fishing treaty to apply outside South Pacific countries' exclusive economic zones.

The head of the New Zealand delegation, Gerard Van Bohemen, said he was hopeful nations would adopt a voluntary ban on gillnets today or tomorrow.

Greenpeace and Environment and Conservation Organisations (Eco) representatives at the talks said the ban was essentially a "done deal".

The negotiations are the last in a series of talks to fill a gap in the protection of high seas fish (apart from tuna) by setting up a Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation.

The new body will watch over a vast area of ocean, from the far eastern part of the South Indian Ocean through the Pacific towards South America - high seas where fish are vulnerable to illegal and over-fishing because of a lack of governance.

Speaking from the talks at Auckland's Crowne Plaza hotel, Eco's Cath Wallace said the gillnet ban was good news for New Zealand.

The huge nets were cheap, so fishing boats could easily afford to cut them loose and leave them floating around snaring fish as they went, she said.

Gillnets are banned in the northeast Atlantic at depths of more than 200m and in Antarctic seas managed by the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources - where the illegal 130km net was found - but vessels still carry them for fishing in the high seas.

ABC News reported the Antarctic net was set at a depth of more than 1500m and had captured 29 tonnes of Antarctic toothfish by the time it was spotted by Australian authorities.

As well as setting up the new organisation and talking about gillnets, delegates have been debating new interim catch limits for jack mackerel fisheries off the coast of South America.

A science working group chaired by New Zealand Ministry of Fisheries scientist Andrew Penney told negotiators jack mackerel catches were well down on past years.

Ms Wallace said that unless interim limits - which were opposed by several countries - were set there would be a "race to fish" and stocks would be gone by the time yet-to-be-signed limits took effect.

Mr Van Bohemen said nations were likely to agree on the basic operating criteria for the new organisation today. A fishing treaty would come into effect in two to four years, as soon as enough countries had signed it

www.nzherald.co.nz/environment/news/article.cfm?...9&objectid=10608945

☰ Australia.

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:25 AM

Australia. Fisheries Minister Norman Moore says greenies 'irresponsible and ignorant' in claims about lobster industry

Thursday, 12 November 2009

Fisheries Minister Norman Moore today described green groups calling for the closure of Western Australia's rock lobster industry as irresponsible and ignorant.

Mr Moore was responding to a joint press release issued by the Conservation Council and the WA Wilderness Society which claimed the lobster fishery, valued at up to \$400million a year, had collapsed and should be immediately closed.

The conservation groups' criticisms followed the release of the latest figures from the Department of Fisheries which showed a slight improvement in puerulus (juvenile lobsters) numbers.

"Here are two significant environmental groups - the Conservation Council and the Wilderness Society - saying we should close the State's commercial rock lobster fishery tomorrow," the Minister said.

"This demand simply highlights a serious disregard for the livelihoods of workers in a very important industry; ignorance about how the puerulus figures relate to the fishery's current state; and a simplistic approach to management, at odds with scientific rigour.

"We have two scientists representing these two organisations who want an industry worth \$400million to this State to close immediately.

"Imagine the consequences of that for an industry that is going through a significant period of readjustment and changes to fishing practices because of low puerulus counts.

"It is regrettable these groups think it acceptable to peddle claims that the fishery is being mismanaged and to focus on one aspect of it, rather than the fishery in its entirety."

Mr Moore said his advice from the Department of Fisheries was that there was evidence to suggest the puerulus count was beginning to slowly increase after several years of record low counts.

"It is my hope this increase will continue into the future and we will have an industry that has a long-term future," he said.

"The State Government has taken a very precautionary approach to this industry and has reduced the catch to 5,500 tonnes for 2009 and the two following years, even though the sustainable catch for this year is estimated to be 6,500 tonnes.

"We have taken the precautionary principle of leaving an extra 1,000 tonnes in the ocean this year, in order to ensure that next year and the year after there are catches of about 5,500 tonnes.

"This will provide an economic return to the industry and demonstrates proper management of this fishery.

"For the Conservation Council and the WA Wilderness Society to claim otherwise demonstrates their ignorance of the way in which this industry and fishery works."

Last Updated (Thursday, 12 November 2009)

<http://www.bymnews.com/news/newsDetails.php?id=62683>

☐ Lobster fisher accused of illegal fishing

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:23 AM

Lobster fisher accused of illegal fishing

Posted Thu Nov 12, 2009 12:43pm AEDT

- **Map:** [Port Macdonnell 5291](#)

A south-east South Australian professional cray fisherman has been found allegedly illegally fishing for rock lobster in Victoria.

Victorian fisheries officers allegedly found the 54-year-old man from Port MacDonnell with 14 pots in the water just out from the mouth of the Glenelg River.

The commercial rock lobster season does not open until Sunday in Victoria.

The state's Primary Industries Department says the man has been interviewed and will probably be charged.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/12/2740820.htm>

☐ Blue cod ban may be lifted early

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:23 AM

Blue cod ban may be lifted early

By CHERIE HOWIE - The Marlborough Express
Last updated 12:00 11/11/2009

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A four-year ban on fishing for cod in the Marlborough Sounds could be abandoned two years early, with the fishery reopened to the public by this time next year, Fisheries Minister Phil Heatley says.

Pressure on the blue-cod population led to former fisheries minister Jim Anderton placing a four-year ban on fishing for the species in the enclosed Marlborough Sounds. The ban began on October 1 last year.

However, Mr Heatley said yesterday that "good progress" had been made on a management plan being developed by the Blue Cod Management Group and the Ministry of Fisheries to rebuild the fishery while allowing for a managed recreational harvest.

That could lead to a partial or full reopening of the fishery in the 2010-11 summer season, he said.

However, Mr Heatley's decision was met with scorn from Marlborough Recreational Fishers Association chairman Lloyd Hanson, who labelled it a "cop-out".

The ban should end this summer, Mr Hanson said.

"He said at a meeting with us [earlier] that he wanted the fishery reopened sooner rather than later.

"I think Phil Heatley's been got at by his advisers."

Mr Hanson said there was no problem with cod numbers in the Sounds in the first place and it should not take two years to come up with a management plan.

"We could put in a plan in three months."

Mr Hanson's views were not shared by Marlborough Sounds Blue Cod Sustainability Society spokesman Andrew Meehan.

"I think it's positive. It's excellent progress and shows the goodwill between the two parties.

"I would've liked it to be this summer, but to do it properly, it takes a year. It will still be two years early," he said.

Mr Heatley also praised the management group for developing other initiatives to sustain the fishery, such as a code of practice.

"If this advice is followed, more small blue cod will be returned to the sea alive and will grow to spawn and provide fish for tomorrow."

To support the guide, the responsible handling of fish would be an important part of the ministry's summer education programme, he said.

The ministry and the management group have also released a poster to guide fishers on best practice when fishing in the Sounds.

The poster will soon be available in outdoors shops and at campsites.

Mr Heatley encouraged recreational fishers to adopt the "good fishing practices promoted by these guides

www.stuff.co.nz/marlborough-express/news/3051834/Blue-cod-ban-may-b...

[Browse > Home / News / Call to report shark sightings](#) [Call to report shark sight](#) Monday, 23 November 2009 10:22 AM

[Browse > Home / News / Call to report shark sightings](#)

Call to report shark sightings

Posted on November 11, 2009, 4:04pm and updated on November 12, 2009 at 7:18 am

PIRSA Fisheries have called on people to report shark sightings along the South East coastline to authorities amid a spate of sightings around Adelaide.

The call follows 20 sightings being recorded on just one day, a man being attacked by a three-metre great white shark and the State Government launching a summer shark spotting plane one month earlier

than usual.



While there have been no reported sightings along the South East as people begin to flock to the beach, great white sharks were sighted off the Kingston beach last year.

A shark was also seen just 200 metres off Cape Jaffa in 2007.

Professional rock lobster fishers have also being reminded to report any large shark sightings seen in the vicinity of swimmers or near shore.

"Shark sightings should be reported to the Fishwatch hotline on 1800 065 522," a PIRSA Fisheries spokesperson said.

"Please report the area and time of the sighting and where possible the size and species of shark."

South East Professional Fishermen's Association president Joel Redman confirmed there have been sightings of great white sharks by fishers over the years.

"There is usually a sighting every few years; we mostly see smaller sharks," said Mr Redman, who fishes at Southend.

Meanwhile, Port MacDonnell commercial fishing veteran Roger Cutting said he had never seen a white pointer during his 40 years as a rock lobster fisher.

But he said some white pointers had been caught off Portland.

"I'm not saying they are not there, I just haven't seen them close to shore," Mr Cutting said.

He believed the warmer waters off Adelaide and Port Lincoln attracted more sharks to those areas.

"I have never heard of anybody being attacked around Port MacDonnell," Mr Cutting said.

Meanwhile, Port MacDonnell Offshore Angling Club president Paul Carrison said more sharks were being sighted because people were looking for them around Adelaide.

He said sharks had always been out there because the ocean was their home.

But he said he believed swimmers had little to fear in the Limestone Coast.

Great whites are the largest predatory fish on earth.

These monster sea creatures grow to an average of 4.6 metres in length, although specimens more than six metres and weighing up 2268kg have been recorded.

They are found in cool, coastal waters throughout the world.

There is no reliable data on the great white's population.

