

A FIVE-YEAR MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR
RECREATIONAL FISHING
ON THE WEST COAST
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Final report of the
West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group

FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PAPER NO. 153

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A Five-Year Management Strategy
for Recreational Fishing
on the West Coast
of Western Australia
Final Report August 2001

Compiled by Nathan Harrison
on advice from the West Coast
Recreational Fishing Working Group

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SECTION 1 FOREWORD

For recreational fishing on Western Australia's west coast to have a bright future, the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group recognised from the start of its review that the paramount task was to develop strategies which would protect fishing quality and meet long-term needs for sustainable management.

To achieve this goal required taking a long-term management view - and the working group believed that short-term solutions to resolve recreational fishing issues and problems would not provide a sustainable future.

In its discussion paper (Fisheries Management Paper No. 139), which was widely distributed and publicized, the working group put forward a range of management proposals for community discussion. These were developed after meeting directly with recreational fishers in key regional centres and receiving feedback from fisheries scientists and managers.

The discussion paper attracted widespread comment, with more than 1,200 written submissions received from recreational fishers, angling clubs and other stakeholders. The working group would like to thank all those individuals and organisations that took the time to provide this valuable feedback.

It was recognised that some of the most pressing concerns raised during public meetings - and in submissions - related to interaction between the commercial and recreational fishing sectors and how to effectively manage the total catch and, within that, the catch by each sector.

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group acknowledged strong public opinion on these issues and recognised the need to take community views into the development of its final recommendations.

To address community concerns over resource-sharing issues, the working group has put forward a number of recommendations to ensure that recreational fishers have a sustainable and equitable share of the region's fish resources.

The group acknowledges that development of this strategy has not involved widespread consultation with the commercial fishing industry, as this was not in our brief. We also recognise that recommendations that have an impact on resource sharing should be progressed through a proper resource-sharing process with the commercial fishing sector.

The group believes that in the long term there will be a clear need to effectively manage the total fish catch – and within that, the share of the recreational fishing sector. While the working group recognises this as desirable in the long term, the recommendations are not aimed at reducing the total recreational catch, but at coming to terms with the massive 300 per cent increase in recreational fishing pressure over the last decade - and dealing with further potential increases in pressure over the next five years.

This 300 per cent increase in recreational fishing levels was at the forefront of the working group's considerations when developing recommendations on bag and size limits, possession limits and boat limits. The associated strategies are the cornerstone

of the overall recreational fishing strategy outlined in this document and are of paramount importance.

The working group has acknowledged mixed support for the funding options in its discussion paper.

On the basis of community feedback in submissions, and economic impact surveys which suggest that recreational fishing contributes an estimated \$570 million a year to WA's economy, the working group has recommended that government should increase funding for recreational fishing management activities in the west coast region by at least \$1 million over and above current levels. The group has also recommended that this should be part of a \$4 million increase in funding across the State.

Funding should be applied to key long-term research, compliance and community education programs and indexed to increases in fishing pressure.

All recommendations contained in this report were made only after careful consideration of submissions to the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group. The universal goal of the recommendations is to protect the long-term sustainability of our fish stocks.

Finally, as Chairman, I would like to thank all the members of the working group for their voluntary efforts during the comprehensive 18-month review process. Their work, along with that of all West Australians who took the time to participate in the review process, will go a long way to safeguarding the future of recreational fishing in WA.

KEN PECH
CHAIRMAN
WEST COAST RECREATIONAL FISHING WORKING GROUP

July 2001

SECTION 2 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Guiding Principles for Management

Recommendation 1 – Key Principles for Management

- Government should ensure that adequate funding is available for comprehensive research and effective management of recreational fishing.
- A key aim should be to ensure that the biodiversity of fish communities and their habitats, and sustainability of fish stocks, are preserved.
- Fisheries management should take into consideration ecosystem and habitat sustainability.
- Fisheries management should incorporate controls and measures that anticipate and cover increasing numbers of recreational fishers and their impact on fish stocks.
- Management should be based on the best available information and, where critical information is unavailable, a precautionary approach should be adopted to minimise risk to fish stocks.
- Fishing rules should acknowledge the importance of equitable access to fishing opportunities across recreational user groups.
- The value of recreational fishing should be clearly recognised and given proper weight in all government and community planning processes; for example, with regard to marine parks and industrial developments.
- Fishing rules should be kept simple and, where possible and practical, made uniform across the region.
- Recreational fishing rules for different species should relate to the level of risk of over-exploitation of the species.
- Recreational fishing rules should be designed to protect the sustainability of stocks and manage the total recreational catch, as well as protect fish at vulnerable stages in their life cycle – for example, during spawning aggregations.
- Benefits from management of the total recreational catch should flow back to the recreational sector and be reflected in maintaining or improving fishing quality and sustainability.
- Processes that support the integrated management of fish stocks should be implemented to resolve resource-sharing issues.

2.2 Information for Management – Biology, Catch and Fishery Performance

Recommendation 2 – Major Catch Survey

A major recreational catch survey should be undertaken every year for a minimum of three years to establish a baseline data set for recreational fishing on the west coast. The catch survey should be comprehensive and cover all aspects of shore and boat fishing in the region.

The major catch survey should then be repeated at a minimum of every three years, so as to provide detailed information about the spatial and temporal distribution of recreational fishing activity and catches, as a basis for management decisions.

As a subset, information should be collected annually on indicator fish species and fishing areas, in order to monitor recreational fishing quality.

Recommendation 3 – Volunteer Angler Logbook Program

The Department of Fisheries should review and expand the current voluntary angler log book program to all key recreational fishing centres in the West Coast Region. This program should be used for additional monitoring of trends among regular fishers. It is essential that the program be provided with adequate resources to ensure timely compilation of information and feedback to participants.

Recommendation 4 – Priority Species for Research

Research should be undertaken on key recreational species in the West Coast Region – in the order of priority as indicated below – to provide information on species biology and stock structure. Predictive fisheries stock assessment models and, where practical, indices of recruitment of fish into stocks, should then be developed for the following important species:

Offshore	Inshore/beach	Estuarine
1. WA dhufish 2. Pink snapper 3. King George whiting 4. Baldchin groper 5. Breaksea cod 6. Coral trout	1. Tailor 2. Herring 3. Skipjack 4. Whiting (all species) 5. Mulloway	1. Black bream 2. Flathead/flounder 3. Blue swimmer (manna) crabs 4. Whiting (all species)

Recommendation 5 – Fishing Quality Indicators

A range of ‘fishing quality indicators’ based on angler surveys should be developed to identify trends in fishing quality in the region and assist in the review of the effectiveness of this strategy.

These indicators should cover fishing quality, diversity and the value associated with the fishing experience.

It is proposed that these species be used as key indicators:

Offshore	Inshore/beach	Estuarine
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Breaksea cod 2. Baldchin groper 3. Coral trout 4. WA dhufish 5. Pink snapper 6. Spanish mackerel 7. Queen snapper 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Herring 2. King George whiting 3. Australian salmon 4. Sand whiting 5. Tailor 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Black bream 2. Blue swimmer (manna) crab 3. Flathead/flounder 4. Yellowfin whiting

2.3 Protecting Vulnerable Fish and Managing the Recreational Catch

Recommendation 6 – Bag and size limits, West Coast Region

6 (a) Category 1 Fish

CATEGORY 1 FISH – TOTAL MIXED DAILY BAG LIMIT OF 6				
Category 1 Fish have a high risk of overexploitation. Fish in this category have low catch rates and levels of abundance and are highly valued for their fishing and eating qualities. Demersal Category 1 Fish are often slow growing and mature at four years +. For these reasons Category 1 Fish require a high degree of protection. (* denotes proposed change to current management)				
<i>Species</i>	<i>Species bag limit</i>	<i>Size limit</i>	<i>Other controls</i>	
Billfish (sailfish, swordfish, marlins)	1*		Boat limits apply for all Category 1 Fish	
Blue groper	1	600mm*		
Cobbler	4*	430mm		
Cobia	2*			
Cods (Serranidae family) includes Breaksea and harlequin	2*	300mm*		Max. size 1.2m
Coral trout	2*	450mm		
WA dhufish	2*	500mm		
Baldchin groper / tuskfish	2*	450mm*		Closed season Abrolhos *
Mackerel – Spanish,	2*	900mm		
Mackerel – wahoo	2*	750mm		
Mackerel – shark	2*	500mm		
Mahi mahi	2*	600mm*		
Mulloway	2*	500mm*	Only 1 fish over 70cm*	
Nannygai / red snapper	4*	250mm*		
North-west snapper	4*	280mm		
Pink snapper	4*	450mm*	Closed season – Metro area*	
Queen snapper	2*	410mm		
Red emperor	2*	410mm		
Salmon, Australian	4	300mm		
Samson fish / amberjack	2*	600mm		
Shark	2*		Max. size 2m*	
Spangled emperor	4*	410mm		
Trevally, golden / giant	2*			
Tuna – southern bluefin, yellowfin, bigeye	2*			
Yellowtail kingfish	2*	500mm*		

6 (b) Category 2 Fish

CATEGORY 2 FISH – TOTAL MIXED DAILY BAG LIMIT OF 16			
Category 2 Fish have a moderate risk of overexploitation. Fish in this category are have moderate catch rates and levels of abundance, mature at three to four years and are mostly found in inshore and estuarine areas, where they are highly sought after by recreational fishers. (* denotes proposed change to current management)			
<i>Species</i>	<i>Species bag limit</i>	<i>Size limit</i>	<i>Other controls</i>
Bream – black	4*	250mm	only 2 fish over 40cm* only 4 fish over 35cm* only 2 fish over 50cm*
Bonito	8		
Flathead/flounder (combined)	8*	300/250mm	
Goatfish	8*		
Whiting – King George	8*	280mm*	
Leatherjacket	8*	250mm	
Mackerel – school	4	500mm	
Mangrove jack	4*		
Skippy / trevally	8*	200mm	
Snook	8*	300mm*	
Tailor	8	300mm*	

6 (c) Category 3 Fish

CATEGORY 3 FISH – TOTAL DAILY MIXED BAG LIMIT OF 40			
Category 3 Fish have a lower risk of overexploitation. Fish in this category generally have higher catch rates and levels of abundance and are mainly found inshore. These fish have a widespread distribution and mature at two+ years. (* denotes proposed change to current management).			
<i>Species</i>	<i>Species bag limit</i>	<i>Size limit</i>	<i>Other controls</i>
Mackerel – blue	20*		
Garfish	20*		
Herring	20*		
Mullet – sea	20*		
Mullet – yelloweye	20*		
Pike	20	300mm*	
Tarwhine (silver bream)	20	230mm	
Whiting – sand, school, yellowfin	20*		
<i>All fish not in other categories except baitfish of the sardine and anchovy families (clupeidae and engravididae), redfin perch, goldfish, carp and talapia</i>	20*		

6 (d) Crustaceans

CRUSTACEANS		
<i>Species</i>	<i>Current management</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
Prawns, king & school	Bag limit 9 litres	No change
Rock lobster	Bag limit 8, boat limit 16,	Link boat limit to number of licensed fishers – see Recommendation 9 (boat limits)
Crab - blue manna	Bag limit 24, boat limit 48	Bag limit 20, boat limit 40

6 (e) Cephalopods

CEPHALOPODS		
<i>Species</i>	<i>Current management</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
Squid, octopus, cuttlefish	Combined bag limit 15 per fisher, boat limit 30	No change

6 (f) Shellfish

The current bag limit for abalone (possession limit of 20 Roe’s abalone) and mussels (nine litres) should continue to apply. For the following species, it is proposed that a daily bag limit of two litres should apply, with the exception of razorfish and scallops for which a bag limit of 20 should apply. The collection of other shellfish and live corals should be prohibited.

SHELLFISH		
<i>Species</i>	<i>Current management</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
Abalone, Roe’s	Possession limit 20, bag limit 20	No change
Mussels	Bag limit 9 litres	No change
Cockles (<i>Cardiidae</i> family), pipis (<i>Donacidae</i> family)	Bag limit 2 litres	Bag limit 2 litres
Sea urchins (<i>Echinoderms</i>)	Bag limit of 40	Bag limit 2 litres
Razorfish (<i>Pinna bicolor</i>), scallops (<i>Pectinidae</i> family)	Bag limit 2 litres	Bag limit 20
Live coral and other shellfish	-	Totally protected

Recommendation 7 – Landing of Whole Fish

Filleting or dismembering of fish at sea should not be permitted. Fish can be gilled and gutted, but must be landed in a whole form. If a fishing trip involves an overnight stay on an island, fish landed on it may be filleted and then transported back to the mainland.

Recommendation 8 – Accumulation of Fish at Sea

In the interests of equity and conservation of key fish species, no accumulation of fish should be permitted above the recommended possession limit of whole fish.

Regulation 20 (2) of the *Fish Resources Management Regulations 1995*, which allows people to accumulate specific species of fish while living on board a boat, should be repealed.

Recommendation 9 – Recreational Boat Limit

9 (a) A boat limit of twice the daily bag limit should apply for Category 1 Fish only. However, if there are more than two anglers on a recreational boat, or more than two paying customers on board a licensed fishing tour, an additional two “Category 1 Fish” per person over and above the boat limit should be permitted for the third and additional recreational fishers or paying customers.

9 (b) A similar logic should apply to the taking of rock lobster, where a boat limit of 16 applies. It is proposed that if there are more than two licensed recreational fishers on a recreational boat, or more than two paying clients on a licensed dive charter, the third and additional licensed recreational fishers should be allowed possession of two lobsters each.

Recommendation 10 – Possession Limits for the West Coast Region

- 20kg of fillets or part of fish, or
- 10kg of fillets plus one day’s bag limit of whole fish, or
- two days’ bag limit of whole fish

Recommendation 11 – Closures to Fishing

11 (a) The take and landing of baldchin groper at the Abrolhos Islands should be prohibited within the Fish Habitat Protection Area from November to March inclusive.