Great white sharks have been fully protected in South Australia since 1997

<http://www.borderwatch.com.au/archives/5279>

Greenpeace Supports Trawling Controls

Wednesday, 11 November 2009, 9:35 am

Press Release: Greenpeace New Zealand

Greenpeace Supports Trawling Controls

Auckland, 10 November, 2009 - Greenpeace is supporting calls to tighten regulations on bottom trawling by the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation in Auckland this week.

The meeting is in the final stages of agreeing on a convention to govern bottom trawling and some other fisheries in the Pacific. New Zealand fishing boats use bottom trawling to target orange roughy, a long-lived deep sea fish which is very slow to reproduce.

Greenpeace is calling for the meeting to adopt measures to prevent damage caused by deep sea gillnets, by new fisheries and to reverse the declines in an important fish stock off the coast of South America, jack mackerel, which has been seriously overfished.

A 130-kilometre long gillnet was recently found in the ocean off Antarctica, set at 1500 metres, which had caught 29 tonnes of Antarctic toothfish as well as a number of skates. Gillnets are banned in the north-east Atlantic at depths of more than 200 metres.

Greenpeace adviser and lawyer Duncan Currie, who is attending the meeting said a new scientific report published in Europe today describing a systematic failure by fisheries managers in the North Atlantic highlighted the need to properly regulate bottom trawling.

"This report is a wake-up call to all governments that they have to start taking their responsibilities of managing the deep sea fisheries seriously. This damage both to the environment and to deep sea fish stocks must stop now."

Currie said Greenpeace agreed with the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC), an umbrella group of organisations concerned about the damage caused by bottom trawling in the deep ocean, which says it is time to halt unregulated deep sea bottom fishing.

The report, entitled 'The Implementation of UN Resolution 61/105 in the Management of Deep-Sea Fisheries on the High Seas,' finds that the measures taken to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems and deep-sea species on the high seas in the North Atlantic are at best inadequate and at worst non-existent.

The report examines the data available from Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs), the bodies tasked with implementing the United Nations (UN) Resolution. Matthew Gianni, Policy Advisor to the DSCC said "The UN resolution was designed to provide protection for vulnerable deep sea areas and species in lieu of a moratorium. The RFMOs studied in the report have failed to fully implement the resolution, without exception.

"The only alternative is to impose a temporary prohibition on all bottom fishing for deep-sea species in these areas until the RFMOs do what they have committed to do through the UN and prove that they can fish responsibly."

Next week, the Sustainable Fisheries resolution negotiations recommence at UN headquarters in New York to determine further recommendations needed in this year's General Assembly Resolution to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems and sustainably manage deep-sea fisheries.

ENDS

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PO0911/S00096.htm>

Progress made toward lifting cod ban

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:17 AM

Progress made toward lifting cod ban

Tuesday, 10 November 2009, 1:28 pm
Press Release: New Zealand Government

Hon Phil Heatley
 Minister of Fisheries

10 November 2009
 Media Statement

Progress made toward lifting cod ban

Work toward lifting the ban on blue cod fishing in the Marlborough Sounds is progressing well, but the fishery will remain closed this summer, Fisheries Minister Phil Heatley announced today.

Pressure on the blue cod population led to a four year ban on fishing for the species in the Marlborough Sounds being put in place on 1 October 2008

Timor Sea oil leak 'threatens Indonesian coast'

FRAN RIMROD

November 10, 2009

Fishermen film oil slick damage

RAW VISION: Footage released by Greens Senator Rachel Siewert and shot by Indonesian fishermen allegedly shows damage from the Montara oil leak.

- [Video feedback](#)
- [Video settings](#)

There are fears the oil that spewed from a leaking well off the West Australian coast has polluted a stretch of the Indonesian coastline, jeopardising the local fishing industry.




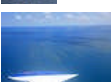


The Greens are calling on operator PTTEP Australasia to compensate West Timorese fishing communities in West Timor if reports of oil reaching the coastline are confirmed.

Greens senator Rachel Siewert said she received a DVD by the West Timor Care Foundation today that shows large patches of an oil-like substance on the water, dying fish floating in the slick and Indonesian fishermen collecting the gluggy material in water bottles.



[Click for more photos](#)

Oil spill leaked from oil rig into WA ocean.

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"We are suspicious it is oil from the Montara well. We are deeply concerned," Ms Siewert said.

West Timorese fishermen had stopped fishing in the area and the oil slick was threatening the livelihood of people who were already living in poverty, she said.

"They are poor fishers who rely on fishing. They have stopped fishing and feeding it to their families," Ms Siewert said.

Event If it was proved that the oil polluting the West Timorese coastline stemmed from the Montara leak, it was uncertain whether PTTEP would have to foot the bill for damages outside Australia, Ms Siewert said.

"The international liability of the company is unclear. I didn't get a satisfying answer on that," she said.

Ms Siewert today called on the Rudd Government to urgently investigate the claims, take proper samples and analyse the oil.

She said the Greens intended to supply the DVD of the suspected Montara oil slick to the Federal Government's inquiry into the leak as soon as submissions were accepted.

Ms Siewert conceded there was no current proof the slick stemmed from the Montara well as Indonesian authorities commonly report natural oil washing up on the Timorese coast.

"(But) A lot of people are saying it is from Montara," Ms Siewert said.

www.watoday.com.au/environment/timor-sea-oil-leak-threatens-indones...

☐ Stormy waters over lobster

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:12 AM

Stormy waters over lobster

HELEN KEMPTON

November 10, 2009 08:00am

TASMANIA'S 22,783 recreational fishers are continuing a 30-year battle over rock lobster quotas.

Recfish Tasmania president Don Paton says the fight began in 1979 when commercial operators sought to have the public banned from using rock lobster pots.

The proposed ban brought a strong response from recreational fishers, with more than 500 people turning out to a public meeting in protest.

"We won the right to keep fishing. And 10 years later it was obvious the stocks were being over-fished by the commercial sector and we imposed a limit of five crayfish a day on ourselves in the interests of sustainability," Mr Paton said.

"It took another 10 to 12 years to convince the Government that commercial limits should also be set to protect the rock lobster population."

Tasmania's commercial operators have agreed to a 20per cent cut in their take over the next two years and last week Hursey Seafoods director David Hudson called on recreational fishers also to commit to a cut.

Mr Paton said that while he fully supported a cap on the total rock lobster take, recreational fishers were not prepared to pay for decades of over-fishing by commercial operators.

In 2007-2008, the commercial take was set at 1470 tonnes. The recreational take over the same period was 8per cent of the total, capped at 172 tonnes.

Mr Paton said focusing on recreational rather than commercial catches was akin to guarding the petty cash

tin while the bank was being robbed.

The state's 22,783 recreational fishers paid more than \$900,000 in licence and other fees in 2007-2008.

"If the recreational limit of 170 tonnes was caught, the average cost per fisher would be \$5.36 per kilogram of crayfish," Mr Paton said.

"Commercial operators dropped 10,000 pots and paid \$2.8 million in fees. They took about 1500 tonnes of rock lobster at an average cost of \$1.90 per kilogram of crayfish."

Mr Paton wants Tasmania to follow New Zealand's lead, which gives recreational fishers priority with commercial interests given access to remaining stock

www.themercury.com.au/article/2009/11/10/108815_tasmania-news.html

☐ Abrolhos Islands study

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:10 AM

Abrolhos Islands study

Posted Mon Nov 9, 2009 6:32pm AEDT
Updated Mon Nov 9, 2009 7:59pm AEDT



Sustainable fishing and tourism developments on Abrolhos Islands to be studied (Grady Winfield)

- **Map:** [Geraldton 6530](#)

The State Government has announced funding for a study to guide future development of the Abrolhos Islands, off Geraldton.

\$490,000 will be used to carry out surveys and analysis of human and marine habitats on the 122 islands and their surrounding coral reefs.

The islands are home to fishermen and their families during the rock lobster season but, in recent years, have become an increasingly popular tourist destination.

The Member for Geraldton, Ian Blayney, says results from the study will be used to ensure conservation, fishing and tourism activities on the islands are managed sustainably.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/09/2737740.htm>

☐ Study shows pests' spread Sunday, 08 November 2009 University of Tasmania The study

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:08 AM

Study shows pests' spread
Sunday, 08 November 2009
[University of Tasmania](#)



The study revealed that although the long-spined sea urchins threaten Tasmania's

seaweed and kelp forests, they haven't spread to the vulnerable sponge beds.

Image: iStockphoto

High-technology seabed mapping has shown that long-spined sea urchins (*Centrostephanus rogersii*), which are a threat to Tasmania's seaweed and kelp forests, have not spread to the environmentally valuable sponge beds located in deeper reefs off the state's coast.

Tasmanian Aquaculture and Fisheries Institute (TAFI) researchers have been using an Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (AUV) to map important marine habitats off the coast of Freycinet, Bruny Island and the Tasman Peninsula.

Marine Biodiversity Research Group leader Dr Neville Barrett said the maps provide a vital tool for evaluating Tasmania's offshore sea bed habitat health, and the potential impacts of threats such as introduced pests, climate change or over-fishing of key predator species.

Dr Barrett said the urchin, which is endemic to mainland Australia, has established itself on Tasmania's east coast in response to climate change.

"They are a problem because in the absence of natural predators they are capable of destructive grazing of kelp and seaweed and form large 'urchin barrens', which are not suitable habitat for lobsters, abalone and other invertebrates," Dr Barrett said.

"Our recent mapping work has helped identify how far the long-spined sea urchin has spread through Tasmania's coastal waters.

"So far it appears that they do not inhabit the deeper sponge gardens.