11 (b) The take and landing of pink snapper should be prohibited from 15 September to 30 November between Cape Bouvard and the Ocean Reef Marina.

Both these proposals should be developed through negotiation with the commercial fishing industry. They should apply to both commercial and recreational fishers to be effective.

Recommendation 12 – Set and Haul Net Fishing

12 (a) Set nets should be prohibited for recreational fishers in the west coast, except for attended set nets in the Peel/Harvey and Leschenault estuaries and the Hardy Inlet.

12 (b) Within the Peel/Harvey and Leschenault estuaries and Hardy Inlet outside existing closures, attended set nets should be permitted only on Wednesday nights. Set nets should have a mesh size of 63mm with a maximum length of 30m, a maximum drop of 25 meshes and float from the surface. All attended nets should be lifted and cleaned every hour.

12 (c) Throw and haul nets should continue to be permitted in ocean waters throughout the region (except for any waters currently closed to netting). Haul nets should have a mesh size of 75mm, with a maximum length of 60m and a maximum drop of 25 meshes.

Recommendation 13 – Prawn Drag Nets

13 (a) Hand trawl nets (drag nets) should be prohibited for recreational fishers in the Peel/Harvey and Leschenault estuaries.

13 (b) Hand trawl nets (drag nets) should be prohibited for recreational fishers in the waters adjoining nature reserves on the Swan River.

Recommendation 14 – Changes to Legal Fishing Gear

14 (a) Unattended set lines should be prohibited. Attendance should be defined as “recreational fishers must be within 10 metres of any line which is being fished”.

The legal permitted fishing methods should be drafted as regulations within the *Fish Resources Management Regulations 1995*.

14 (b) One attended bait trap per person (saltwater only) should be allowed. Bait traps should be clearly marked to identify ownership. The legal dimensions of a bait trap should be defined.

Recommendation 15 – Fishing Competitions

15 (a) All fishing competitions with more than 100 participants should formally be registered in advance with the Department of Fisheries.

15 (b) Competition organisers should keep an accurate record of participation and ‘catch and effort’ - and forward catch returns to the Department of Fisheries for inclusion in the recreational fisheries database.

15 (c) The Department of Fisheries should develop a formal code of conduct for fishing competitions in consultation with fishing clubs and organising bodies. Competitions should be conducted in line with recreational fishing ethics and meet requirements under the *Animal Welfare Bill*.

Recommendation 16 – Position Statement on Recreational Fishing by Indigenous People

It is recognised that in the past, members of the Aboriginal community have collected fish to provide food for their community, and there should be provision to allow this custom to continue in the future. In certain circumstances – such as Aboriginal ceremonies – members of the Aboriginal community should be allowed to collect fish for the whole community.

Where these activities involve the possibility of exceeding the daily bag limit, such fishing should be carried out only with prior written approval from the Department of Fisheries. In the interest of preserving fish stocks, no-one should be allowed to keep undersize fish, use illegal fishing gear or fish outside approved times or in areas closed to fishing.

The working group noted that the Minister for Fisheries has appointed an Aboriginal Fishing Strategy Working Group. This working group will make recommendations to government relating to Aboriginal customary and subsistence fishing issues. The working group believes Recommendation 16 should be referred to the Aboriginal Fishing Strategy Working Group, noting the strong community support received in submissions.

2.4 Protecting Recreational Fishing Quality

Recommendation 17 – Code for Recreational Fishing at Rottnest Island

Given the special status of Rottnest Island, the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group has developed the following code of practice:

- When visiting the island, catch only enough fish to eat fresh for yourself and family.
- Take the time to release all undersize or unwanted fish.
- Regardless of the length of your stay on Rottnest, do not take more than one day's bag limit of fish away from the island.
- Take a camera, not a speargun.
- Respect the sanctuary areas around Thomson Bay and Parker Point and stay on marked trails to protect the fragile environment.

Recommendation 18 – Position Statement on Restocking as a Stock Enhancement Strategy

Management of wild fish stocks should be the primary focus for recreational fisheries management.

Restocking should only be considered as a strategy to assist with the recovery of a stock where it can be identified that the stock has been significantly depleted and its recovery is endangered or will be prolonged.

To minimise any ecological impacts, all stock enhancement projects should be assessed against disease, biodiversity and genetic diversity criteria. Any stock enhancement project should also be adequately monitored and evaluated.

2.5 Resource Sharing

Recommendation 19 – Resource Sharing

Sustainable catch shares for key recreational fishing species should be determined by negotiations with the commercial fishing sector through a resource-sharing process.

19 (a) Commercial fishing, which has a significant impact on the quality of the recreational fishery, should be restricted within three nautical miles of the coast. This includes the West Coast Demersal Gillnet and Longline Fishery; trawl fisheries and commercial wetline fishing. The working group believes there is a case for extending this restriction in areas of high recreational use – for example, for five nautical miles around Kalbarri.

19 (b) Herring and tailor have a high recreational value and low commercial value. Priority for their management should be recreational and the recreational catch share should reflect their importance to this sector.

Further, the total herring catch should be managed within Total Allowable Catch (TAC) parameters for both recreational and commercial fishing sectors. Resource-sharing should be achieved through creating a purely recreational fishery on WA's west coast and a reduction in commercial catch on the south coast.

The aim should be to adjust the current 80 per cent commercial / 20 per cent recreational catch shares for herring to 50 per cent for each sector. This should encourage 'value-adding' within the commercial fishery and an improved social and economic return to the WA community.

19 (c) The commercial take of tailor south of Shark Bay should be phased-out, in recognition of their high value as a recreational fishing species and low commercial value.

19 (d) Commercial salmon fishing should not be allowed on beaches in the west coast zone over Easter and the Anzac Day holiday periods.

19 (e) The ban on recreational netting upstream of Fisher Road on the Blackwood River, near Augusta, should also apply to commercial netting, to protect black bream stocks.

19 (f) A minimum level of commercial fishing should be retained in the major estuary systems on the west coast to provide monitoring data on fish

abundance and a source of fresh fish for consumers. A ceiling on commercial fishing ‘catch and effort’ should be established in these waters, along with complementary controls on recreational fishing, which are consistent with their ‘priority’ recreational use and limited stock productivity.

- 19 (g) No commercial finfish fishing (purse seine, wetline, demersal gill net and long line) should be allowed within two nautical miles of Rottnest Island.
- 19 (h) No commercial finfish fishing should be allowed in the shallow waters (under 10m) around the Abrolhos Islands.
- 19 (i) Fees for commercial Fishing Boat Licences (FBLs) should be on parity with licences for Category 1 Fishing Tour Operators (charter fishing). Fees from these licenses should be placed in a trust account and, as a priority, used to fund structured catch surveys to validate commercial fishing returns and identify unreported catch.
- 19 (j) The working group supports management being implemented for the commercial ‘wetline’ fishing fleet and the benchmark date of November 1997 for continued access to the wetline fishery. It recommends that the fleet pay for the cost of its fishery management.

2.6 Protection of Fish Habitats

Recommendation 20 – Low Impact Wilderness Fishing Experiences

The area north of Kalbarri to the Zuytdorp Cliffs should be managed on a trial basis as a remote wilderness fishing area. The trial should determine the level of community support and potential for retaining wilderness-fishing values in the area.

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group defines a wilderness area as:

“An area previously protected by a high level of remoteness which provided a unique fishing experience unavailable in other areas, and characterised by getting there under your own steam.”

The working group agrees on the following guiding principles for the management of wilderness areas:

- low take, and
- low environmental impact

The working group believes that a code of practice for beach fishing and associated beach access should be developed by the local community. It notes that this issue applies to beach fishing and access by recreational fishers and tour operators, not commercial boat fishing.

Recommendation 21 – Protection of Sensitive Habitat Areas and Fish Stocks Around New Marina Developments

- 21 (a) Developers should contribute funds for the management of fish resources and the marine environment when there is an increase in recreational fishing as a result of building new marinas and boat ramps.
- 21 (b) Where possible, developers should investigate opportunities to establish new fish habitat as part of a marina development and ensure continued public access to water; for example, habitat for cobbler in the Mandurah canals and launching access at the North Fremantle residential development between the two traffic bridges.
- 21 (c) If there are unique or important fish habitats close to a new facility, these should be set aside as ‘no-go’ areas. Any areas of this kind should be determined during the development of the site, following scientific assessment.
- 21 (d) Any proposals for a new commercial fishery need to take into account the sensitive nature of the marine environment and the value of the area to recreational fishing.

2.7 Improving Community Stewardship – Education and Compliance

Recommendation 22 – West Coast Region Community Education Plan

22 (a) *Regional Fishing Guide*

A comprehensive guide to recreational fishing in the West Coast Region should be produced to inform and educate fishers about regional management, ethics, research, conservation and the protection of fish stocks and the environment.

22 (b) *Educational Resource Materials*

Practical educational tools such as measuring gauges, fish rulers, adhesive bag limit guides and boat ramp and fishing venue signs should support the regional fishing guide.

22 (c) *Annual Media Campaign*

There should be an annual media campaign to promote responsible recreational fishing ethics in the West Coast Region.

Recommendation 23 – Additional Patrol Capacity

The working group believes that best practice is for Fisheries Officers and VFLOs to achieve a ten per cent contact-to-trip ratio with recreational fishers. To achieve this contact rate, an additional eight patrols (16 Fisheries Officers) should be dedicated to recreational field compliance and education during peak fishing seasons in the West Coast Region.

The placement of Fisheries Officers should be considered within a statewide education and compliance-planning framework. Resources should be allocated to regions to meet seasonal fluctuations in fishing pressure. This could involve using part-time, seasonal Fisheries Officers at weekends.

These resources should be allocated to:

- Kalbarri-Port Gregory. One additional patrol crew, based in Kalbarri. At present, effective compliance presence is sporadic at best.
- Abrolhos Islands. One additional patrol crew to service the peak season fishing at sea and in the Geraldton area.
- Jurien Bay-Lancelin. One additional patrol crew, based in Jurien Bay.
- Perth North Metro: Hillarys-Yanchep. One additional patrol crew, based at Hillarys, to cover the northern suburbs from Hillarys up to Two Rocks.
- Perth South Metro. Two additional patrol crews based in Fremantle to provide additional compliance for the Swan River, Cockburn Sound and Warnbro Sound.
- Mandurah/Bunbury. One additional patrol crew during the summer crab and tailor fishing seasons.
- Busselton. One additional patrol crew for Geographe Bay and the Capes region

Recommendation 24 (a) – Volunteer Fisheries Liaison Officer (VFLO) Program

The VFLO program must be adequately resourced with educational materials and support from Department of Fisheries staff. A priority for VFLO groups should be direct angler contact through exercises such as beachfront educational patrols. This will assist in achieving a target contact rate of 10 per cent (of fishing trips being carried out in the region) by VFLOs and Fisheries Officers.

Recommendation 24 (b) – Junior VFLO Program

The working group does not support a VFLO cadet-style of program run by the Department of Fisheries, due to ‘duty of care’ concerns. It supports existing education programs in schools and fishing clubs, but believes they should be more focused on fish and aquatic conservation.

To foster involvement of young fishers, funding should be available for community-based groups such as fishing clubs to run junior educational activities that encourage the involvement of parents.

Groups that obtaining funding for activities of this kind should be required to report on the outcomes of these activities.

Recommendation 25 – Recreational Fishing Management Officer

A person should be appointed within the Department of Fisheries to be responsible for implementing the West Coast Regional Review, coordinating community consultation and education activities, and providing executive support for community advisory committees.

Recommendation 26 – Regional Recreational Fisheries Council

A Regional Recreational Fisheries Council should be established to oversee the implementation and operation of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Management Strategy.

The council should replace the existing Regional Recreational Fishing Advisory Committees (RRFACs) in the West Coast Region. To ensure proper regional representation, two representatives from each current RRFAC should be appointed to the council. The new council should report to the Minister for Fisheries as part of the State Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee network.

Representation on the council should be regional and expertise-based, and the Department of Fisheries should be formally included as a committee member, rather than simply providing executive support.

2.8 Providing Adequate Resources for Management and Enhancement

Recommendation 27 – Funding for Recreational Fisheries Management

The State Government should increase funding for core recreational fisheries management throughout WA to meet a massive 300 per cent increase in demand experienced since 1987. Options for funding include any or all of the following means:

- Increase government funding.
- Institute a resource rent on the commercial fishing sector.
- Recover a percentage of GST raised by expenditure on activities and equipment associated with recreational fishing.
- Institute a contribution from - or levy on - those associated with the development of marinas and industrial projects that have a direct impact on recreational fishing.
- Introduce additional fishing licenses, as appropriate.

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group has recommended that

government should increase funding for recreational fishing management activities across the state to at least an additional \$4 million over and above current levels. \$1 million of the additional funding should be allocated to the west coast region. Future increases in funding should be indexed to increases in fishing pressure.

Priorities for funding are:

- research;
- compliance;
- education and community programs; and
- recreational fishing enhancement through funding for projects such as artificial reefs, developing inland fishing opportunities to take pressure off estuary and marine systems, and structured restocking trials for species identified as depleted.

SECTION 3 OVERVIEW OF WEST COAST REGIONAL REVIEW

In May 1999, the Minister for Fisheries appointed a working group to develop a recreational fishing strategy for the coast between Kalbarri and Augusta to help protect the future quality of recreational fishing on the west coast of WA.

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group is comprised of members representing a range of interests covering tourism, conservation, recreational fishing and commercial fishing.

All working group members accepted their appointments on a voluntary basis and, with the exception of the Chairman, did not receive any sitting fees.

3.1 Membership

<i>Chairman</i>	Mr Ken Pech	Community
<i>Executive Officer</i>	Mr Nathan Harrison	Department of Fisheries
<i>Committee Members</i>	<i>Representing</i>	
Mr Andrew Cribb	Department of Fisheries	
Mr Pino Monaco	Metro RRFAC	
Mr Geoff Bury	Peel RRFAC	
Mr Barry Dawes	South-West RRFAC	
Mrs Anne Franks	Mid-West RRFAC	
Mr Russel McCarthy	Community representative	
Mr Robert McCarthy	Community representative	
WAFIC representative	Commercial fishing industry	
Mr Les Rochester	Recfishwest representative	
Mr Wendy Payne	Conservation interests	
Mr Jamie Waite	Tourism interests	
Mr Graham Maunder	Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee	

3.2 Background on Working Group Members

Ken Pech AM, JP

Ken is a farmer in the Great Southern Region and was appointed by the Minister for Fisheries because of his facilitation skills and independence from any sector of the fishing community. Ken is a past President of the Shire of Gnowangerup and past President of the Western Australian Municipal Association. He has extensive experience chairing both community and industry-based committees and advisory groups.

Andrew Cribb

Andrew is the Department of Fisheries' Recreational Fisheries Program Manager. Andrew is responsible for setting the strategic policy direction for recreational fisheries and managing the recreational fishing program team. He is an experienced angler who enjoys fishing from the beach and exploring inshore waters in his 4m boat.

Jamie Waite

Jamie is a keen recreational fisher with extensive fishing experience for offshore demersal species such as WA dhufish and pink snapper. He has considerable knowledge of boat and beach fishing in the Kalbarri area, and is a joint owner operator of Kalbarri Seafront Villas.

Les Rochester

Les is Chairman of Recfishwest, the independent organisation established to represent the interests of recreational fishers. He is a keen diver and boat fisher and enjoys fishing for tailor and mulloway in the Kalbarri area.

Robert McCarthy JP, NM

Bob is a first generation farmer near the Great Southern town of Williams and has served on many community-based committees. Besides fly-fishing for trout in his well-stocked dam, Bob is a keen game fisherman and enjoys fishing for a range of pelagic species including marlin, sailfish, tuna and mackerel.

Russell McCarthy

Russell is the owner-operator of a fishing and camping store in Mandurah. He is a keen club angler who particularly enjoys fishing the beaches and rivers of the South-West.

Graham Maunder

As the manager of a Geraldton tackle shop, Graham has extensive knowledge of inshore and offshore fishing around the Mid-West including the Abrolhos Islands. He particularly enjoys shore fishing for tailor and mulloway, and sport fishing for pelagic species such as tuna and mackerel.

Wendy Payne

Wendy is a member of the Australian Marine Conservation Society and has a strong desire to see appropriate safeguards established to protect the marine environment. She also enjoys land-based fishing for a range of popular angling species.

Barry Dawes

Barry is a retired engineer living close to the Blackwood River and enjoys net and line fishing in the Hardy Inlet and fishing for King George whiting inshore around Augusta. He is also an active member of the Volunteer Fisheries Liaison Officer (VFLO) Program.

Pino Monaco

Pino lives in Perth and is the managing partner of a city law firm and a keen sportsman. He enjoys shore-based and river fishing in the metropolitan area.

Anne Franks

Anne is a joint owner operator of the Greenough River Caravan Park and has been involved in the tourism industry for over ten years. She is also a member of the Abrolhos Islands Management Advisory Committee and a Greenough Shire Councilor.

Geoff Bury

Geoff is a keen diver and inshore fisher around the Mandurah area and also enjoys freshwater fishing in the South-West. He has worked for Alcoa as a fitter for over 20 years and has also been involved in the VFLO program since its inception in Mandurah in 1995.

Commercial Fishing Representative

Martin Holtz represented the interests of the commercial fishing industry during the development of the draft management strategy. Due to his resignation from the West Australian Fishing Industry Council (WAFIC), he was no longer able to represent the interests of the commercial fishing industry. WAFIC was invited to send a representative to attend all working group meetings held to review public submissions and formulate final recommendations.

3.3 Terms of Reference of the Review

- To identify the key issues and development opportunities facing recreational fishing in the West Coast Region.
- To prepare a draft five-year recreational fishery management strategy for the region, consistent with the strategic directions identified in the Coalition [Liberal/National] Fisheries Policy and the Department of Fisheries' Recreational Fisheries Program business plan.
- To identify management and resourcing needs - and possible funding strategies - for implementation of the plan.
- To conduct extensive public consultation, including key stakeholders.
- To make final recommendations to the Minister for Fisheries for the management of recreational fisheries over five years within the West Coast Region.

3.4 Process of Review

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group recognised that development of effective management strategies for recreational fishing must involve the recreational fishing community, as it is recreational fishers themselves who value the future of recreational fishing more than any other group in the community.

During development of the draft strategy, public meetings were held so that the community could raise issues to be considered in future planning for recreational fishing. Six public meetings were held in the following regional centres:

- Busselton
- Bunbury
- Mandurah
- Perth
- Geraldton
- Kalbarri

The issues and suggestions raised at these meetings were incorporated into the discussion paper *A Quality Future for Recreational Fishing on the West Coast* (Fisheries Management Paper No. 139), which was released for public comment in July 2000.

The discussion paper was publicised through print and electronic media and by direct mail, with the aim of attracting community feedback on all proposals.

During the public comment period, eight public meetings were held in the following regional centres to brief the community on the issues and proposals raised in the discussion paper:

- Busselton
- Bunbury
- Mandurah
- Perth
- Jurien Bay
- Geraldton
- Katanning
- Northam

Most of the public meetings were well attended and members of the community used the opportunity to comment on proposals in the discussion paper.

Briefings were also held with a number of angling clubs, which requested specific meetings to discuss various proposals.

When the public discussion period ended, the working group had received a total of 1,267 submissions.

The group met in late 2000 and early 2001 to discuss the submissions and formulate final recommendations to the Minister for Fisheries.

SECTION 4 OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group would like to thank the people and associations who took the time to complete submissions on the proposals and issues outlined in its discussion paper *A Quality Future for Recreational Fishing on the West Coast* (Fisheries Management Paper No. 139).

The comments and suggestions provided valuable feedback that was analyzed in detail.

Proposals on managing the recreational catch, resource-sharing and funding for management attracted the greatest comment. The key issues raised by the community on all proposals are detailed in ‘Section 5 – Issues and Recommendations’ of this document.

In addition to individual community members who completed submissions, the working group would like to thank Regional Recreational Fishing Advisory Committees, peak industry associations such as Recfishwest and WAFIC, and fishing clubs which took the time to complete submissions.

The group received the following written submissions from the public:

- 1,249 individuals
- 8 fishing clubs and recreational fishing associations
- 2 conservation groups
- 4 Regional Recreational Fishing Advisory Committees
- 3 commercial fishing associations
- 1 tourist association

1,267 TOTAL

The working group considered all the comments that were made in submissions. It took into account not only the frequency with which issues were raised, but also discussed the validity of various comments. The working group also noted and considered views and issues raised during public meetings.

A summary of the level of support for each proposal as indicated in submissions is attached in Appendix B of this document.

SECTION 5 ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Guiding Principles for Management

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Group proposed a set of guiding principles in the discussion paper *A Quality Future for Recreational Fishing on the West Coast* (Fisheries Management Paper No. 139) upon which it believes recreational fisheries management in the West Coast Region should be based.

Ninety per cent of submissions supported the proposed principles for management. The working group noted that some comments raised on other proposals in the draft strategy had relevance to the setting of principles for management. These included relating rules for different species to their level of risk of overexploitation, and considering ecosystem and habitat sustainability requirements in fisheries management.

To address these issues the group has recommended two additional principles:

- Fisheries management should take into consideration ecosystem and habitat sustainability.
- Recreational fishing rules for various species should relate to the level of risk of over-exploitation of the species.

The working group endorsed all proposed guiding principles, including the additional two outlined above.

Recommendation 1 – Key Principles for Management

- Government should ensure that adequate funding is available for comprehensive research and effective management of recreational fishing.
- A key aim should be to ensure that the biodiversity of fish communities and their habitats, and sustainability of fish stocks, are preserved.
- Fisheries management should take into consideration ecosystem and habitat sustainability.
- Fisheries management should incorporate controls and measures that anticipate and cover increasing numbers of recreational fishers and their impact on fish stocks.
- Management should be based on the best available information and, where critical information is unavailable, a precautionary approach should be adopted to minimise risk to fish stocks.
- Fishing rules should acknowledge the importance of equitable access to fishing opportunities across recreational user groups.
- The value of recreational fishing should be clearly recognised and given proper

weight in all government and community planning processes; for example, with regard to marine parks and industrial developments.

- Fishing rules should be kept simple and, where possible and practical, made uniform across the region.
- Recreational fishing rules for different species should relate to the level of risk of over-exploitation of the species.
- Recreational fishing rules should be designed to protect the sustainability of stocks and manage the total recreational catch, as well as protect fish at vulnerable stages in their life cycle – for example, during spawning aggregations.
- Benefits from management of the total recreational catch should flow back to the recreational sector and be reflected in maintaining or improving fishing quality and sustainability.
- Processes that support the integrated management of fish stocks should be implemented to resolve resource-sharing issues.

5.2 Information for Management – Biology, Catch and Fishery Performance

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group's proposals that a major catch survey should be carried out to collect quality time-series data on recreational fishing activity and a volunteer angler logbook program should be introduced received 91 per cent support in submissions.

The comments made were positive, with people agreeing that comprehensive catch and effort information is essential for effective management and to assist with the resolution of resource-sharing issues.

In considering feedback on the survey proposal, the working group was concerned that some past surveys had only picked up boat-based catches. Future surveys should be comprehensive and include the total shore and boat-based recreational catch.

There was strong support for the volunteer angler logbook program. However, the working group noted some concern over the accuracy of information recorded in a voluntary log book, and that the log books may not represent an accurate cross-section of recreational catches.

As a result, the group believes that logbooks should not be used to estimate total recreational catches, but rather to provide information on trends in the catch of regular fishers.

The group also noted that for any logbook program to work effectively, volunteers who supply information must receive regular feedback. On this basis, resources must be set aside for the coordination and administration of the logbook program.

Rather than establishing a completely new logbook program, an existing program run by the Department of Fisheries should be reviewed and expanded to all key fishing centres in the West Coast Region and supported with the necessary resources.

Recommendation 2 – Major Catch Survey

A major recreational catch survey should be undertaken every year for a minimum of three years to establish a baseline data set for recreational fishing on the west coast. The catch survey should be comprehensive and cover all aspects of shore and boat fishing in the region.

The major catch survey should then be repeated at a minimum of every three years, so as to provide detailed information about the spatial and temporal distribution of recreational fishing activity and catches, as a basis for management decisions.

As a subset, information should be collected annually on indicator fish species and fishing areas, in order to monitor recreational fishing quality.

Recommendation 3 – Volunteer Angler Logbook Program

The Department of Fisheries should review and expand the current voluntary angler log book program to all key recreational fishing centres in the West Coast Region. This program should be used for additional monitoring of trends among regular fishers. It is essential that the program be provided with adequate resources to ensure timely compilation of information and feedback to participants.

5.2.1 Species Biology

In its discussion paper (Fisheries Management Paper No. 139), the working group identified the need for more research on key recreational species in the West Coast Region. While a considerable amount of biological information is known about some species, little stock assessment information is available on most species.

The working group's proposal for a list of 'priority species' that research should be carried out upon received 92 per cent support in submissions. Given the need for more research data on key species and strong community support for the proposal, the group endorsed the proposed list of species with the addition of coral trout, due to its high value north of Geraldton and around the Abrolhos Islands.

Recommendation 4 – Priority Species for Research

Research should be undertaken on key recreational species in the West Coast Region – in the order of priority as indicated below – to provide information on species biology and stock structure. Predictive fisheries stock assessment models and, where practical, indices of recruitment of fish into stocks, should then be developed for the following important species:

Offshore	Inshore/beach	Estuarine
1. WA dhufish 2. Pink snapper 3. King George whiting 4. Baldchin groper 5. Breaksea cod 6. Coral trout	1. Tailor 2. Herring 3. Skipjack 4. Whiting (all species) 5. Mulloway	1. Black bream 2. Flathead/flounder 3. Crabs 4. Yellowfin whiting

5.2.2 *Quality Indicators for Recreational Fishing*

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group’s proposed list of ‘fishing quality indicators’ received 85 per cent support from those who provided submissions on the draft strategy. Submissions raised the point that environmental effects such as weather, currents and the El Nino phenomenon must be taken into consideration, as changes to abundance cannot be linked solely to fishing pressure.

The working group accepted this point and also the suggestion that herring and Spanish mackerel be added to the ‘fishing quality indicator’ list. It supported the inclusion of herring due to its importance to the recreational fishing catch and the seasonal nature of the fishery. Spanish mackerel, while low in abundance across the region, were supported for inclusion due to their high value as pelagic sport fish and their seasonal abundance north of Geraldton.

The working group acknowledged many comments that recreational fishers want to be involved in research programs. It believes the volunteer angler logbook program provides this opportunity, and that there is value in linking this program with the ‘fishing quality indicators’. For example, if 100 dedicated tailor anglers in the West Coast Region were collecting and submitting records of tailor catches, this data could provide valuable information on catch trends, including changes in the abundance or size of fish.

Recommendation 5 – Fishing Quality Indicators

A range of ‘fishing quality indicators’ based on angler surveys should be developed to identify trends in fishing quality in the region and assist in the review of the effectiveness of this strategy. These indicators should cover fishing quality, diversity and the value associated with the fishing experience.