"This is an important discovery as sponge communities form an important component of marine ecosystems forming complex structures on the sea floor, which provide habitat for many fish and invertebrate species."

However, the mapping work has also identified another introduced marine pest, the New Zealand screw shell (*Maoricolpeus roseus*) in abundance on sandy sediments in many places on Tasmania's east coast.

"We knew that this screw shell species had formed extensive cover in parts of the D'Entrecasteaux Channel, but were not aware of similar densities in other areas of the east coast," Dr Barrett said.

"In some areas the density produces its own habitat type, allowing other species, such as sponges, to settle and grow on the piles of dead shells."

The AUV, which takes both stereo photographic and sonar images of the flora and fauna of the sea bed is programmed to swim two metres above the sea bed to depths of more than 100m.

Taking thousands of photographs as it glides above the sea bed, the images are stitched together to form three-dimensional sea floor maps. The high resolution images allow fine sea bed details including individual rocks and sponges to be measured.

TAFI's sea mapping research is a collaborative project within the CERF Marine Biodiversity Hub, which is funded through the Commonwealth Environment Research Fund Program and is in partnership with CSIRO, Geoscience Australia, the Australian Institute of Marine Science and the Museum of Victoria.

The project is currently testing the ability of new multi-beam sonar technology to identify and predict the distribution of marine habitats in shelf waters, by comparing fine-scale mapping information with biological data on the species present derived from imagery collected by the AUV and towed video

<http://www.sciencealert.com.au/news/20090811-20193.html>

☐ Recreational lobster limit

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:06 AM

Recreational lobster limit

HELEN KEMPTON

November 08, 2009 08:18am

TASMANIA'S commercial rock lobster fishers have ramped-up their campaign for recreational catch sizes to be reduced.

Professional fishers have voluntarily agreed to a 20 per cent cut in catches and they want the State Government to enforce a similar cut to recreational lobster limits.

Hursey Seafoods director David Hudson, of Stanley, said the 20 per cent cut followed lower than normal catches in the past 18 months.

"This period of time is insufficient to make long-term judgments on cray stock," Mr Hudson said.

"Catch rates have been impacted by adverse weather conditions and it is not unusual for a cyclical downturn in catch rates.

"In the end, the fishermen have adopted a better to be safe than sorry approach.

"Recreational fishers also have a role to play in sustainability."

Recreational fishers can take the biggest crustaceans, which are often the best breeders, but it is the commercial fishers who provide the Department of Primary Industry with exact catch weights.

Mr Hudson said the recreational annual catch was a best-guess situation, which was now not good enough.

"We need accurate data to plan for the future," he said.

The commercial southern rock lobster season opens next weekend.

A rising Australian dollar will cut profits to those exporting lobsters, with the southern rock lobster one of the most sought-after sea delicacies worldwide.

The price per kilo peaks around \$75 at the end of winter and almost 80 per cent of the Hursey company's catch from six crayfish-specific vessels is exported to China.

"We are very reliant on the Chinese market and we need to make sure any reduction in catch does not hurt that market," Mr Hudson said.

"If we don't supply it, they will look elsewhere."

Primary Industries Minister David Llewellyn has announced a two-year review of the management plan for commercial and recreational rock lobster fisheries.

Mr Llewellyn said the review's findings would be implemented by February 2011.

He said the review was in line with the usual five-year cycle of fishing to ensure sustainability.

It would guide decisions, including setting the total allowable catch

www.themercury.com.au/article/2009/11/08/108485_todays-news.html

☐ The wrongs and rights over new access to the foreshores

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:03 AM

The wrongs and rights over new access to the foreshores

By Matt Nippert

4:00 AM Sunday Nov 8, 2009



Adriana Edwards is pictured with Maria Melvin at Opotiki Beach. Photo / Doug Sherring

*Public access to the foreshore and seabed is no longer a "bottom line" for government policy-makers. **Matt Nippert** visits the first piece of coastline to be claimed by Maori under the controversial law.*

Opotiki is a small settlement, barely 10,000 people strong. It climbs from the low-rise, predominantly Maori township, set back from the sprawling beaches, to the hilltop houses with ocean views owned by the better off, mostly Pakeha, residents.

Despite the small population, the area is vast. More than two-thirds of land is conservation estate, and the coastline stretches a full 150km. And it is this coastline, comprising sandy beaches and mangrove-sprouting wetlands, that thrust this small community into the public eye.

In 2005 Whakatohea, the local iwi, made the first claim under the contentious Foreshore and Seabed Act for customary rights to 47km of coastline. Claimant Adriana Edwards, a grandmother sitting in her modest Opotiki home, says the claim has historic roots. "We've had unbroken occupation going back hundreds of years."

Ranginui Walker, emeritus professor of Maori studies at the University of Auckland and a Whakatohea kaumatua, foreshadowed the debate that was to come in an open letter to the Crown published in 2003 in the Listener.

Writing of the military action that followed the murder of missionary Sylvius Volkner in March 1865, Walker wrote: "You made war on me, executed one of my chiefs, notwithstanding his protestations of innocence, and confiscated most of my land.

"You, like the Indians of America, put me on a reservation, known as the Opape reserve. The land that you confiscated for the military settlers of your tribe took away 30km of my coastline from Ohope to the Waiaua River."

In words that proved prescient, Walker asserted his tribe's rights to use the legal system and attempted to head off criticism at the pass: "I reserve the right to apply to the Maori Land Court for title to that bequeathed to me by my ancestors. I will not sell one millimetre of my coastline, and I will continue to share it, as I always have done, with those who love kaimoana as I do."

Edwards says the tribe is seeking kaimoana and kingitanga rights - in essence, the right to collect seafood and manage the water environment.

"For all of us along the beach it's very much part of our lives. Our hapu, we've actually managed the resource, especially through the summer months where it's pretty much trashed."

The beach and foreshore is one of the main food sources of the iwi, she says. Mussels, kina, paua and fish are collected for occasions ranging from everyday kai to funeral and marriage feasts.

Of course, concerns were raised over access, but they tended to come from outside the district. "One of the fears is about access," says Edwards. "We've never said we're going to deny access."

Opotiki district mayor John Forbes, too, says fears about restriction of access are overblown. "I've never had any issue being anywhere," he says from his ridgeline home.

"Most of the abuse comes the other way, from Pakeha, and often out-of-towners. For instance, say a dive club comes along with a couple of deep freezers, and spends a week cleaning out all the crayfish."

Under the Foreshore and Seabed Act, Forbes says Whakatohea had a mountain to climb to succeed.

"The hurdles of that law are really high. To prove cultural use, and exclusive cultural rights, they have to prove ongoing use since 1840. That's like picking the bloody Lotto numbers three weeks in a row," he says.

Forbes wishes the claimants all the best, and he says the parlous state of local Maori wellbeing is at least

partly due to the historic injustice Walker sketched out in his open letter.

"We spent nine months hunting down and killing Maori. Scorched earth. That's why they're still munted. That's some of the background with the seabed and foreshore."

DESPITE THEIR amicable relationship with the mayor, the road walked by Whakatohea hasn't been easy. The original claimant, Claude Edwards, passed away.

And initially Ken Kameta, the chair of the Whakatohea Maori Trust Board, distanced himself from the Maori Land Court proceedings.

"I have my reservations," Kameta said in 2005. "We have had no input into the initiative."

Then Prime Minister Helen Clark attacked the claim as being "wider than the law will allow for", and Attorney-General Michael Cullen attacked the presiding judge for even hearing the case.

How times change. Edwards, Claude's daughter, has inherited the title of claimant; her uncle Robert Edwards succeeded Kameta as chair of the Trust Board; Clark and Cullen resigned after last year's election.

And now, after a deal struck between the Maori and National parties to repeal the Foreshore and Seabed Act, Edwards' claim - with many subsequent cases filed with the Maori Land Court - is stuck in limbo.

Four years on, Edwards is willing to discuss criticism that the claim was worded in such a way as to subvert the intention of the Foreshore and Seabed Act, by claiming broad customary rights that were identical to title.

"We were saying: 'If the courts won't acknowledge our customary role, we'll have to find a way around it'."

Half of this subversion was through the claim. The other was poured into the Maori Party. Edwards says she was "quite active" in the formation of the party, and served as fundraiser for Te Uroora Flavell.

This bore fruit last year, when the Maori Party struck a governance deal with National that required a review of the Act.

Victoria University associate law professor Richard Boast sat on the Ministerial Review panel and he says the crux of the issue was finding a way to simultaneously satisfy concerns over public access as well as claims for customary rights.

"It would be idle to pretend the two can be balanced easily and without any thought - but to say they're mutually contradictory is wrong. Otherwise it's just a matter of two sides shouting at each other," says Boast.

The odd marriage of the Maori Party and National seems to have lowered the volume and now respectful conversation is taking place. "There seems to have been an outbreak of sweetness and light," says Boast. "How long that will last, who knows?"

IT SEEMS, no one wants a repeat of the 2005 furore. Shadow attorney general David Parker certainly doesn't. "The Labour Party are absolutely sure we're not going to rark it up and scratch racist scabs and cause fear in people that they won't be able to go to the beaches."

Parker says that as long as there is a legislated right of public access, Labour is sanguine about what the Government proposes. Parker says the debate now is several degrees cooler than that which took place earlier. "It's a more responsible and benign attitude now, which has given the country space to work out a solution."

Even Don Brash, the frontman for the divisive Iwi/Kiwi billboards that put the foreshore issue centre-stage in the 2005 election, has made a belated mea culpa - which Labour MP Shane Jones says was equivalent to being "mugged on the way to Damascus".