It is proposed that these species be used as key indicators:

Offshore	Inshore/beach	Estuarine
1. Breaksea cod 2. Baldchin groper 3. Coral trout 4. WA dhufish 5. Pink snapper 6. Spanish mackerel 7. Queen snapper	1. Herring 2. King George whiting 3. Australian salmon 4. Sand whiting 5. Tailor	1. Black bream 2. Blue swimmer (manna) crab 3. Flathead/flounder 4. Whiting (all species?)

5.3 Protecting Vulnerable Fish and Managing the Recreational Catch

5.3.1 Bag and Size Limits

In its draft discussion paper, the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group divided finfish species into three broad categories to which mixed bag and species bag limits should apply.

The proposed bag limit for 'Trophy Fish' (mixed bag limit of 4) received 40 per cent support.

Of the 56 per cent of submissions that disagreed with the proposed mixed bag limit of four Trophy Fish, 125 people (10 per cent of submissions) disagreed because they believed the allowable take of Trophy Fish should be higher. An additional 106 people (nine per cent of submissions) disagreed because they thought the bag limit for certain Trophy Fish should be lower than four.

While there was support for a three-tier approach to bag limits, there was limited community backing for a single mixed bag limit for the demersal species that require the greatest protection.

The working group believes that bag limits are a front-line conservation control and have a vital role in managing the recreational fishing community's share of the total catch within sustainable limits.

In seeking to properly manage the recreational catch, the working group could not ignore the fact that recreational fishing has grown significantly during the last decade. In that time, participation has more than doubled from 287,000 fishers in 1987 to more than 600,000 in 2001. Most importantly, people are fishing more often - over the same period fishing effort has tripled from three million angler days to 10 million angler days.

The West Coast Region between Kalbarri and Augusta attracts the highest level of recreational fishing activity around the state. Of the 600,000-plus fishers in WA, 380,000 are estimated to go fishing in the West Coast Region for over four million angler days per year.

The working group came to the view that the current set of bag limits, which have been in place since the early 1990s, are largely "social" limits. That is, they are largely based on what is deemed to be a fair and reasonable catch, rather than being linked expressly to the biology or abundance of species. A copy of the current State bag and size limits is included in Appendix D.

By 2010 recreational fishing pressure in the West Coast Region is expected to increase to 5.4 million angler days. Given this increase, future management controls on various species should focus on the level of risk of overexploitation.

The working group also foreshadows a compelling need to integrate management of the region’s fish resources. Having completely separate management streams for commercial and recreational fishing will not guarantee sustainability of stocks for either sector.

Integrated management will need to incorporate requirements for ecologically sustainable development including:

- biological (stock status);
- ecological (ecosystem requirements); and
- social (resource shares reflecting community values).

Species at higher risk will require more intensive research and management that constrains both the recreational and commercial catch.

In its draft discussion paper, the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group gave a detailed explanation of the tools available to manage recreational fishing. A summary of these controls is provided below:

POSSIBLE MANAGEMENT CONTROLS FOR RECREATIONAL FISHING				
Attitudinal and Behavioural Management	Regulatory			
	Input Controls		Output Controls	
	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Sectoral</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Sectoral</i>
Education	Gear	Area closure	Bag limit	Catch quota
	Licences	Seasonal closure	Possession limit	
		Effort quota	Trip limits	
			Size limit	
			Tags	

The working group said there would be confusion if each region developed its own bag limit structures with different categories and names.

To simplify bag limits, the working group believes three standard categories should apply across the State: 'Category 1 Fish' (requiring the greatest protection); 'Category 2 Fish' (moderate protection); and 'Category 3 Fish' (lower level of protection).

It is proposed these three categories should apply as a standard template for each region, for practical/commonsense reasons. Specific bag limits for various species may change between regions depending on levels of abundance and fishing pressure. Effective bag limits must be based on an assessment of the level of risk of overexploitation of the species, stock or local populations. [This approach for the setting of bag limits is supported by the State RFAC.]

The working group used a risk assessment matrix to link appropriate management controls to the risk of overexploitation of a species. The matrix determined specific controls such as bag, size and possession limits and closed seasons after assessing the biology and abundance of a species, as well as behavioral traits, value to recreational fishers and fishing pressure. A copy of the risk assessment matrix is included in Appendix A.

It was acknowledged that risk to various species will change over time and limits will need to be reviewed in light of future changes in stock status, fishing pressure, environmental conditions and the community opinion on best use of a particular stock.

Ideally, the establishment of biological reference points for particular species or stocks that trigger predetermined management action is required. In reality, this information will not yet be available for many species and may take some time to collect. In the absence of such data, a range of alternative management triggers may need to be developed, such as trends in effort, catch, catch structure, catch composition and changes in stock structure, fishing practices and social values.

With regard to 'Category 1 Fish' (Trophy Fish in discussion paper), it was accepted that some fishers want to take more than the proposed mixed bag limit of four fish. However, to protect highly vulnerable species an increase in the mixed bag limit would require lower individual species bag limits.

The working group noted support for this approach in many submissions. It believes some reduced individual bag limits will be essential, given the sharp projected increases in recreational fishing effort and the fact that anglers are constantly using new advances in technology to locate and catch fish.

To allow a greater mixed bag limit for Category 1 Fish, the working group has recommended an overall mixed bag limit of six fish. However, due to the dramatic increase in recreational fishing effort in the region, the group supports a 50 per cent reduction in individual bag limits for species now categorized as "Prize fish". At the same time it notes that future bag limit reductions for key species as a means of managing total catch may be socially unacceptable and ineffective, and that other measures will need to be canvassed.

The working group said that lower individual limits within a higher overall mixed bag would address the concerns of the 106 people (nine per cent of submissions) who raised this as an issue within this key category.

On the proposal for Category 2 Fish (Prize Fish in the discussion paper Fisheries Management Paper No. 139) of a mixed bag limit of 16 – with not more than eight of each species – 54 per cent of submissions indicated support. Of the submissions that disagreed, 70 of them (six per cent of submissions) said the bag limit should be lower.

Forty-five submissions (four per cent of submissions) urged that King George whiting be included in this category. After assessing the risk of overexploitation, it was agreed that King George whiting be included as a Category 2 Fish. Following the use of the risk assessment matrix, the working group also recommended that cobbler and black bream require a higher level of protection than the proposed bag limit of eight.

Based on the risk of overexploitation and a tripling in fishing pressure over the last 10 years, the working group supported a mixed bag limit of 16, with an individual bag limit of eight for most species. However, the group recommended a bag limit of four for black bream due to their vulnerability. It also recommended that cobbler be moved to the highest conservation category.

The working group's proposal for Category 3 Fish (Table Fish in the discussion paper) received mixed support – 30 per cent of submissions backed the option for a

mixed daily bag limit of 40 (with not more than 30 of each species), and 32 per cent supported the second option for a mixed bag limit of 30 (with not more than 20 of each species). A further 34 per cent of submissions did not support either option.

Comments focused on supporting a higher bag limit than proposed in either option (86 submissions), or a lower limit (21 submissions).

The working group does not support a higher mixed bag limit than proposed in either option.

The group believes that recreational fishing pressure on herring is intense on the west coast: about 164,000 anglers target them on an estimated 2.7 million fishing trips a year. On these broad figures, the potential catch of herring in any year under the current individual daily bag limit of 40 is in the order of 108 million or 21,600 tonnes.

However, the estimated west coast recreational catch is much lower than this at about 100 tonnes a year, so clearly there is little relationship between the current bag limit and the available catch.

It was accepted that people may want to catch a range of Category 3 Fish, and for this reason the working group supported an overall mixed daily bag limit of 40 for Category 3 Fish, noting that this is about eight times the average catch for species in this category. However, to provide additional protection in the face of increasing fishing pressure, the working group recommended an individual species limit of 20 for fish in this category.

The proposals for new minimum sizes generally received strong support, with most suggested size limits receiving between 60 per cent and 85 per cent backing. However, the proposals for two key species did not receive strong support. These were King George whiting (the proposed size limit of 280mm received 44 per cent support) and mulloway (the proposed size limit of 500mm received 50 per cent support).

Comments in submissions indicated that the minimum size should be higher. In addition, 165 people (14 per cent of submissions) indicated that the minimum size for all species should be the size at maturity.

The working group noted that juvenile mulloway and King George whiting are distributed inshore and in estuaries and are sought by recreational fishers. It believes the proposed increases for both species will help protect juvenile fish. However, rather than completely restrict the catch on juvenile King George whiting and mulloway, the working group recommends additional protection for large mulloway and King George whiting in the form of a slot limit.

The proposed minimum size of 200mm for herring and school and yellowfin whiting also received low support, with 46 per cent of submissions backing the size limit for herring and 44 per cent backing the limit for school and yellowfin whiting.

Given the abundance of these species, the low community support for the proposal and the cost of compliance for the size limit, the working group did not support a size

limit for these species and believes the primary management should continue to be the daily bag limit.

Recommendation 6 – Bag and size limits, West Coast Region

6 (a) Category 1 Fish

CATEGORY 1 FISH – TOTAL MIXED DAILY BAG LIMIT OF 6			
Category 1 Fish have a high risk of overexploitation. Fish in this category have low catch rates and levels of abundance and are highly valued for their fishing and eating qualities. Demersal Category 1 Fish are often slow growing and mature at four years +. For these reasons Category 1 Fish require a high degree of protection. (* denotes proposed change to current management)			
<i>Species</i>	<i>Species bag limit</i>	<i>Size limit</i>	<i>Other controls</i>
Billfish (sailfish, swordfish, marlins)	1*		Boat limits apply for all Category 1 Fish
Blue groper	1	600mm*	
Cobbler	4*	430mm	
Cobia	2*		Max. size 1.2m
Cods (Serranidae family) includes Breaksea and harlequin	2*	300mm*	
Coral trout	2*	450mm	Closed season Abrolhos *
WA dhufish	2*	500mm	
Baldchin groper / tuskfish	2*	450mm*	
Mackerel – Spanish,	2*	900mm	Only 1 fish over 70cm*
Mackerel – wahoo	2*	750mm	
Mackerel – shark	2*	500mm	
Mahi mahi	2*	600mm*	
Mulloway	2*	500mm*	
Nannygai / red snapper	4*	250mm*	
North-west snapper	4*	280mm	Closed season – Metro area*
Pink snapper	4*	450mm*	
Queen snapper	2*	410mm	Max. size 2m*
Red emperor	2*	410mm	
Salmon, Australian	4	300mm	
Samson fish / amberjack	2*	600mm	
Shark	2*		
Spangled emperor	4*	410mm	
Trevally, golden / giant	2*		
Tuna – southern bluefin, yellowfin, bigeye	2*		
Yellowtail kingfish	2*	500mm*	

6 (b) Category 2 Fish

CATEGORY 2 FISH – TOTAL MIXED DAILY BAG LIMIT OF 16			
Category 2 Fish have a moderate risk of overexploitation. Fish in this category are have moderate catch rates and levels of abundance, mature at three to four years and are mostly found in inshore and estuarine areas, where they are highly sought after by recreational fishers. (* denotes proposed change to current management)			
<i>Species</i>	<i>Species bag limit</i>	<i>Size limit</i>	<i>Other controls</i>
Bream – black	4*	250mm	Only 2 fish over 40cm* Only 4 fish over 35cm* Only 2 fish over 50cm*
Bonito	8		
Flathead/flounder (combined)	8*	300/250mm	
Goatfish	8*		
Whiting – King George	8*	280mm*	
Leatherjacket	8*	250mm	
Mackerel – school	4	500mm	
Mangrove jack	4*		
Skippy / trevally	8*	200mm	
Snook	8*	300mm*	
Tailor	8	300mm*	

6 (c) Category 3 Fish

CATEGORY 3 FISH – TOTAL DAILY MIXED BAG LIMIT OF 40			
Category 3 Fish have a lower risk of overexploitation. Fish in this category generally have higher catch rates and levels of abundance and are mainly found inshore. These fish have a widespread distribution and mature at two+ years. (* denotes proposed change to current management).			
<i>Species</i>	<i>Species bag limit</i>	<i>Size limit</i>	<i>Other controls</i>
Mackerel – blue	20*		
Garfish	20*		
Herring	20*		
Mullet – sea	20*		
Mullet – yelloweye	20*		
Pike	20	300mm*	
Tarwhine (silver bream)	20	230mm	
Whiting – sand, school, yellowfin	20*		
<i>All fish not in other categories except baitfish of the sardine and anchovy families (Clupeidae and Engravididae), redfin perch, goldfish, carp and talapia</i>	20*		

6 (d) Crustaceans

The working group's proposal for a possession limit of 32 rock lobsters (at the possessor's place of residence) received 33 per cent support, whereas 55 per cent of submissions supported no change to the current management arrangements for rock lobster.

Comments in 34 submissions indicated that the proposed possession limit was too restrictive. In 51 other submissions it was suggested that it would be unfair to further restrict the recreational 'take', given that the vast majority of the rock lobster catch goes to commercial fishers. However, 38 submissions suggested that the proposed possession limit was too high.

The working group has acknowledged that as fishing pressure increases, there will need to be integrated management of the rock lobster fishery, with a total allowable catch and resource shares allocated to various user groups. It may then be necessary to examine management controls such as possession limits. However, due to current low community support for the proposed possession limit, the group believes the recreational rock lobster catch should still be managed through the existing bag and size limits and closed season.

The working group's proposal for a reduction in the bag limit of blue swimmer ('blue manna') crabs from 24 to 20, and a reduction in the boat limit from 48 to 40, received 65 per cent support in submissions.

It was suggested in 44 submissions that the proposed bag limit should be higher, and in 53 submissions that it be lower.

Blue swimmer crabs constitute the State's largest recreational fishery, with an estimated 1.6 million individual or 360 tonnes of crabs caught each year, yet only seven per cent of fishers are said to achieve the current boat limit. Therefore the working group rejected the suggestion that the bag limit should be higher than proposed.

The estimated recreational effort in the Peel/Harvey and Leschenault estuaries and the Swan River alone is estimated at 316,000 crabbing days, making it the region's most popular recreational fishing activity. Given increasing recreational fishing pressure, support for reduced daily bag and boat limits, and the fact that the blue manna crab fishery is heavily dependant on new recruits each year, the working group endorsed a daily bag limit of 20 and a boat limit of 40.

CRUSTACEANS		
<i>Species</i>	<i>Current management</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
Prawns, king & school	bag limit 9 litres	no change
Rock lobster	bag limit 8, boat limit 16,	link boat limit to number of licensed fishers – see Recommendation 9 (boat limits)
Crab - blue manna	bag limit 24, boat limit 48	bag limit 20, boat limit 40

6 (e) Cephalopods

The working group believes the current bag limits for cephalopods is not excessive and should be retained. The average individual catch of squid is 3.29 (Sumner and Calligaro) and there are no concerns over the sustainability of squid stocks. Comments made in submissions did not propose alternative management arrangements.

CEPHALOPODS		
<i>Species</i>	<i>Current management</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
Squid, octopus, cuttlefish	Combined bag limit 15 per fisher, boat limit 30	No change

6 (f) Shellfish

The working group’s proposal for a daily bag limit of two litres of specified shellfish received 72 per cent support. The only issue raised was whether the bag limit applied to shucked or un-shucked shellfish - it was always the intention of the working group that the bag limit should apply to un-shucked shellfish. The group believes a daily bag limit of two litres of shucked shellfish, such as pipis, would be excessive.

Due to strong community support for the proposal, and vulnerability of shellfish populations to over-fishing, the working group endorsed the proposed bag limit for shellfish.

The current bag limit for abalone (possession limit of 20 Roe’s abalone) and mussels (nine litres) should continue to apply. For the following species, it is proposed that a daily bag limit of two litres should apply, with the exception of razorfish and scallops for which a bag limit of 20 should apply. The collection of other shellfish and live corals should be prohibited.

SHELLFISH		
<i>Species</i>	<i>Current management</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
Abalone, Roe’s	Possession limit 20, bag limit 20	No change
Mussels	Bag limit 9 litres	No change
Cockles (Cardiidae family), pipis (Donacidae family,)	Bag limit 2 litres	Bag limit 2 litres
Sea urchins (Echinoderms)	Bag limit of 40	Bag limit 2 litres
Razorfish (<i>Pinna bicolor</i>), scallops (Pectinidae family)	Bag limit 2 litres	Bag limit 20
Live coral and other shellfish	-	Totally protected

5.3.2 Landing Whole Fish

In its discussion paper (Fisheries Management Paper No. 139) the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group proposed that filleting at sea should not be permitted in the West Coast Region.

Now 58 per cent of submissions have supported the proposal, with many noting that it would be impossible to enforce bag limits and, in particular, size limits if filleting was permitted.

Of the 36 per cent of submissions that disagreed with the proposal, most believed that filleting at sea should be permitted, provided skin was left on the fillets to permit identification. The desirability of returning offal to the food chain by allowing filleting at sea was also raised as an issue.

Another option suggested was to allow filleting at sea, with the retention of the fish frame for measuring purposes. However, the point was made that if people wanted to 'fudge' on size limits, they could simply retain legal-size frames and freeze them for later use.

The working group foreshadowed that size limits would become increasingly important as fishing pressure increased and average sizes decreased towards the minimum legal length in many species.

To protect juvenile fish, Fisheries Officers needed to be in a position to check minimum sizes of whole fish at boat ramps, and therefore filleting at sea should not be permitted in the West Coast Region.

So that fishers may keep their catch in good condition when staying on islands, the working group believes enforcement of the minimum size should be at the point where fish are first landed. Fish could be gilled and gutted, but must be landed whole. Once landed, the fish could then be filleted and later transported to the mainland.

The onus of proof should be on recreational fishers to provide evidence of an overnight stay on an island.

Recommendation 7 – Landing of Whole Fish

Filleting or dismembering of fish at sea should not be permitted. Fish can be gilled and gutted, but must be landed in a whole form. If a fishing trip involves an overnight stay on an island, fish landed on it may be filleted and then transported back to the mainland.

5.3.3 Accumulation of Fish at Sea

A proposal that recreational fishers should not be allowed to accumulate daily bag limits while spending extended periods at sea on board a boat received support from 42 per cent of submissions.

Under current regulations, fishers can accumulate daily bag limits of certain species for each day they stay on a boat. The working group believes that this creates a loophole and as bag or possession limits must be enforceable, this regulation should be rescinded.

Of the 48 per cent of submissions that disagreed with the aforementioned proposal, a significant number indicated that they would support it if they were allowed to accumulate two days' bag limit at sea. Others also suggested that accumulation should be allowed if proof of stay or living on a boat could be provided.

The working group rejected this idea, because it believes that providing a registration system for everyone going fishing on overnight or extended boat trips would be difficult and costly.

The group also considered the issue of equity between boat and shore-based fishers and believes that accumulating catches at sea is not in the spirit of fishing for the future.

Recommendation 8 – Accumulation of Fish at Sea

In the interests of equity and conservation of key fish species, no accumulation of fish should be permitted above the recommended possession limit of whole fish.

Regulation 20 (2) of the *Fish Resources Management Regulations 1995*, which allows people to accumulate specific species of fish while living on board a boat, should be repealed.

5.3.4 Boat Limits

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group's proposed boat limit of twice the daily bag limit, when there are two or more people on a boat, received the support of 41 per cent of submissions.

Of the 43 per cent of submissions that disagreed with the proposal, most said the recreational catch should be controlled by bag limits, not boat limits. Others said there should be equity between recreational fishers whether they were fishing from charter boats or privately owned craft.

The working group noted that the total recreational catch (incorporating both private and charter vessels) will need to be constrained once it approaches maximum sustainable yield. It also noted that charter boats provide boat fishing opportunities for individual fishers who may not own a boat, and that the fishing power of a single charter vessel may not be any different from that of six smaller recreational craft.

Boat limits are seen as an effective tool to manage recreational take and protect vulnerable species, given big increases in recreational fishing pressure and substantial growth in the charter industry.

The working group also agreed with submissions that said there should be equity between charter fishers and private boat anglers. To ensure such equity, it suggested a

limited take per angler above the boat limit be allowable when there were more than two people fishing.

The group also said the boat limit should apply only to Category 1 Fish – those currently requiring the greatest protection. Modified bag limits for Category 2 and 3 Fish should provide adequate protection, based on current scientific advice about their status.

Recommendation 9 – Recreational Boat Limit

- 9 (a) A boat limit of twice the daily bag limit should apply for Category 1 Fish only. However, if there are more than two anglers on a recreational boat, or more than two paying customers on board a licensed fishing tour, an additional two “Category 1 Fish” per person over and above the boat limit should be permitted for the third and additional recreational fishers or paying customers.
- 9 (b) A similar logic should apply to the taking of rock lobster, where a boat limit of 16 applies. It is proposed that if there are more than two licensed recreational fishers on a recreational boat, or more than two paying clients on a licensed dive charter, the third and additional licensed recreational fishers should be allowed possession of two lobsters each.

5.3.5 Possession Limits

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group’s proposed possession limit received support from 66 per cent of submissions. Of the 28 per cent of submissions which did not support it, a number indicated that the recreational catch should be managed solely through daily bag limits, on the basis that it is unfair to penalize people for accumulating fish on extended fishing holidays.

The working group disagrees with this rationale and considers that accumulating large quantities of fish is not sustainable. It believes, too, that daily bag limits have limited capacity to cap the total recreational catch and that there should be a ceiling on individual catches to control excessive 'take' over extended periods.

The group also noted that a possession limit could deter people from accumulating fish for illegal sale or barter. Additionally, it sees a possession limit as a way to ensure equity between shore and boat fishers.

In its draft strategy the working group proposed that boat fishers should not be allowed to accumulate daily bag limits. After considering the issues, the group now believes that if a possession limit is introduced which allows as an option “twice the daily bag limit”, boat fishers on extended trips should be able to accumulate fish up to this limit.

Recommendation 10 – Possession Limits for the West Coast Region

- 20 kg of fillets or part of fish, or

- 10 kg of fillets plus one day's bag limit of whole fish, or
- two days' bag limit of whole fish

5.3.6 Closures to Fishing

In its discussion paper (Fisheries Management Paper No. 139) the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group recommended two closures to fishing. The first was for baldchin groper at the Abrolhos Islands within the Fish Habitat Protection Area from December to March. This proposal, aimed at protecting spawning baldchin groper and reducing pressure on stocks, received 77 per cent support. A further 15 per cent indicated that they did not agree or disagree.

The second proposed closure was for pink snapper between Cape Bouvard and Ocean Reef Marina between 15 September to 30 October and received support from 70 per cent of submissions. However, some people submitted that the fishery should be managed through reductions in bag and size limits and not a closed season. A small number said that land-based fishing for snapper should be allowed.

In considering these issues, the working group noted that in the past up to 200 boats a night fished the snapper aggregations in Cockburn Sound. With an average of two people in each boat, a daily bag limit of one snapper would still amount to 400 large breeding fish potentially being caught each night.

When this figure of up to 200 boats a night is expanded over the snapper spawning season, the group believes that bag limits alone cannot provide adequate protection for spawning fish. It also believes that the closure should apply to shore and boat recreational fishers.

A number of submissions recommended that the closure should be for a longer period of time. The breeding time for pink snapper is closely linked to water temperatures, which vary from year-to-year. An examination of historical commercial catch data for Cockburn Sound indicates that in many years the peak catch is often achieved in November.

After considering this information, the working group has recommended that the closure to snapper fishing should run from 15 September to 30 November.

With regard to fishing for baldchin groper at the Abrolhos, the group was advised that the species spawns from September to January, with November-January the peak breeding time. The working group noted that the Abrolhos Islands Management Advisory Committee did not support the closure in February and March. However, given the strong community support for its proposal and the need to protect baldchin groper stocks, the working group has recommended closure during November, December, January, February and March.

The group agrees with comments in 99 submissions that the fishing closures should apply to recreational and commercial fishers. To this end, the proposed closures should be negotiated with the commercial fishing industry.

Recommendation 11 – Closures to Fishing

11 (a) The take and landing of baldchin groper at the Abrolhos Islands should be prohibited within the Fish Habitat Protection Area from November to March inclusive.

11 (b) The take and landing of pink snapper should be prohibited from 15 September to 30 November between Cape Bouvard and the Ocean Reef Marina.

Both these proposals should be developed through negotiation with the commercial fishing industry. They should apply to both commercial and recreational fishers to be effective.

5.3.7 Recreational Netting

The proposal that set netting should be prohibited for recreational fishers on the West Coast except for attended set nets in the Peel/Harvey Estuary and the Hardy Inlet received support in 62 per cent of submissions.

Comments in submissions indicated that 148 people (16 per cent of submissions) disagreed because they believe netting should not be allowed in any estuary systems. Thirteen submissions indicated that they disagreed because they were in favour of allowing netting in Leschenault Estuary.

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group believes the key issue is whether recreational fishers should be allowed continued access to sea mullet through netting – the only means of catching this species – and what fishing methods or gear configuration should be allowed to minimise bycatch of other species.

It also acknowledges that there should be a consistent management approach to estuaries where recreational netting has occurred historically.

The potential high bycatch of set nets in estuaries is due to several reasons. Estuaries are fish nursery areas, so there is always the likelihood of catches of undersize fish and juveniles. Nets are indiscriminate – in some estuaries they are likely to catch a range of species and large quantities of schooling fish.

Survival of released fish is also an issue. However, the working group noted that creel surveys in the Leschenault and Peel/Harvey estuaries suggest that set net catches comprise only a minimal part of the recreational take there.

After considering submissions the group believes that recreational fishers should be allowed to net mullet in estuaries where there they have historically done so in the past, provided that bycatch is minimised.

To help achieve this, nets should be attended and lifted and cleaned every hour. However, the group noted that research in the Peel/Harvey Estuary suggests that, with the current allowable gear, sea mullet are often a minority of the catch, even when nets are attended.

To minimise bycatch, the working group recommends that the allowable net length for attended set nets be reduced to 30m. To provide a consistent management approach, it also recommends that attended set netting in estuaries be allowed only one night a week (currently the case in the Peel/Harvey Estuary). This will reduce the potential catch of species accessible to recreational line anglers.

The working group could see no reason why netting for sea mullet should not be allowed in Leschenault Estuary under the same management arrangements as in Peel/Harvey Estuary and Hardy Inlet.

Another issue raised in submissions and during public meetings was the justification for allowing attended set netting in estuaries while not allowing haul netting in the ocean. Anecdotal information suggests that haul netting in ocean waters has a minimal bycatch of species other than mullet.

The working group acknowledges that haul nets may be used to target whiting and other species of interest to anglers. After considering the issues on the basis that haul nets are used primarily to target mullet and that a minimal bycatch occurs, the group said haul netting outside existing closed waters should be allowed to continue.

Recommendation 12 – Set and Haul Net Fishing

- 12 (a) Set nets should be prohibited for recreational fishers in the west coast, except for attended set nets in the Peel/Harvey and Leschenault estuaries and the Hardy Inlet.
- 12 (b) Within the Peel/Harvey and Leschenault estuaries and Hardy Inlet outside existing closures, attended set nets should be permitted only on Wednesday nights. Set nets should have a mesh size of 63mm with a maximum length of 30m, a maximum drop of 25 meshes and float from the surface. All attended nets should be lifted and cleaned every hour.
- 12 (c) Throw and haul nets should continue to be permitted in ocean waters throughout the region (except for any waters currently closed to netting). Haul nets should have a mesh size of 75mm, with a maximum length of 60m and a maximum drop of 25 meshes.