But the former National Party leader told Q+A last week that Labour letting the issue lie - and not enacting the Foreshore and Seabed Act in the first place - would probably have short-circuited any racial antagonism.

"I suspect that, had the iwi concerned been allowed to test their case, we might have avoided a great deal of subsequent history," Brash said. "The ability to prove customary rights would actually have been quite limited. And we might have avoided much of the controversy that occurred."

There is no timetable for what comes next. Prime Minister John Key has said the law will almost certainly be repealed, but not until what replaces it has been worked out.

A spokesman for Attorney General Chris Finlayson, whose office is drafting the replacement, says: "Work continues apace to generate a satisfactory conclusion to balance the interests of all New Zealanders - of families to enjoy the beaches, and recognition of customary interests."

Interestingly, in perhaps a signal of a change, the right of public access and the acknowledgement of customary rights have become "guiding principles" rather than "bottom lines" in this drafting process, a Beehive official says.

Politically, the Maori Party requires change to come before the 2011, but this still leaves a possible two more years of limbo for claimants such as Whakatohea, and the communities abutting the coastline.

Not that Edwards is complaining - the repeal of the Act was always more important than their claim under it.

But is the delay disappointing? "Yes. But it's a good thing National's doing," she says.

Edwards wants to be able to submit the Whakatohea claims to the Maori Land Court and seek title.

Failing that, negotiate directly with the Crown for a settlement that includes putting the foreshore and seabed on the table, as the East Coast's big Ngati Porou iwi has done.

Public access won't be an issue in Opotiki, she says, but it might possibly be elsewhere.

"It's not about denying anyone access, but the law needs to recognise access can be negotiated," Edwards says.

WHILE THE CLAIM for Opotiki's beach awaits the conclusion of the Attorney-General's work, a parallel development off the coast is also slowly taking shape.

Trust Board chairman Robert Edwards says an eight-year campaign to develop New Zealand's largest mussel farm is nearing its culmination. Test lines are to be dropped early in the New Year, and the plans excite both the iwi and the local council.

The development promises to generate millions in income for the region, and employ 500 people in a district that suffers chronic unemployment.

The council and iwi have also started talks with Chinese seafood company Oriental Ocean, with a view to leveraging New Zealand's free trade agreement to generate access to one of the largest seafood markets in the world.

It is fair to say that access to the mussel farm waters will be shut off to locals - Maori or Pakeha - who might at present take out a dinghy and drop a fishing line over the side.

The aquaculture industry has sailed along unimpeded by the ructions of the legal status over the seabed and foreshore. Indeed, a 2004 decision has flagged 20 per cent of all marine farming space established since 1991 to be given to iwi authorities. Submissions to a Government technical advisory group on aquaculture policy and the 20 per cent allocation close next month.

Boast says the development of aquaculture is somewhat ironic, given that the original Ngati Apa decision that sparked the Foreshore and Seabed Act was about the allocation of coastal space for marine farming.

"The whole Resource Management Act is predicated on the assumption that the Crown does in fact own the foreshore and has the right to allocate it; the Ngati Apa decision said that was completely wrong," he says.

"That's one of the reasons we recommended that - at least for the time being - the foreshore should remain in Crown hands."

By Matt Nippert

www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10607961&pnum=0

☰ Illegal fishers escape the spotlight

Monday, 23 November 2009 9:42 AM

Illegal fishers escape the spotlight

ANDREW DARBY

November 7, 2009

HOBART: The Rudd Government has pulled plans to publicise the discovery of massive illegal fishing nets in the Antarctic while the ship that found them, Oceanic Viking, is under a different spotlight.

Bottom-set gillnets are presenting a new crisis in Australia's regional waters. Laid by foreign fishers, they form a "curtain of death" on the deep-sea floor.

But plans to expose the quantity of illegal nets found by the customs vessel on fisheries patrol have been sidelined.

Oceanic Viking found nets totalling 130 kilometres in length on Banzare Bank in the Southern Ocean earlier this year, sources told the *Herald* yesterday.

Use of the nets is outlawed by the 25-nation Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, but rich pickings of Patagonian toothfish are leading illegal fishers to set them anyway.

The Government had planned to publicise the finds at a meeting of the commission in Hobart this week. But while the Oceanic Viking was caught up in Indonesia with Sri Lankan asylum seekers, the Opposition began to ask why it was not doing its fisheries job.

In April the vessel found nets of five to nine kilometres in length but did not have the gear to pull them up. So it called on a licensed fishing vessel nearby, owned by Austral Fisheries of Perth, which recovered 29 tonnes of toothfish, a bycatch of skate, and about 10 kilometres of net. The rest was ripped up and sunk.

Glenn Sant, the global marine program leader at TRAFFIC, a wildlife trade monitoring network, said the discovery was devastating for the marine environment in the commission area.

"These nets are actually an invisible curtain of death for everything that swims into them," he said. "The nets kill indiscriminately, and if they are lost they keep killing as ghost nets."

A spokesman for the federal Fisheries Minister, Tony Burke, said he had no comment on the discovery, but the sources said a joint announcement by customs and the Australian Fisheries Management Authority was ready to be made this week.

The Opposition fisheries spokesman, Richard Colbeck, asked who was patrolling and protecting Australia's fisheries while Oceanic Viking was caught in the asylum seeker "mess".

Mr Burke said Australian officials would take up with the European Union the discovery of Spanish fishermen in the Tasman Sea with the same type of nets.

The Spanish are exploiting a gap in the fisheries zone boundaries of Australia and New Zealand, where endangered sharks migrate. Nets have been set for two seasons, an environment assessment by the Spanish Government disclosed.

"As fish stocks are increasingly depleted worldwide, fleets such as Spain's are scanning the farthest seas for stocks left in unguarded patches," Mr Sant said.

A Spanish Government assessment concluded that the nets would have very low impact on deep water corals and sponges.

www.smh.com.au/environment/illegal-fishers-escape-the-spotlight-200...

☐ Fish nets kept secret

Monday, 23 November 2009 9:41 AM

Fish nets kept secret

ANDREW DARBY

November 7, 2009

THE Federal Government has pulled plans to publicise the discovery of massive illegal fishing nets in the Antarctic, with the ship that found them, Oceanic Viking, now under a different spotlight.

Bottom-set gill nets are posing a new fisheries threat in Australian regional waters, where the "curtains of death" are being laid by foreign fishers on the deep-sea floor. Nets totalling 130 kilometres were found in April on Banzare Bank in the Southern Ocean by Oceanic Viking on fisheries patrol, sources told *The Age* yesterday.

The nets' use is outlawed by the 25-nation Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, but rich pickings of Patagonian toothfish are leading illegal fishers to set them anyway.

Plans by the Australian Government to publicise the find to coincide with the commission's meeting in Hobart this week were put on hold with Oceanic Viking detained with Sri Lankan asylum seekers in Indonesia, and the Federal Opposition asking why it is not doing its fisheries job instead.

When Oceanic Viking found the nets, the converted cable-laying ship did not have the gear to pull them up. Instead, it called on a nearby licensed fishing vessel owned by the Perth-based Austral Fisheries, which recovered 29 tonnes of toothfish, a bycatch of skates, and about 10 kilometres of net. The rest was ripped up and sunk.

Glenn Sant, global marine program leader for the wildlife monitoring network, TRAFFIC, said the nets were devastating for the environment. He described the nets as "invisible curtains of death" for everything that swims into them.

www.theage.com.au/national/fish-nets-kept-secret-20091106-i292.html

Oil spill sends fishermen bankrupt

Monday, 23 November 2009 9:41 AM

Oil spill sends fishermen bankrupt

Posted Sat Nov 7, 2009 7:16am AEDT



Better times: Indonesian fisherman Justinus Lahama holds up a rare coelacanth fish. (Reuters)

An environmental lawyer in Indonesia says local fishermen are going bankrupt because the Timor Sea oil spill has ruined fish stocks.

The West Atlas oil rig spewed hundreds of thousands of litres of oil and gas into the sea for 10 weeks and last week caught fire. It was plugged earlier this week with mud.

The Federal Government has been in contact with Indonesian officials and will send an Australian delegation there next week.

David Jones, who worked as an environmental lawyer for 10 years before moving to Kupang in West Timor, says he has started taking statements from local fishermen who claim their catch has been affected.

"Most of them really can't afford to go fishing anymore because they've been on four trips and they've lost money four times," he said.

"Where are they going to get money from again? Because the guy who usually funds them says, 'well, I'm bankrupt as well'.

"I don't think I've found anybody who's told me they have enough fish to cover costs - everybody's losing money.

"They've never done this before. This is the first time ever."

Commercial fishermen in Australia are not happy either.

Earlier this week, Kimberley-based commercial fisherman Steve Hinge said the oil leak has been poorly managed and monitored.

He said because of fish life cycles in the region it will be five years before the full impact is known, but the fact it leaked oil and gas for so long is a disgrace.

"Peter Garrett's probably the most environmental Environment Minister we've ever had, but I haven't seen or heard of him ... [about] the monitoring that at the moment is supposed to be happening," he said.

"I'm talking to some of the guys that might be doing it and they've got no idea how long it is going to go for, where it is going to happen, when it is going to stop and who we give the information to.