5.3.8 Prawn Drag Nets

A proposal that prawn drag nets be prohibited in the Peel/Harvey and Leschenault estuaries - both popular spots for recreational crabbing - received support in 39 per cent of submissions. Of the 35 per cent of submissions that disagreed with the proposal, the main issue raised was that banning drag netting would eliminate the opportunity for fishers to catch prawns.

A view also expressed was that people should be educated to return crabs caught in drag nets to the water, rather than just ban drag nets. The working group has noted that more than 150,000 people are estimated to go crabbing between Perth and Geographe Bay.

The group acknowledges that a ban on drag netting would eliminate the opportunity to catch large quantities of school prawns. However, recreational fishers would still be able to use dip nets for catching school and king prawns.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that despite extensive education programs by Volunteer Fisheries Liaison Officers and Fisheries Officers, there is still a significant bycatch of undersize and size crabs in prawn drag nets - many of which die.

In the interests of protecting the key blue swimmer crab fishery, the working group agreed with a proposal to prohibit drag nets in the Peel/Harvey and Leschenault estuaries, and in the waters around nature reserves in the Swan River.

Recommendation 13 – Prawn Drag Nets

13 (a) Hand trawl nets (drag nets) should be prohibited for recreational fishers in the Peel/Harvey and Leschenault estuaries.

13 (b) Hand trawl nets (drag nets) should be prohibited for recreational fishers in the waters adjoining nature reserves on the Swan River.

5.3.9 Changes to Legal Fishing Gear

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group's proposal that unattended set lines be prohibited received support in 85 per cent of submissions. Submission comments were supportive, and the only concern raised was how far someone could be from a rod or line before it was deemed to be unattended. The working group has recommended that the limit should be no more than 10 metres.

A second proposal that one attended bait trap per person should be allowed in saltwater received support in 69 per cent of submissions. Comments were limited, but 19 people said that no traps of any form should be used by recreational fishers.

Given that bait traps are used mainly to catch prawns and small baitfish, the group supports the use of one bait trap per person. The legal size of a trap should be defined, and traps should be attended and marked with some form of identification.

Bait traps should not be permitted in the upper reaches of rivers and in fresh water, due to their capacity to catch marron and other freshwater crustaceans.

Recommendation 15 – Fishing Competitions

15 (a) All fishing competitions with more than 100 participants should formally be registered in advance with the Department of Fisheries.

15 (b) Competition organisers should keep an accurate record of participation and 'catch and effort' - and forward catch returns to the Department of Fisheries for inclusion in the recreational fisheries database.

15 (c) The Department of Fisheries should develop a formal code of conduct for fishing competitions in consultation with fishing clubs and organizing bodies. Competitions should be conducted in line with recreational fishing ethics and meet requirements under the *Animal Welfare Bill*.

5.3.10 Fishing Competitions

Proposals on fishing competitions were in three parts. The first – that all competitions with more than 100 participants must formally register in advance with the Department of Fisheries – received support from 72 per cent of submissions.

The second – that competition organisers must keep an accurate record of participation, catch and effort, and forward catch returns to the Department of Fisheries in the recreational fisheries database – received 81 per cent support.

The third proposal - that a formal code of conduct for fishing competitions be developed - received 79 per cent support.

Most disagreement with regard to fishing competitions arose from the premise that they should be banned. Other comments urged that all fish should be gilled and gutted before the competition weigh-in, and that the number of participants allowed to register in a fishing competition should be reduced from 100 to 50.

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group has supported the criteria of 100 participants for registration. It believes that gilling and gutting before weigh-in has merit, but says this issue should be referred to a group developing a code of practice for all fishing competitions.

The working group has acknowledged the views of angling clubs and associations that made submissions.

There was much support for competition proposals, but also some criticism of aspects of species-based competitions. For example, there was concern that often only the heaviest fish of each species is weighed in - to ensure accurate catch and effort data, it was suggested that all fish caught in a competition should be weighed. The working group agrees with this point and believes it should be considered in developing a code of practice for fishing competitions.

The working group has acknowledged strong views from some sections of the community about the future of fishing competitions. It does not believe competitions should be banned, given that many people believe such contests have an intrinsic role in the activities of fishing clubs, and that in the last decade there have been significant changes in the way competitions are run.

The working group believes competitions should be encouraged as a social activity with a broader focus on angling and family involvement, rather than just for the catch.

Given strong community support, the group has endorsed all proposals on competitions in its discussion paper.

Recommendation 15 – Fishing Competitions

- 15 (a) All fishing competitions with more than 100 participants should formally be registered in advance with the Department of Fisheries.
- 15 (b) Competition organisers should keep an accurate record of participation and ‘catch and effort’ - and forward catch returns to the Department of Fisheries for inclusion in the recreational fisheries database.
- 15 (c) The Department of Fisheries should develop a formal code of conduct for fishing competitions in consultation with fishing clubs and organising bodies. Competitions should be conducted in line with recreational fishing ethics and meet requirements under the *Animal Welfare Bill*.

5.3.11 Position Statement on Recreational Fishing by Indigenous People

A proposed position statement on recreational fishing by indigenous people received support from 76 per cent of submissions.

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group has noted that since the release of the draft strategy on recreational fishing on the west coast, an Aboriginal Fishing Strategy Working Group has been appointed by the Minister for Fisheries. This working group will make recommendations to government on issues relating to Aboriginal customary and subsistence fishing.

The working group believes the position statement on recreational fishing by indigenous people should be referred to the Aboriginal Fishing Strategy Working Group, noting strong community support received in submissions.

Recommendation 16 – Position Statement on Recreational Fishing by Indigenous People

It is recognised that in the past, members of the Aboriginal community have collected fish to provide food for their community, and there should be provision to allow this custom to continue in the future. In certain circumstances – such as Aboriginal ceremonies – members of the Aboriginal community should be allowed to collect fish for the whole community.

Where these activities involve the possibility of exceeding the daily bag limit, such fishing should be carried out only with prior written approval from the Department of Fisheries. In the interest of preserving fish stocks, no-one should be allowed to keep undersize fish, use illegal fishing gear or fish outside approved times or in areas closed to fishing.

The working group noted that the Minister for Fisheries has appointed an Aboriginal Fishing Strategy Working Group. This working group will make recommendations to

government relating to Aboriginal customary and subsistence fishing issues. The working group believes Recommendation 16 should be referred to the Aboriginal Fishing Strategy Working Group, noting the strong community support received in submissions.

5.4 Protecting Recreational Fishing Quality

5.4.1 Code for Fishing at Rottnest Island

A proposal for a code for recreational fishing at Rottnest Island received support from 80 per cent of submissions. Of the 11 per cent of submissions that disagreed with the proposal, the main issues were that restrictions on commercial fishing should be greater than two nautical miles, and that fishers should be allowed to accumulate two days' bag limit when staying on the island.

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group believes an emphasis of the fishing experience when staying at Rottnest should be to enjoy eating fresh fish caught that day. Given that more than 400,000 people visit the island each year, and that this figure is expected to increase annually, the group did not support encouraging people to take any more than a daily bag limit from the island.

Further, it believes all recommendations that have an impact on commercial fishing will need to be negotiated with the commercial fishing industry, including the possible exclusion of certain commercial fishing activities and the distance to which they may be excluded around Rottnest.

The working group has endorsed the following proposed code of recreational fishing for Rottnest:

Recommendation 17 – Code for Recreational Fishing at Rottnest Island

Given the special status of Rottnest Island, the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group has developed the following code of practice:

- When visiting the island, catch only enough fish to eat fresh for yourself and family.
- Take the time to release all undersize or unwanted fish.
- Regardless of the length of your stay on Rottnest, do not take more than one day's bag limit of fish away from the island.
- Take a camera, not a speargun.
- Respect the sanctuary areas around Thomson Bay and Parker Point and stay on marked trails to protect the fragile environment.

5.4.2 Restocking as a Stock Enhancement Strategy

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group's position statement on restocking received support from 84 per cent of submissions. Many people agreed

strongly that the protection of wild fish stocks and their habitat should be the primary focus of management.

On the basis of such strong community support, the group endorsed the proposed position statement with the addition that restocking wild fisheries should be considered only where the recovery of a stock is endangered or prolonged.

Recommendation 18 – Position Statement on Restocking as a Stock Enhancement Strategy

Management of wild fish stocks should be the primary focus for recreational fisheries management.

Restocking should only be considered as a strategy to assist with the recovery of a stock where it can be identified that the stock has been significantly depleted and its recovery is endangered or will be prolonged.

To minimise any ecological impacts, all stock enhancement projects should be assessed against disease, biodiversity and genetic diversity criteria. Any stock enhancement project should also be adequately monitored and evaluated.

5.5 Resource Sharing

Key proposals on resource sharing received strong support in submissions, with more than 85 per cent backing for all proposals.

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group has noted from submissions and public meetings that many recreational fishers believe the activities of the commercial fishing sector are having a significant impact on fish stocks and the quality of the recreational fishery.

Many submissions raised the issue that if the recreational fishing sector is going to take a substantial cut in its potential catch by reducing bag limits and imposing tighter controls, there should also be tighter catch controls on the commercial fishing sector.

The working group believes it is unacceptable for any real reduction in the recreational catch to simply be neutralized through increased catches in the commercial sector. It is vital that an integrated fisheries management framework be established for the region, and that there is a clearly defined process for resolving resource sharing issues and areas of conflict between fishing sectors.

The working group now reiterates its position in the draft discussion paper (Fisheries Management Paper No. 139) that resource sharing is not simply a matter of allocating catch shares. Sharing the resource involves issues of fishing areas, time and access.

Resource sharing should be based on clear principles and processes, and an understanding and recognition of the relative social and economic values for each fishery or area in question.

From a recreational perspective the working group believes that the aims of a resource-sharing process should be to:

- ensure that an adequate share of fish resources are allocated to the recreational sector to protect the quality of recreational fishing.
- provide for reallocation of fish resources between user groups through an equitable process.
- operate within an ecologically sustainable framework for multi-species fisheries.

The working group believes that integrated resource management between competing user groups requires a basis for comparability between sectors. It recommends a regional approach to integrated management to best meet the needs of all sectors, based on the bio-geographical nature of the zones and variations in fishing activity and species between regions.

The working group recognises that development of this strategy so far has not directly involved the commercial fishing sector to a large extent, and it remains adamant that changes in resource shares for each sector should be approved through negotiation. The group recommends that key comment raised in submissions on resource sharing should be considered in any negotiation with the commercial sector.

Following is a list of key issues and views raised in submissions:

- Commercial fishing that has an impact on the quality of recreational fishing should be restricted to a distance greater than three nautical miles off the coast (raised in 122 submissions – 10 per cent of the total).
- The following areas should be managed with recreational fishing as a priority use (raised in 66 submissions – 5 per cent of the total):
 - Geographe Bay,
 - Bunbury,
 - Perth metropolitan coast (including Mandurah, Cockburn Sound and Rottne Island), and
 - Geraldton.
- Salmon, herring and tailor should be managed primarily as recreational species (raised in 91 submissions).
- No commercial fishing should be allowed in estuaries because of their importance to the recreational sector (raised in 54 submissions).
- Commercial rock lobster fishers should not be allowed to wetline (raised in 104 submissions).

Based on the need to protect recreational fishing quality and the high level of community support, the working group endorsed all resource-sharing proposals, with an additional recommendation that – in the interests of equity – fees for Fishing Boat Licences (FBLs) should be on a parity with licences for Category 1 Fishing Tour Operators (charter fishing). The group sees this as equitable, based on both sectors having access to the region's finfish resources for a commercial purpose.

Recommendation 19 – Resource Sharing

Sustainable catch shares for key recreational fishing species should be determined by negotiations with the commercial fishing sector through a resource-sharing process.

19 (a) Commercial fishing, which has a significant impact on the quality of the recreational fishery, should be restricted within three nautical miles of the coast. This includes the West Coast Demersal Gillnet and Longline Fishery; trawl fisheries and commercial wetline fishing. The working group believes there is a case for extending this restriction in areas of high recreational use – for example, for five nautical miles around Kalbarri.

19 (b) Herring and tailor have a high recreational value and low commercial value. Priority for their management should be recreational and the recreational catch share should reflect their importance to this sector.

Further, the total herring catch should be managed within Total Allowable Catch (TAC) parameters for both recreational and commercial fishing sectors. Resource-sharing should be achieved through creating a purely recreational fishery on WA's west coast and a reduction in commercial catch on the south coast.

The aim should be to adjust the current 80 per cent commercial / 20 per cent recreational catch shares for herring to 50 per cent for each sector. This should encourage 'value-adding' within the commercial fishery and an improved social and economic return to the WA community.

19 (c) The commercial take of tailor south of Shark Bay should be phased-out, in recognition of their high value as a recreational fishing species and low commercial value.

19 (d) Commercial salmon fishing should not be allowed on beaches in the west coast zone over Easter and the Anzac Day holiday periods.

19 (e) The ban on recreational netting upstream of Fisher Road on the Blackwood River, near Augusta, should also apply to commercial netting, to protect black bream stocks.

19 (f) A minimum level of commercial fishing should be retained in the major estuary systems on the west coast to provide monitoring data on fish abundance and a source of fresh fish for consumers. A ceiling on commercial fishing 'catch and effort' should be established in these waters, along with complementary controls on recreational fishing, which are consistent with their 'priority' recreational use and limited stock productivity.

19 (g) No commercial finfish fishing (purse seine, wetline, demersal gill net and long line) should be allowed within two nautical miles of Rottnest Island.

19 (h) No commercial finfish fishing should be allowed in the shallow waters (under 10m) around the Abrolhos Islands.

- 19 (i) Fees for commercial Fishing Boat Licences (FBLs) should be on parity with licences for Category 1 Fishing Tour Operators (charter fishing). Fees from these licenses should be placed in a trust account and, as a priority, used to fund structured catch surveys to validate commercial fishing returns and identify unreported catch.
- 19 (j) The working group supports management being implemented for the commercial ‘wetline’ fishing fleet and the benchmark date of November 1997 for continued access to the wetline fishery. It recommends that the fleet pay for the cost of its fishery management.