"It is just, I think, a bit of lip service."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/07/2736012.htm>

Bluefin tuna 'on edge of extinction'

Monday, 23 November 2009 9:34 AM

Bluefin tuna 'on edge of extinction'

05:35 AEST Fri Nov 6 2009

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Nov 23, 2009

An international fisheries group set up to protect Atlantic tuna has done the opposite and driven one species of the fish, the bluefin, to the edge of extinction, environmentalists say.

On the eve of a meeting in Brazil of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICATT), environmentalists accused the group of ignoring the advice of its own scientists and setting fishing quotas for bluefin tuna that have drastically depleted stocks.

"ICATT has continually disregarded countless opportunities to do the right thing and secure the Atlantic bluefin tuna and guarantee the recovery of this species," Susan Lieberman, director of international policy at the Washington-based Pew Environment Group, told reporters.

Marine biologist Carl Safina, president of the Blue Ocean Institute, which studies how human behavior impacts the ocean, called ICATT "the poster child for not only failure which is demonstrable but cynicism and a real unwillingness to get serious, be professional and listen to what the science has to say.

"The world's first fisheries management agency formed out of concern for this one species, never followed their own science, never lived up to their mandate to manage for a sustainable yield," Safina said.

According to Lieberman, ICATT has for decades set quotas above what its own scientists have recommended for bluefin tuna.

Governments systematically exceed the ICATT-set quotas and allow their industrial fleets to over-fish the species.

Combined with illegal fishing, this has caused the population to decline by more than 85 percent in the eastern Atlantic and by more than 90 percent in the western Atlantic, she said.

"The blue fin tuna will not be with us and certainly will be extinct if governments don't do the right thing... and unless ICCAT says, 'Enough is enough, it's time for a zero quota; we're going to put the brakes on this fishery,'" Lieberman said.

A first "right thing" to do by bluefin tuna would be to include it on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) list of animals and plants most threatened with extinction, the environmentalists said.

ICATT scientists met twice last month in Spain to discuss including the bluefin tuna on the CITES list, known as Appendix One. The fisheries management group, which was set up in the late 1960s, is due to begin a 10-day meeting in Recife, Brazil on Friday.

ICATT was set up to conserve "tuna and tuna-like species in the Atlantic Ocean and adjacent seas," according to its website.

Forty-eight countries in every region of the world -- ranging from Algeria, Barbados, China and France, to Ivory Coast, Japan, the United States and Venezuela -- are contracting parties to ICATT.

<http://news.ninemsn.com.au/article.aspx?id=927533>

☐ NZ, Aust to raise incursion by Spanish gillnetters

Monday, 23 November 2009 9:33 AM

NZ, Aust to raise incursion by Spanish gillnetters

Published: 4:25AM Friday November 06, 2009

Source: NZPA

- [Read](#)



Source: ONE NewsCommercial fishing boat

New Zealand and Australia will raise with European officials concerns about two Spanish boats fishing with gillnets in the Tasman Sea.

The governments are concerned the two vessels are using the nets, which have been banned in the North East Atlantic in waters deeper than 200 metres, the ABC reported.

They are reported to have been sighted setting deepwater gillnets up to 2km underwater in seas off Lord Howe Island and elsewhere in the Tasman.

The gillnets target fish species that live on the bottom of the ocean such as the beleaguered deepwater dogfish, but if the fishing net gets lost, it acts like a "ghost net" and continues to catch fish as it bobs about in the ocean.

Deepwater migratory sharks and other fish species are likely to be caught in the nets, including harrison's dogfish, which is considered to be critically endangered.

Gillnet fleets usually target sharks for their meat and for liver oil which is used around the world in cosmetics.

A spokesman for New Zealand's Fisheries Minister, Phil Heatley, told the ABC: "There are mechanics to deal with these issues and we will work through official channels. The key issue here is the proper management of the high seas."

Australian Fisheries Minister Tony Burke said that officials will raise with European representatives the issue of the Spanish gillnetters at a crucial meeting of the fledgling South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO) in Auckland next week.

The SPRFMO hopes to establish a legally-binding body that would have control over the high seas areas of the South Pacific ocean from the most eastern part of the South Indian Ocean through the Pacific towards the Exclusive Economic Zones of South America.

Traffic, a conservation organisation concerned about the lack of constraint in issuing licences on the high seas for use of gillnets has already called for action from Europe.

"The European Union should take responsibility for these Spanish vessels and ensure they are only allowed to fish in areas with a gear type if they can demonstrate sustainable fishing," said its global marine programme leader Glenn Sant.

"These fishing activities will be directly impacting on straddling stocks from within the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of Australia and New Zealand," he said.

Traffic has also written to the SPRFMO to express alarm that deepwater gillnetting is being allowed in the region.

The SPRFMO meeting will pull together delegates from 20 nations to try to set up a South Pacific regional fisheries body.

Before the fledgling committee is a claim by Spain that gillnetting does not present any serious impact on vulnerable marine ecosystems.

"Nothing could be further from the truth," said Sant.

"The available scientific evidence points towards deepwater gillnets being extremely damaging to certain species."

In 2006 the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) said unregulated use of gillnets in deep water is potentially damaging to deep-water stocks due to long-term impact of lost or abandoned gear.

The SPRFMO should ban the use of deep water set gillnets unless the fishers can demonstrate sustainability around their use and prevent the loss of gear and resultant ghost fishing, he said.

tvnz.co.nz/politics-news/nz-aust-raise-incursion-spanish-gillnetter...

East Timor wants compo for oil spill fallout

Monday, 23 November 2009 9:32 AM

East Timor wants compo for oil spill fallout

Posted Thu Nov 5, 2009 7:15pm AEDT



A former senior public servant will head a commission of inquiry into the recent oil spill in the Timor Sea. (PTTEP ERG Media)

- **Audio:** [The Resources Minister Martin Ferguson speaks to journalists about the Timor Sea oil spill inquiry. \(ABC News\)](#)
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East Timor wants compensation from the Australian Government for any environmental damage caused by an oil leak from a rig in the Timor Sea.

The Montara oil rig, which is 250 kilometres from East Timor's coastline, was expelling 400 barrels of oil a day for two months until the leak was stopped earlier this week.

East Timorese President Jose Ramos-Horta says the spill is the responsibility of the Australian Government and the Thai company that owns the platform.

Dr Ramos-Horta is calling for Australian environmental groups to help assess if the spill has caused any damage to East Timor's maritime area and says he will seek compensation for any negative effects to his country's environment.

ABC Radio's PM program has seen statements provided by several Indonesian fishermen who say their livelihoods have been seriously affected by oil.

They have spoken of a slick appearing at their fishing grounds and some of them have had no catch as a result. Some have had to borrow money to get by.

The Australian Government says only small patches of "weathered oil" have gone into Indonesia's economic zone, and that was about 100 kilometres from Roti.

Today Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett would not comment directly today on reports of impacts

in Indonesian waters.

But he did say more work had started to determine the effects of the spill.

"As soon as we receive the results from that work we will make them publicly available, as we did with the work done originally at my insistence," he said.

"I have always said that this is a very serious matter and we have treated it seriously.

"We will make sure that every amount of relevant information in respect of environmental impacts is made available. If we think there's a necessity for more information and for more work to be done, we will get it done."

The confirmed death toll of birds affected by the spill is now at 19 but Mr Garrett would not speculate on whether he thought the seemingly low death toll would increase by much.

"I hope of course ... that there's minimal impact. So I'm not going to start speculating on whether there'll be increases and what kind of increases there may or may not be," he said.

"We will make sure that we will continue to do the work that we undertook in the first instance as a consequence of this event."

Spill inquiry

Today the Federal Government appointed a former senior public servant - former Environment Department secretary David Borthwick - to head a commission of inquiry into the oil spill.

The company behind the rig, PTTEP Australasia, says it welcomes the opportunity for the facts to be placed on the public record.

Federal Resources Minister Martin Ferguson says Mr Borthwick will have the power and the authority of a royal commission.

"This inquiry's about getting to the bottom of the cause of the incident and the manner in which it was handled," he said.

"It's clearly now our responsibility to work with industry to assess the cause or causes of the incident and also make any necessary changes to the regulatory environment in Australia to try and avoid similar incidents in the future."

But Greens Senator Rachel Siewert is concerned Mr Borthwick does not have any judicial or investigative experience.

She says the Government must guarantee the inquiry will be conducted in public.

"Under the terms of reference and the process set up, it could be entirely done behind closed doors," she said.

"We don't think that's adequate so we're seeking an absolute commitment that there will be a public inquiry."

Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett says that is up to the commissioner.

"As to whether the commissioner determines to have public hearings or not in relation to the oil spill inquiry is a matter for him," he said.

"My expectation would be that he would give pretty open thought to the opportunity for public inquiry participation, but it's a matter for the commissioner."

Opposition Environment spokesman Greg Hunt says the inquiry should also examine a separate gas leak in the oil spill region.

"It's inexplicable that the Government has excluded the seven-week cover up of the East Puffin gas leak," he said.

"This was a gas leak which was 50 kilometres from the West Atlas oil rig leak and yet we heard nothing for seven weeks."

Mr Borthwick is due to hand down his findings by April.

www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/05/2734579.htm?section=justin

ASEAN, Oz meet to curb fish poaching

Erwida Maulia and Panca Nugraha , The Jakarta Post , Lombok | Fri, 11/06/2009 10:54 AM | National

A number of countries concerned by fish poaching activities in the region kicked off a meeting Wednesday aimed at reducing the frequency of such practices.

Taking place on Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara for two days, the second coordination meeting of the Regional Plan of Action (RPoA) is expected to produce an agreement among country members to jointly reduce "illegal, unreported, and unregulated" fishing practices in the region.