5.6 Protection of Fish Habitats

5.6.1 Low Impact Wilderness Fishing Experiences

A proposal that the area north of Kalbarri up to the Zuytdorp Cliffs should be managed as a remote wilderness fishing area, on a trial basis, received support from 72 per cent of submissions.

Comments were generally supportive, but 22 submissions urged that restrictions in this area should apply to commercial and recreational fishers.

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group believes that the area directly north of Kalbarri has special significance for recreational fishing, due to the quality land-based fishing and the remote, pristine environment.

The working group also recognises the importance of the offshore commercial rock lobster fishery in the area, and accepts that this key activity does not have a significant impact on the quality of recreational beach fishing, where the key species sought are mulloway and tailor. The group believes that it is paramount to properly manage the recreational fishery, which includes tourism-based recreational fishing.

Many anglers are drawn to the area because of its reputation for large tailor and mulloway and with recreational fishing pressure increasing, the working group believes that trophy-size tailor and mulloway need additional protection.

To achieve this additional protection, the working group has recommended slot limits for both species. The group proposes for the whole West Coast Region that only two tailor of more than 50cm may be kept daily. Similarly, for mulloway it proposes a daily slot limit of only one fish longer than 70cm for the whole region.

Recommendation 20 – Low Impact Wilderness Fishing Experiences

The area north of Kalbarri to the Zuytdorp Cliffs should be managed on a trial basis as a remote wilderness fishing area. The trial should determine the level of community support and potential for retaining wilderness-fishing values in the area.

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group defines a wilderness area as:

“An area previously protected by a high level of remoteness which provided a unique fishing experience unavailable in other areas, and characterised by getting there under your own steam.”

The working group agrees on the following guiding principles for the management of wilderness areas:

- low take, and
- low environmental impact

The working group believes that a code of practice for beach fishing and associated beach access should be developed by the local community. It notes that this issue applies to beach fishing and access by recreational fishers and tour operators, not commercial boat fishing.

5.6.2 Protection of Sensitive Habitat Areas and Fish Stocks Around New Marina Developments

Protection of sensitive habitat areas and fish stocks around new marina developments received support from 85 per cent of submissions.

It was suggested in Mandurah during public consultation that developers should investigate opportunities to establish new fish habitat, and ensure that public access to water is maintained. The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group agreed with this suggestion and has incorporated it in its final recommendations.

The working group has endorsed proposals relating to marina developments.

Recommendation 21 – Protection of Sensitive Habitat Areas and Fish Stocks Around New Marina Developments

- 21 (a) Developers should contribute funds for the management of fish resources and the marine environment when there is an increase in recreational fishing as a result of building new marinas and boat ramps.
- 21 (b) Where possible, developers should investigate opportunities to establish new fish habitat as part of a marina development and ensure continued public access to water; for example, habitat for cobbler in the Mandurah canals and launching access at the North Fremantle residential development between the two traffic bridges.
- 21 (c) If there are unique or important fish habitats close to a new facility, these should be set aside as ‘no-go’ areas. Any areas of this kind should be determined during the development of the site, following scientific assessment.
- 21 (d) Any proposals for a new commercial fishery need to take into account the sensitive nature of the marine environment and the value of the area to recreational fishing.

5.7 Improving Community Stewardship – Education and Compliance

5.7.1 West Coast Region Community Education Plan

The proposed community education plan was in three parts.

The first proposal was that a comprehensive regional fishing guide should be produced for the West Coast Region, and this received support in 91 per cent of submissions.

The second was for educational materials to support the regional fishing guide, and this received 92 per cent backing.

The third proposal was for an annual media campaign to promote recreational fishing and fishing ethics in the West Coast Region. Again, this was backed strongly, with 82 per cent in favour.

The only negative comment in submissions was the cost of the community education plan and who would pay for it. The working group believes costs should be considered under the options for management funding, and it has endorsed the community education proposals.

Recommendation 22 – West Coast Region Community Education Plan

22 (a) Regional Fishing Guide

A comprehensive guide to recreational fishing in the West Coast Region should be produced to inform and educate fishers about regional management, ethics, research, conservation and the protection of fish stocks and the environment.

22 (b) Educational Resource Materials

Practical educational tools such as measuring gauges, fish rulers, adhesive bag limit guides and boat ramp and fishing venue signs should support the regional fishing guide.

22 (c) Annual Media Campaign

There should be an annual media campaign to promote responsible recreational fishing ethics in the West Coast Region.

5.7.2 Compliance and Education Program

A proposal for additional patrol officers received support from 79 per cent of submissions.

An issue raised in submissions was that Fisheries Officers should be deployed in areas and at times when there are peaks in recreational fishing activity. It was also suggested that part-time fisheries officers should be employed for weekend duty.

The working group has endorsed these suggestions and seeks additional patrols.

Recommendation 23 – Additional Patrol Capacity

The working group believes that best practice is for Fisheries Officers and VFLOs to achieve a ten per cent contact-to-trip ratio with recreational fishers. To achieve this contact rate, an additional eight patrols (16 Fisheries Officers) should be dedicated to recreational field compliance and education during peak fishing seasons in the West Coast Region.

The placement of Fisheries Officers should be considered within a statewide education and compliance-planning framework. Resources should be allocated to regions to meet seasonal fluctuations in fishing pressure. This could involve using part-time, seasonal Fisheries Officers at weekends.

These resources should be allocated to:

- Kalbarri-Port Gregory. One additional patrol crew, based in Kalbarri. At present, effective compliance presence is sporadic at best.
- Abrolhos Islands. One additional patrol crew to service the peak season fishing at sea and in the Geraldton area.
- Jurien Bay-Lancelin. One additional patrol crew, based in Jurien Bay.
- Perth North Metro: Hillarys-Yanchep. One additional patrol crew, based at Hillarys, to cover the northern suburbs from Hillarys up to Two Rocks.
- Perth South Metro. Two additional patrol crews based in Fremantle to provide additional compliance for the Swan River, Cockburn Sound and Warnbro Sound.
- Mandurah/Bunbury. One additional patrol crew during the summer crab and tailor fishing seasons.
- Busselton. One additional patrol crew for Geographe Bay and the Capes region

5.7.3 VFLO Program

A proposal that the VFLO program be properly resourced and that a junior VFLO program be established received support from more than 80 per cent of submission. However, there was some concern over the use of junior VFLOs in relation to public liability, duty of care and who would provide a guardian/parent role.

The working group acknowledged this as an issue and said that in some instances it would be undesirable to expose junior VFLOs to certain situations. However, the group still believes there is significant merit in involving children in educational activities, preferably under the supervision of parents/guardians.

To foster involvement of young fishers in education programs, the group believes funding should be made available for community-based groups such as fishing clubs.

Recommendation 24 (a) – Volunteer Fisheries Liaison Officer (VFLO) Program

The VFLO program must be adequately resourced with educational materials and support from Department of Fisheries staff. A priority for VFLO groups should be direct angler contact through exercises such as beachfront educational patrols. This will assist in achieving a target contact rate of 10 per cent (of all fishers carrying out fishing trips in the region) by VFLOs and Fisheries Officers.

Recommendation 24 (b) – Junior VFLO Program

The working group does not support a VFLO cadet-style of program run by the Department of Fisheries, due to ‘duty of care’ concerns. It supports existing education programs in schools and fishing clubs, but believes they should be more focused on fish and aquatic conservation.

To foster involvement of young fishers, funding should be available for community-based groups such as fishing clubs to run junior educational activities that encourage the involvement of parents. Groups that obtaining funding for activities of this kind should be required to report on the outcomes of these activities.

5.7.4 Recreational Fisheries Management Officer

A proposal to appoint a person responsible for implementing the West Coast Regional Review – coordinating community consultation and education activities, and providing executive support for community advisory committees – received support from 69 per cent of submissions.

Many people (25 submissions) said it was important that the person selected should have good communication skills and understand the issues surrounding recreational fishing. The working group has agreed that the aforementioned criteria should be considered in the selection process.

It supports the appointment of a Recreational Fishing Management Officer to implement this major regional review.

Recommendation 25 – Recreational Fishing Management Officer

A person should be appointed within the Department of Fisheries to be responsible for implementing the West Coast Regional Review, coordinating community consultation and education activities, and providing executive support for community advisory committees.

5.7.5 Recreational Fisheries Council

A proposal for a Regional Recreational Fisheries Council received support from 62 per cent of submissions.

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group noted that 25 per cent of submissions had no opinion. Comment focused on the need for such a council to be community-based and to represent different recreational fishing interests.

Thirteen submissions suggested that the existing system of Regional Recreational Fishing Advisory Committees (RRFACs) should remain. However, the working group believes that a single new council would be better for effective management of recreational fishing in the West Coast Region, provided it is resourced and supported and has proper regional representation.

Recommendation 26 – Regional Recreational Fisheries Council

A Regional Recreational Fisheries Council should be established to oversee the implementation and operation of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Management Strategy.

The council should replace the existing Regional Recreational Fishing Advisory Committees (RRFACs) in the West Coast Region. To ensure proper regional representation, two representatives from each current RRFAC should be appointed to the council. The new council should report to the Minister for Fisheries as part of the State Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee network.

Representation on the council should be regional and expertise-based, and the Department of Fisheries should be formally included as a committee member, rather than simply providing executive support.

5.8 Providing Adequate Resources for Management and Enhancement

As expected, the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group's proposal on providing funding for the future management of recreational fishing received mixed support in submissions.

The proposal was in three parts:

First, the government should increase funding - which received strong community support, being supported by 85 per cent of submissions.

Second, if the government did not increase funding, then the introduction of a general recreational fishing licence should be considered. Only 34 per cent of submissions supported this proposal.

The third part of the proposal outlined the conditions for a recreational licence, should it be introduced. This also received support from only 34 per cent of submissions.

Among those who disagreed with general licensing, the main view put forward (in 120 submissions) was that recreational fishers already paid enough through existing licences, taxes and GST, so there should be no additional cost.

The working group has acknowledged lack of support for a general recreational fishing licence and, in contrast, strong support for increased government funding.

The working group emphasizes that to achieve effective management of recreational fishing there must be a direct link between funding and participation.

Funding for management has remained relatively static during the past decade, despite recreational fishing effort increasing by more than 300 per cent. As mentioned earlier, effort is expected to increase to 13.5 million angler days by 2010. Unless funding is linked to participation levels, it is unlikely that research and management will be able to keep pace with such rising pressure on fish stocks.

Funding for core activities such as compliance, research, education and management should be increased to \$10 million and linked to future increases in participation to avoid a significant decline in the future quality of recreational fishing.

On the basis of community feedback in submissions, and economic impact surveys which suggest that recreational fishing contributes an estimated \$570 million a year to the State's economy, the working group has recommended that government should increase funding for recreational fishing management activities across the State to at least an additional \$4 million over and above current levels. \$1 million of the additional funding should be allocated to the West Coast Region. Future increases in funding should be indexed to increases in fishing pressure.

The working group identified five potential sources of funding for recreational fisheries management. These are:

- increased government funding;
- resource rent on the commercial fishing sector;
- percentage of GST money spent in association with recreational fishing activities;
- contribution from, or levy on, those associated with the development of marinas and industrial projects which have a direct impact on recreational fishing; and
- additional fishing licences as appropriate.

The working group has acknowledged that a general recreational fishing licence would provide a direct link between participation and funding, but believes that the

introduction of such a licence should be considered only after other options have been thoroughly examined.

After considering the key management requirements for the West Coast Region, the working group has highlighted the following funding priorities:

- research;
- compliance;
- education and community programs; and
- recreational fishing enhancement through funding for projects such as artificial reefs, developing inland fishing opportunities to take pressure off estuary and marine systems, and structured restocking trials for species identified as depleted.

Recommendation 27 – Funding for Recreational Fisheries Management

The State Government should increase funding for core recreational fisheries management throughout WA to meet a massive 300 per cent increase in demand experienced since 1987. Options for funding include any or all of the following means:

- Increase government funding.
- Institute a resource rent on the commercial fishing sector.
- Recover a percentage of GST raised by expenditure on activities and equipment associated with recreational fishing.
- Institute a contribution from - or levy on - those associated with the development of marinas and industrial projects that have a direct impact on recreational fishing.
- Introduce additional fishing licenses, as appropriate.

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group has recommended that government should increase funding for recreational fishing management activities across the state to at least an additional \$4 million over and above current levels. \$1 million of the additional funding should be allocated to the west coast region. Future increases in funding should be indexed to increases in fishing pressure.

Priorities for funding are:

- research;
- compliance;
- education and community programs; and
- recreational fishing enhancement through funding for projects such as artificial reefs, developing inland fishing opportunities to take pressure off estuary and marine systems, and structured restocking trials for species identified as depleted.