The RPoA was set up in 2007, with members consisting of the 10 ASEAN members plus Australia. Indonesia has been appointed as the secretariat of the forum.

The two-day meeting in Lombok is being attended by delegates of all RPoA members excluding Malaysia. Also attending were delegates from East Timor and Papua New Guinea.

Director general for surveillance and control at Indonesia's Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Ministry, Aji Sularso said the RPoA enabled the sharing of information between country members, on issues such as the new poaching-related regulations enacted in a country.

"Indonesia, for example, can inform other RPoA members that we now apply firm measures against poachers, and that we will shoot and drown their vessels if they're found to poach in our water areas, so they can inform their fishermen," Aji, the meeting co-chair, told reporters after opening the meeting.

While Indonesian fishermen have often been found poaching in Australian waters mainly because of a lack of information on boundaries, Indonesia is a victim of poaching by fishermen from China, the Philippines and Thailand, among other countries, he said.

"Indonesia is estimated to lose Rp 30 trillion [US\$3.15 billion] per year to poaching," Aji said.

"We have an average potential to catch 6.4 million tons of fish annually, but it has shrunk by 25 percent thanks to the illegal fishing."

Aji said his office had caught at least 185 foreign ships for illegally fishing in Indonesian waters in 2007, saving some Rp 435 billion from possible state losses. There were 242 foreign ships caught in 2008, saving some Rp 650 million in losses.

"This year we have discovered more than 200 cases of illegal fishing already, excluding those handled by the police and navy," he said.

"This means that our waters are still very prone to illegal fishing practices."

Although only Indonesia and Australia will benefit from reduced poaching activities, other countries in the region also joined the RPoA because they share the responsibility of preventing their fishermen from poaching in their neighbors' territories, said Aji.

"No countries would want their fishermen to poach in other countries' areas.

"For example, we [Indonesia] feel embarrassed that some of our fishermen intrude into Australia's waters, while we have fish in our own territory," he said.

Head of the Australian delegation, Ian Thompson, said the RPoA had provided a "very good" mechanism for Australia to work closely with Indonesia and other countries in ASEAN to prevent irresponsible fishing practices.

"We're pleased with the progress we're making in legislation, in the sharing of information, and in helping each other build our capacity to address illegal fishing," he said, referring to the aftermath of the 1st coordination meeting of the RPoA that took place in Manila last year.

Thompson said that while the first meeting was aimed at making country members understand the poaching-related problems of each country; the second meeting was expected to "reinforce the efforts everybody is making to reduce illegal fishing".

"We also hope there will be sharing of more practical measures such as legislative responses to illegal fishing and opportunities for training or capacity building programs within each nation to address the problem," he said.

Aji expressed hope the RPoA would become a permanent forum.



www.thejakartapost.com/news/2009/11/06/asean-oz-meet-curb-fish-poac...

Australia to pursue EU over gillnet fears

By senior investigative reporter Suzanne Smith

Posted November 3, 2009 16:14:00

Updated November 3, 2009 16:52:00

 Slideshow: Photo 1 of 2 



A Spiny Dogfish caught in a trawler's nets. (TRAFFIC)

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- **Related Story:** [Fishing families hit hard by tuna cuts](#)
- **Related Story:** [Bluefin quota to cost Australian fisheries millions](#)

Australia and New Zealand will raise with EU officials the issue of two Spanish boats using huge nets, known as gillnets, in waters between the two countries.

The governments are concerned the two vessels are using the nets, which have been banned in the North East Atlantic in waters deeper than 200 metres.

The gillnets target fish species that live on the bottom of the ocean such as the beleaguered deepwater dogfish.

Australia's deepwater migratory sharks and other fish species are likely to be caught in the nets, including "harrison's dogfish", which is considered to be critically endangered due to overfishing.

Gillnets are a particularly lethal form of fishing. If the fishing net gets lost, it acts like a "ghost net" and continues to catch fish as it bobs about in the ocean.

The gillnet fleets are targeting sharks for their meat and for liver oil which is used around the world in cosmetics. The oil from the deepwater dogfish is highly prized.

A spokesman for the New Zealand Minister for Fisheries, Phil Heatley, has told ABC News Online:

"There are mechanics to deal with these issues and we will work through official channels. The key issue here is the proper management of the high seas."

There are concerted efforts by the international community to put together a management organisation to deal with the threat of illegal and over-fishing in the high seas.

The high seas are those areas outside the exclusive economic zones. Areas close to Australia are particularly vulnerable as fish stocks become more and more depleted in the north of the globe.

Plundering the high seas

Fisheries Minister Tony Burke has told ABC News Online that officials will raise with European representatives the issue of the Spanish gillnetters at a crucial meeting of the fledgling South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO) in Auckland next week.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/03/2732142.htm?site=idx-nsw>

Fishers netted in offshore police raids

By Bruce Atkinson

Posted Tue Nov 3, 2009 9:07am AEDT

- **Map:** [Mooloolaba 4557](#)

Police say they will continue to target commercial and recreational fishers after charging 10 people with drug, firearm and maritime offences.

The three-day operation involved about 70 Queensland and Australian Federal Police, Customs and Australian Crime Commission officers boarding and searching 72 fishing boats on the weekend.

Acting Detective Superintendent Dave Drinnen says the operation extended as far out as 200 nautical miles off the coast.

"It was something that we've had in the pipeline for a while," he said.

"We identified that there was a need to look into the maritime activities ... occurring within our Mooloolaba Marina and also in our sea zone from Sandy Cape to Cape Moreton.

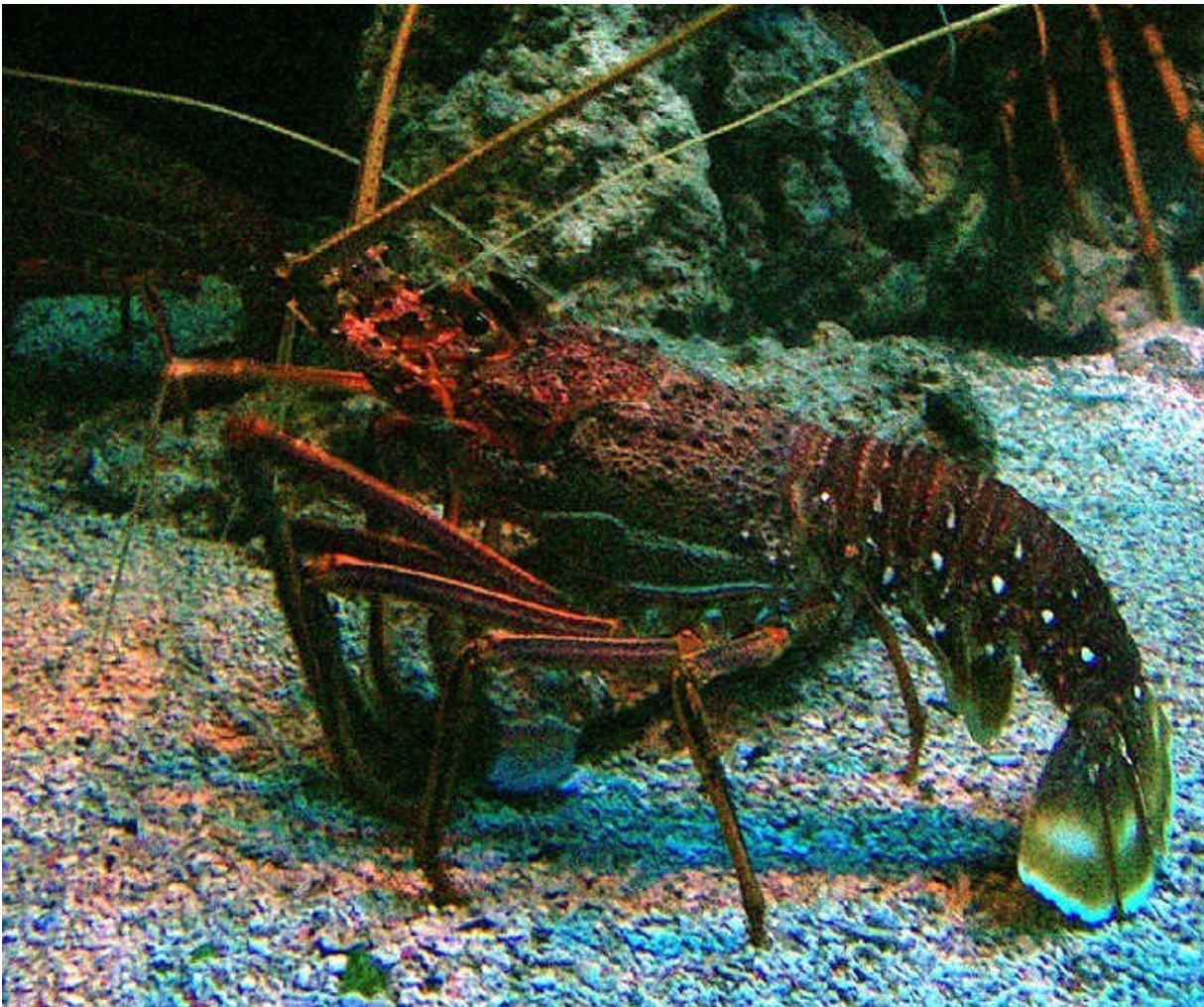
"We'll be diligent in ensuring that we police the maritime industry with a view of looking at particular vessels that are involved in illegal activity."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/03/2731571.htm>

Western Australian rule changes for recreational rock lobster fishers

Monday, 23 November 2009 9:06 AM

Western Australian rule changes for recreational rock lobster fishers



'Western Rock Lobster'

Western Australian Fisheries Minister Norman Moore has announced rule changes for recreational rock lobster fishers for the coming WA season.

The recreational rock lobster season runs from November 15 to June 30. The new

rules for the 2009-10 season are:

a consistent minimum legal size of 77mm for western rock lobsters all season
a reduction in the maximum legal size limit for female western rock lobsters from 105mm to 95mm, when taken between Green Head and North-West Cape
a reduction in the maximum legal size limit for female western rock lobsters from 115mm to 105mm, when taken between Green Head and Cape Leeuwin.

Mr Moore said the measures would also apply to commercial fishers, as part of a package of measures to contain that sector's overall catch.

'Recreational fishers must play their part in contributing to the sustainable management of this fishery by adopting the new sustainability rules,' he said.

'I have also decided the escape gap size for recreational rock lobster pots will remain at 54mm for 2009-10, before increasing to 55mm for the 2010-11 season.'

The Minister said the new rules took into account the record low settlement of puerulus (juvenile lobsters) in recent seasons, which indicated that in the next two to three years the fishery would experience its lowest catches in 40 years.

'This season, for the first time, the sectors will be managed to allocated shares of the sustainable harvest level,' Mr Moore said.

'The commercial sector is allocated a 95 per cent share, the recreational sector's share is five per cent and the customary sector's share is one tonne.

'This season, the commercial catch's managed target is 5,500 tonnes, with a likely range of 4,950 to 6,050 tonnes. The target catch for the recreational sector will be 290 tonnes, with a range of 260 to 318 tonnes.'

A recreational licence is required to fish for rock lobster. Fishers can buy licences online and a new brochure on rock lobster fishing for the 2009-10 season is available at the Department of Fisheries website at <http://www.fish.wa.gov.au> or on 9482 7333.

by Dept Fisheries WA 11:23 AM Mon 2 Nov 2009 GMT

www.powerboat-world.com/Western-Australian-rule-changes-for-recreat...

Big haul in Mornington's premier fishing competition

Monday, 23 November 2009 9:02 AM

Big haul in Mornington's premier fishing competition

- [sport](#)
- [Aquatic Sports](#)

02 Nov 09 @ 12:39pm by Natalie Kealey



Martin Kraulis hauled in this 10.84kg snapper to become this year's Victorian Snapper Champion. Picture: RICHARD SERONG

MORE than 1800 anglers defied Melbourne's fickle spring weather on the weekend in their bid to be crowned Victorian Snapper Champion 2009.

The annual Tea Tree Snapper Fishing Competition is run by Mornington's Snapper Point Angling Club and club stalwart John Vincent never doubted this year would produce something special.

"In the 26 years of this competition, we have had every type of weather conditions and we have often wondered what would come in," Mr Vincent said.

"But snapper fishermen are very resourceful when it comes to finding a safe place to fish."

Friday's wild wind whipped up Port Phillip and Western Port bays and many of the 786 boats entered in the competition waited for calmer conditions before heading out.

But typical of their dedication to their passion, both bays saw plenty of activity throughout the day and night.

Crowds gathered at Mornington Racecourse In Saturday's brilliant sunshine to enjoy the market stalls, trade exhibitions and competitions before the final weigh-ins and presentations to the winners, who shared more than \$120,000 in prizes.

WINNERS

Open and new Victorian Snapper Champion - Heaviest Martin Kraulis (10.84 kg) Hastings; Second Heaviest - Sean Walker-Donnelly (8.60 kg) Berwick; Third Heaviest - Greg Dixon (6.54 kg) Endeavour Hills.

Juniors:

Heaviest Fish - Dylan Anderson (6.10 kg) Don Valley; Second Heaviest - Taylor Close (6.07 kg) Boronia; Third Heaviest - Patrick Polistena (5.82 kg) Ferny Creek.

hastings-leader.whereilive.com.au/sport/story/snap-up-a-snapper/

Fishermen want seal cull

Monday, 23 November 2009 8:59 AM

Fishermen want seal cull

DANIELLE MCKAY

November 01, 2009 08:31am



Huon Aquaculture general manager David Cahill monitors seal nets at Dover. Picture: RAOUL KOCHANOWSKI

TASMANIA'S fishing industry is being ravaged by seals and a cull is urgently needed, industry leaders say.

Fishermen have reported an explosion in seal populations in Tasmanian waters as legal sanctions and limited predatory sharks leave the population unchecked.

Fishermen say seals are having catastrophic effects, costing millions in damage to gear and fish stocks, and rogue seals are increasingly attacking workers.

But ecotourism operators say the population boom is a huge boon for the industry.

More than 115,000 Australian and New Zealand fur seals are estimated to populate Tasmanian and Victorian waters, with more than 17,000 pups born each year.

The New Zealand fur seal is classified as a threatened species in Tasmania and no longer breeds in Bass Strait.

While the fishing community agrees the population boom is indisputable, it remains divided on the prospect of culling.

Recreation Fishing Tasmania believes there will be nothing left for recreational fishermen if seals continue to breed at today's rate.

President Don Paton said culling had to happen on a large scale, and it had to start now.

"We need immediate action if we are to have any sort of future or any chance of being sustainable," he said.

"Culling is really the only regime that would manage the population."

Tasman Peninsula fishing charter operator Stuart Nichols said his industry was languishing because of increased seal numbers.

Mr Nichols said the population boom meant an increase in competition for food, making hooked game fish an easy and common target.

"I often say to the kids, I don't know how they're going to reel a fish in in five to 10 years time because the seals are just eating everything we hook," he said.

"I'd love to see a cull happen, but I just can't see a politician putting their hand up to back it, unfortunately."

The Tasmanian Fishing Industry Council agrees seals are causing havoc for commercial fishers.

Council CEO Neil Stump said they were costing the industry millions in loss of production, damage to gear and relocation costs -- menacing seals are transported hundreds of kilometres from fishing farms and released at a cost of about \$1000 each.

Mr Stump said the council did not support a cull, acknowledging it was an emotive issue, but would support management to control the population.

The Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, which is responsible for managing seals, said it was aware of the industry's concerns.

It is monitoring populations, which it says are showing signs of increasing, though they are still recovering from low numbers caused by over-exploitation by sealing operations.

A spokesman said seals played an important role in the marine ecosystem, keeping predatory fish in check, and also had huge benefits for tourism.

"In Tasmania there is a growing marine ecotourism industry that features seals as a major attraction," he said.

www.themercury.com.au/article/2009/11/01/107131_tasmania-news.html

☐ MAF backs off irradiation plan for frozen fish bait

Monday, 23 November 2009 8:55 AM

MAF backs off irradiation plan for frozen fish bait

By [Eloise Gibson](#)

4:00 AM Saturday Oct 31, 2009

1.

A proposal fishermen believed would stop them using imported fishing bait has been dropped after a public outcry.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry wanted all imported whole fish to be irradiated to kill viral haemorrhagic septicaemia (VHS) - a disease deadly to fish that has seriously depleted populations in the North American Great Lakes.

MAF dropped the rule after fishermen said the treatment would drive up the cost of bait, and make bait too mushy to stay on the hook.

It will now look at a softer approach targeting only highest-risk species from countries affected by VHS.

The disease affects a wide range of fresh and salt water fish, including farmed rainbow trout and turbot. It has been found in Europe the United Kingdom, and North America.

MAF Biosecurity advisor Richard Soons said the fishing industry had convinced the ministry it was too dependent on imported frozen fish for bait for the draft rule to work.

Irradiation treatment boxes were too small to cope with the large amount of imported bait used in New Zealand.

Mr Soons said there would be no change for the moment, but requirements would be developed for the riskiest fish. It was likely low-risk species would be allowed to continue to come in frozen but high risk species would have to come from a low-risk country or be irradiated.

"It doesn't mean you can't import bait, but we would probably look at treating it first if it is not from a safe country," he said.

MAF said in a report on the import standard that whole round fish represented a "significant risk of introducing pests or pathogens that are not managed by the current freezing requirement".

Recreational Fishing Council secretary Sheryl Hart said the initial proposal met with huge opposition from fishers.

MAF has promised to consult the Recreational Fishing Council when a new rule is drafted.

Its views would depend on which fish were affected and how important they were to fishermen, said Ms Hart.

By [Eloise Gibson](#) | [Email Eloise](#)

www.nzherald.co.nz/politics/news/article.cfm?...=280&objectid=10606380

☐ Cut to tuna quota puts SA jobs at risk

Monday, 23 November 2009 8:53 AM

Cut to tuna quota puts SA jobs at risk

MELISSA MACK

31 Oct, 2009 04:00 AM



Tuna fishermen Scott Ryan and David Ellis: a cut to southern bluefin tuna is a threat to their livelihoods. Photo: Kate Elmes

The Fina K bobs gently on the water docked in the Port Lincoln marina. Next to the boats he's worked on for five years fishing southern bluefin tuna, Scott Ryan looks grim. His job could now be on the line.

Last week the Commission for Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna agreed to an international cut of 20 per cent to the world catch quota following fears the stock may collapse.

Australia will face a 25 per cent slashing of its catch over the next two years – reducing its average catch from 5265 to 4015 tonnes.

Conservationists welcomed the decision to slash the quota and stepped up calls for a moratorium on tuna fishing, but in Port Lincoln the fishing industry is outraged.

For this town of 14,000, the cut - just more than a month before the start of the fishing season - threatens the \$187 million industry, its 2000 jobs including Mr Ryan's and the wider community.

A scientific report to the commission, which includes Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Indonesia, Korea and Taiwan, shows the SBT population is in serious decline, down to as low as 3 per cent of the original unfished levels.

Years of illegal tuna fishing by Japan has reduced the stock to the critical levels seen today and Australia's industry says Japan, not Australia, should be forced to cut its catch.

The Federal Government has backed the international agreement, saying it was necessary to boost fish stocks and protect the species long-term.

"It was important all countries agree on how to address the dangerously low stock levels, which were causing concern for the sustainability and future profitability of the industry," said federal fisheries minister Tony Burke.

"If we had failed to take action now, the entire southern bluefin tuna industry could collapse, which would have a devastating impact on the Port Lincoln economy," he said.

The Australian Tuna Association met yesterday in Port Lincoln to discuss industry strategies to deal with the cut.

The Federal Government said it would consider offering support to the industry after plans were in place.

Tuna Association CEO Brian Jeffries said the Port Lincoln industry was shattered.

"It's a big set back," Mr Jeffries said. "We've had these kind of setbacks before and come back stronger, but this time we are completely unprepared."

Port Lincoln faced massive cuts in the tuna catch in the late 1980s, but embraced exporting after discovering a market in Japan, a move which created today's tuna barons who now sell 99 per cent of Australia's tuna to Japan where they retail for more than \$1000 each.

Mr Jeffries said while the industry recognised the current decline in stock condition, it was not an equitable outcome for Australia.

"Japan has overfished in the 1990s and severely damaged the stock, but quite clearly Japan should take the cut, instead in the end Australia will take a bigger cut than anyone.

"This decision has completely destroyed the industry's trust in the Australian Government."

Port Lincoln Mayor Peter Davies said it was a harsh decision for an industry facing tough times.

He said the industry was already suffering from high fuel prices, the financial crises and the high Australian dollar.

"The tuna industry is critical to Port Lincoln, and though it is too early to make definite statements, there are going to be people who lose their jobs and businesses will have to close," Mr Davies said.

Mr Davies questioned the need for a cut, saying he had heard anecdotal evidence of the tuna population's recovery.

But conservationists including the Humane Society International want a ban on southern bluefin tuna fishing internationally.

HIS senior program manager Nicola Beynon said the 20 per cent reduction in the global total allowable catch was not enough.

"The commission is taking a big chance in allowing the population to stay that low," Ms Beynon said.

"The scientific report to the CCSBT shows only a zero quota would give the species a chance to recover."

www.independentweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/cut-to-tuna-qu...

☐ For best prawn yield, breed your own

Monday, 23 November 2009 8:49 AM

For best prawn yield, breed your own

Friday, 30/10/2009

Tiger prawn farmers could increase their yields by up to 40 per cent by breeding their own prawns.

Farmers and CSIRO have worked out a way of breeding prawns in captivity rather than getting their stock from the wild.

CSIRO's Nigel Preston says it's resulted in a better tasting and coloured prawn.

"The trick has been to recreate the environment and the breeding system that's as close to the natural environment where the prawns breed," he says.

It could take up to four years for farmers to breed an ideal prawn.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/200910/s2729014.htm>

☐ Environmental issues make salvage a priority

Monday, 23 November 2009 8:46 AM

Environmental issues make salvage a priority

30th October 2009

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THE TASMANIAN owners of a 180-tonne fishing trawler run aground on Fraser Island are expected to make a salvage attempt today or tomorrow.

The 20-metre trawler has been stranded in the shallows on the eastern side of the island since Wednesday morning.

It is believed the vessel's entire crew may have been sleeping when it beached at 4.15am about 3.5km north of Yidney Rocks.

A police spokesperson said yesterday afternoon Marine Safety Queensland and a tug boat operator were on the island assessing the situation.

Because of environmental issues, the owners were being advised to attempt the salvage as soon as possible.

The four fishermen on board the trawler at the time of the incident have returned to Tasmania uninjured.

Police investigations into the incident continue.

www.frasercoastchronicle.com.au/story/2009/10/30/environmental-issu...

☐ The end of the line

Monday, 23 November 2009 8:45 AM

The end of the line

THE decision by the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna - made up of Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Indonesia and other Asian countries - to cut Australia's catch by 30 per cent for the next two years has met strong negative criticism. This is understandable. Jobs and lucrative returns will be lost. Port Lincoln in South Australia, where 90 per cent of Australia's southern bluefin tuna comes from, will be hit especially hard. More broadly, the already battling fishing industry is concerned that the cut will penalise its attempts to bolster fish stocks while turning a blind eye to Japan's illegal overfishing. But it is the right decision, and - though tough - it is also refreshingly farsighted. The Rudd Government is right to back it.

Decades of overfishing have emptied the world's seas. Cod is disappearing from European fishing grounds. Last month the European Commission moved to ban trade in the most endangered Atlantic bluefin for two years. Of 23 tuna species worldwide, nine are "fully fished", which means that catches should not be increased. And four others are rated as "overexploited" or "depleted", according to the United Nations Food and

Agriculture Organisation. About 80 per cent of commercial fish species are either fully exploited, overexploited, or have collapsed. Global spawning stock of bluefin tuna is estimated to be as low as 5 per cent of 1940s levels. The stark truth is that when catches exceed what is sustainable, fisheries do not recover. Commercial extinction is typically followed by biological collapse.

Now Australia's biggest bluefin tuna fishery is in danger. The cut is likely to push prices up, making captive breeding more viable - an industry on which Australia's restaurants, fish shops and kitchens will increasingly rely. But as the Tasmanian fishermen who offered a 20 per cent quota reduction in response to dwindling rock lobster stocks have realised, short-term pain may lead to long-term gain.

Japan's recent admission that it illegally overfished up to 200,000 tonnes of bluefin in the past decade should not be forgotten. The Japanese should be urged to honour catch limits; in the meantime their catch must be rigorously monitored.

Of course, Australians love fish too, eating about 390,000 tonnes every year - half of it imported. Our projected population of 35 million by 2050 will need about 630,000 tonnes. Farming fish must become a stronger policy priority, and the managers of fisheries globally supported in making tough decisions, if the world is not to find itself staring into an empty net by then.

Source: The Sydney Morning Herald

www.watoday.com.au/opinion/editorial/roxons-ruling-the-eyes-dont-ha...

☐ Fishermen call for lobster quota cut

Friday, 30 October 2009 12:01 PM

Fishermen call for lobster quota cut

By Simon Lauder for AM

AM abc.net.au/am >

Posted Thu Oct 29, 2009 10:00am AEDT

Updated Thu Oct 29, 2009 10:28am AEDT



Lobster: Fishermen are pushing for a 20 per cent reduction in the catch. (ABC News: David Hudspeth)

- **Audio:** [Rock lobster fears in Tasmania \(AM\)](#)

The highly regarded Tasmanian lobster is under threat of extinction and fishermen are putting up their hands and telling the State Government to cut commercial quotas.

They have voted to push for a 20 per cent reduction in the catch, in the hope it will help secure the long-term sustainability of their industry.

John Sansom has been a rock lobster fisherman for more than 30 years and is the president of the Tasmanian Rock Lobster Fisherman's Association.

Each trip out costs Mr Sansom about \$3,000 and he says fishermen are working harder for less.

"You just notice a decrease in the number of fish in the pots, that's basically it," he said.

"And ... there's not as many keepers in each pot as there was."

The vote by the association's members could involve massive self sacrifice in the hope of a brighter future.

They are asking the Tasmanian Government to cut their annual quota by 20 per cent over the next three years.

"It's an extremely large sacrifice," Mr Sansom said.

"I don't know whether most people would realise it [but a] 20 per cent cut in your pay is a big slice of it so you've got to either work harder to try and make up the shortfall or do without.

"It's all about the sustainability of the fishery. If we don't have a fishery, we've got nothing."

Neville Perryman has been a lobster fisherman for three decades. He says the association's response reflects changing attitudes in the industry.

"Going from that change of there'll always be fish because it's a big ocean, to realising that there's only a certain amount that you can take out sustainably," he said.

"It helps being a bit mad when you're a fisherman I think. The lifestyle, it takes a toll on your body and your sanity at times, but it's in the interest of the industry in the long term.

"You've invested in the industry and you want to have that confidence that when you get out that you're leaving something behind. It probably comes down to the old adage that you're only borrowing it from your children really."

Unsurprisingly, not every member of the Rock Lobster Fisherman's Association is keen on giving up a fifth of the industry's fishing rights.

John Hammond does not believe the scientific modelling which predicts a further decline in lobster numbers.

"Catchability is something that's pretty much impossible to measure," he said.

"Where we fish, at Flinders Island, we're the only ones that fish that bottom. Nobody else knows where the grounds are so the fish haven't caught the last 747 and gone somewhere else, the fish are still there."

Mr Hammond says cuts in the lobster quota will hit small operators the hardest.

"All this will do is play into the hand of the big operators of the factories," he said.

"At the end of the day all it adds up to now is who's got the longest pockets and our fishery will get knocked off, out the door, finished. And you know, I think it's bloody terrible."

The State Government is due to announce the new quota in December.

www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/10/29/2727240.htm?section=justin

Fax. (03) 8660 2755 Mob. (0418) 292 004
fishing@searead.net www.searead.net

Thursday, 16 July 2009 12:00 AM



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