APPENDIX A VULNERABILITY TO OVEREXPLOITATION – RISK ASSESSMENT FOR KEY SPECIES

	AUSTRALIAN HERRING <i>Arripis georgianus</i>	BALDCHIN GROPER <i>Choerodon rubescens</i>	BLACK BREAM <i>Acanthopagus butcheri</i>
Biology			
Age maturity (years)	F = 2, m = 2-3	Hermaphrodite - change sex from Female to male	Swan River 2, Moore River 4
Size at maturity (mm)	F = 215, m = 196	F = 300, m = 400	Swan River F = 218, m = 212
Maximum weight/size		7kg - 700mm	Swan River F = 480, m = 475
Spawning times	April – June	November – January	
Fecundity (number of eggs)	Mean = 98,800		Multiple spawner, range 13,000 -612,000
Abundance	High seasonally	Low across region Moderate at Arolhos Is	Moderate in limited locations
BIOLOGICAL RISK	LOW	HIGH	MODERATE
Habitat	Nearshore waters and embayments and estuaries.	Inshore on offshore marine	Estuarine
Behavioural traits	Migratory, schooling fish	Solitary individuals or in small groups	
Fishing pressure	High/increasing	High/increasing	High/increasing
Value eating/fishing	Moderate	High	High
Other issues	Migratory fish, but possible limited migration to west coast.	Possible mortality issues with fish from deep water. Slow growing – 50cm at 20yrs. Increasing use of technology to improve effectiveness at targeting.	Limited gene exchange among isolated populations and heavy fishing pressure around population centres.
VULNERABILITY DUE TO FISHING AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS	MODERATE	HIGH	MODERATE/HIGH
LEVEL OF RISK OF OVEREXPLOITATION	Moderate, due to targeting and increasing fishing pressure.	High, due to targeting, slow growing and hermaphrodite (change sex).	Moderate, due to isolated nature of fisheries and localised depletion issues.

CURRENT APPROPRIATE CONTROLS FOR MANAGEMENT

Size limits	Possible, but low priority due to abundance.	Yes, if fish survive release.	Yes
Species bag limits	Yes	Yes, if fish survive release.	Yes
Mixed bag limits	Yes	Yes	Not essential due to targeting of black bream.
Gear restrictions (over and above standard hook and line controls)	No	No	No
Species possession limits	No	Possible, particularly in areas of depletion.	No
Area closures	No	Yes, if localised depletion occurs.	Possible, if breeding areas can be defined.
Season closures	Possible control to protect spawning fish.	Possible, if fish stocks depleted or vulnerable.	Possible, to protect breeding fish.
Individual quota: tags, licences	No	No	No
Total allowable recreational catch	No	No	No

NOTE: in table above, F = female, m = male

	CORAL TROUT <i>Plactropomus maculatus</i>	COBBLER <i>Cnidoganis macrocephalus</i>	DHUFISH <i>Glaucosoma hebracum</i>
Biology			
Age maturity (years)	2-3 years Change sex from female to male at 4.42 yrs	Swan River, 2 Wilson Inlet, 4	F = 5, m = 8
Size at maturity (mm)	350	Wilson Inlet, 425	F = 250-300, m = 350 -400
Maximum weight/size	70cm	Swan River, 683mm	25kg
Spawning times		Swan River, October – December	December – April
Fecundity/number of eggs		Range 533 –5551 Average 2,078	
Abundance	Low	Low	Low
BIOLOGICAL RISK	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH

Habitat	Reef structures, inshore and offshore.	Estuaries and near-shore waters where weed and reef exist.	Inshore – offshore marine
Behavioural traits	Individual fish often territorial.	Males brood eggs and larvae in burrows.	Adult fish can form schooling aggregations.
Fishing pressure	High/increasing	Moderate/high-increasing	High/increasing
Value eating/fishing	High	High	High
Other issues	Use of technology to improve efficiency at targeting.	Isolated populations. Can form breeding aggregations.	Possible mortality issues with fish from deep water. Use of technology to improve efficiency at targeting.
VULNERABILITY DUE TO FISHING AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH

LEVEL OF RISK OF OVEREXPLOITATION	High, due to low abundance, being highly targeted and hermaphrodite.	High, due to very low fecundity and fisheries occurring around key population centres.	High, due to low abundance, slow growth and being highly targeted.
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CURRENT APPROPRIATE CONTROLS FOR MANAGEMENT

Size limits	Yes	Yes	Yes, retain until mortality study is complete.
Species bag limits	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mixed bag limits	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gear restrictions (over and above standard hook and line controls)	No	Yes (netting controls)	No
Species possession limits	Yes	No	Yes
Area closures	No	Yes (protect breeding fish)	Possible if fish can be returned alive
Season closures	No	Yes (protect breeding fish)	Possible if fish can be returned alive
Individual quota: tags, licences	No	No	No
Total allowable recreational catch	No	No	No

NOTE: in table above, F = female, m = male

	GARFISH <i>Hyporhamphus melanochir</i>	KING GEORGE WHITING <i>Sillaginodes punctata</i>	MULLOWAY <i>Argyrosomus hololepidotus</i>
Biology			
Age maturity (years)	3yrs (SA)	F = 4, m = 4	6 years
Size at maturity (mm)	250	F = 413, m = 400	75cm
Maximum weight/size	520mm	720mm	43kg
Spawning times	October – November (SA)	June - September	October - February (SA)
Fecundity/number of eggs	10,000	Multiple spawner	
Abundance	High	Moderate	Low
BIOLOGICAL RISK	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH

Habitat	Sheltered embayments and over seagrass beds.	Juveniles – sheltered embayments. Adults – more offshore waters around reefs.	Sheltered embayments, estuaries and near surf zone.
Behavioural traits	Can form large schools.	Juveniles can form aggregations.	Small fish can form schools.
Fishing pressure	Medium/increasing	High/increasing	High/increasing
Value eating/fishing	Medium/low	High	High
Other issues		Heavy fishing pressure occurs on juvenile fish in the inshore environment.	
VULNERABILITY DUE TO FISHING AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH

LEVEL OF RISK OF OVEREXPLOITATION	Low, due to abundant nature	Moderate, due to age at maturity and fishing pressure on both juveniles and adult stock.	High, due to low abundance, time to reach maturity, and highly targeted.
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CURRENT APPROPRIATE CONTROLS FOR MANAGEMENT

Size limits	No	Yes	Yes
Species bag limits	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mixed bag limits	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gear restrictions (over and above standard hook and line controls)	No	No	No
Species possession limits	No	Yes	Yes
Area closures	No	Possible for juvenile fish	No
Season closures	No	Possible for juvenile fish	No
Individual quota: tags, licences	No	No	No
Total allowable recreational catch	No	No	No

NOTE: in table above, F = female, m = male

	MAHI MAHI <i>Coryphaena hippurus</i>	PINK SNAPPER <i>Pagrus auratus</i>	SALMON <i>Arripis truttaceus</i>
Biology			
Age maturity (years)	7 months	4 - 5 (Shark Bay)	3 - 4
Size at maturity (mm)	700	400 - 410	540
Maximum weight/size	39kg	1,300mm 17kg+	10kg
Spawning times	Summer	September - November	March - May
Fecundity/number of eggs		114,500 -182,500	
Abundance	Moderate/low *more abundant in specific locations where aggregations occur.	Moderate/low *more abundant during breeding.	Moderate/seasonally
BIOLOGICAL RISK	LOW	HIGH	MODERATE/HIGH

Habitat	Offshore open water environment.	Juveniles - bays and inlets. Adults - inshore and offshore environments.	Juveniles – bays and inlets. Adults – inshore and offshore.
Behavioural traits	Will often form aggregations around floating objects.	Form large breeding aggregations.	Form large migratory schools.
Fishing pressure	Moderate/increasing	High/increasing	Moderate/seasonally
Value eating/fishing	High	High	High
Other issues	Fast growing. Ability to target due to aggregating behaviour. Use of technology to improve efficiency at targeting.	Targeting of breeding aggregations. Use of technology to improve efficiency at targeting.	Westward migration influenced by strength of Leeuwin Current. Significant fishing pressure on juvenile and adult stock.
VULNERABILITY DUE TO FISHING AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS	MODERATE/HIGH	HIGH	MODERATE/HIGH

LEVEL OF RISK OF OVEREXPLOITATION	Moderate/high, fast growing and early age at maturity, but heavy targeting of aggregations.	High, due to targeting of breeding aggregation and 4 – 5 years to reach maturity.	Moderate/high, due to age and size at maturity and targeting of migratory spawning fish.
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CURRENT APPROPRIATE CONTROLS FOR MANAGEMENT

Size limits	Yes	Yes	Yes
Species bag limits	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mixed bag limits	Not essential due to targeting of species	Yes	Yes
Gear restrictions (over and above standard hook and line controls)	No	No	No
Species possession limits	Yes	Yes	No
Area closures	No	Yes	No
Season closures	No	Yes	No
Individual quota: tags, licences	No	No	No
Total allowable recreational catch	No	No	No

NOTE: in table above, F = female, m = male

	SEA MULLET <i>Mugil cephalus</i>	SAMSON FISH <i>Seriola hippos</i>	SILVER BREAM <i>Rhabdosargus sarba</i>
Biology			
Age maturity (years)			
Size at maturity (mm)			
Maximum weight/size		50kg	
Spawning times	March - September		
Fecundity/number of eggs			
Abundance	High	Low	Medium
BIOLOGICAL RISK	LOW	INSUFFICIENT DATA	INSUFICIENT DATA

Habitat	Estuary systems, sheltered embayments, near shore marine environments.	Inshore and Continental Shelf waters associated with reefs, jetties and pylons.	Inshore reefs and surf zones and areas of rock and weed.
Behavioural traits	Migrate into upper reaches of estuaries.	Often form schooling aggregations around structures.	Often form schooling aggregations where there is a bottom substrate of sand and weed.
Fishing pressure	Low (moderate in some estuary systems)	Moderate/increasing	High/increasing
Value eating/fishing	Low	Moderate/high	Moderate/low
Other issues	Not targeted by line fishers	Little biological data known on samson fish. Use of technology to improve efficiency at targeting.	Little biological data known on silver bream.
VULNERABILITY DUE TO FISHING AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS	LOW	MODERATE	LOW/MODERATE

LEVEL OF RISK OF OVEREXPLOITATION	Low, given abundance and non-targeting by line fishers.	Insufficient data to determine.	Insufficient data to determine.
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CURRENT APPROPRIATE CONTROLS FOR MANAGEMENT

Size limits	No	Yes	Possible
Species bag limits	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mixed bag limits	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gear restrictions (over and above standard hook and line controls)	Yes (netting)	No	No
Species possession limits	No	No	No
Area closures	To gear (nets)	No	No
Season closures	To gear (nets)	No	No
Individual quota: tags, licences	No	No	No
Total allowable recreational catch	No	No	No

NOTE: in table above, F = female, m = male

	SKIPJACK TREVALLY <i>Pseudocaranx dentex</i>	SOUTHERN SCHOOL WHITING <i>Sillago bassensis</i>	SPANISH MACKEREL <i>Scomberomorus commerson</i>
Biology			
Age maturity (years)		F = 2, m =2	3 years
Size at maturity (mm)	280 (NSW)	F and m = 200	900
Maximum weight/size	700mm	328mm	59kg
Spawning times	Summer (New Zealand)	December - March	August - March (Queensland) October - December south of Queensland.
Fecundity/number of eggs	Serial spawners	Multiple spawner	
Abundance	Moderate	High	Low in region
BIOLOGICAL RISK	LOW/MODERATE	LOW	HIGH

Habitat	Juveniles – inshore embayments, estuaries. Adults – inshore and offshore reefs and open water over sand and gravel.	Exposed nearshore marine environments.	Juvenile fish may inhabit nearshore coastal waters. Adults offshore reefs and open water.
Behavioural traits	Schooling fish. Possible migration between onshore and offshore environments.	Schooling fish.	Some fish undertake seasonal migration.
Fishing pressure	High	High	Moderate (when available)
Value eating/fishing	Moderate	High	High
Other issues	High fishing pressure on both juvenile and adult fish.	High fishing pressure.	Concerns over sustainability at current catch levels.
VULNERABILITY DUE TO FISHING AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS	MODERATE	LOW	HIGH

LEVEL OF RISK OF OVEREXPLOITATION	Moderate/low, due to abundance.	Low, due to abundance, and size and age at maturity.	High, due to targeting and low abundance.
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CURRENT APPROPRIATE CONTROLS FOR MANAGEMENT

Size limits	Yes	Possible, but low priority due to abundance.	Yes
Species bag limits	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mixed bag limits	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gear restrictions (over and above standard hook and line controls)	No	No	No
Species possession limits	No	No	Yes
Area closures	No	No	No
Season closures	No	No	No
Individual quota: tags, licences	No	No	No
Total allowable recreational catch	No	No	No

NOTE: in table above, F = female, m = male

	SPANGLED EMPEROR <i>Lethrinus nebulosus</i>	TAILOR <i>Pomatomus saltatrix</i>	TUNA Southern Bluefin Yellowfin, Bigeye
Biology			
Age maturity (years)		2 years +	8 years (bluefin) 3+ years (bigeye) 2 years (yellowfin)
Size at maturity (mm)	380 (F)	340	1,200 (bluefin) 1,000 (bigeye) 1,000 (yellowfin)
Maximum weight/size	7kg	1200mm	200kg (bluefin) 210kg (bigeye) 176kg (yellowfin)
Spawning times	October - March	Spring (Geraldton – Carnarvon) Perth south – spring and autumn	September – March (bluefin) January – March (bigeye)
Fecundity/number of eggs		370,000 – 1,240,000	14 – 15 million (bluefin)
Abundance	Low in region	Moderate	Low in region
BIOLOGICAL RISK	MODERATE/HIGH	MODERATE	HIGH

Habitat	Coral reefs, usually adjacent to sandy areas.	Juveniles – inshore marine embayments and estuaries. Adults – beaches, nearshore and offshore reefs and islands.	Open ocean, juveniles often found inside continental shelf.
Behavioural traits		Schooling fish	Highly migratory schooling fish.
Fishing pressure	Low in region	High/increasing	Low/moderate - increasing
Value eating/fishing	High	Moderate/high	High
Other issues		Heavy fishing pressure on juveniles in estuary systems.	Significant fishing pressure. Mortality issues may exist for fish caught on light line.
VULNERABILITY DUE TO FISHING AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS	HIGH	MODERATE	HIGH

LEVEL OF RISK OF OVEREXPLOITATION	High, due to low abundance in region and fishing pressure.	Moderate, due to high size at maturity and fishing pressure on juvenile and adult fish.	High, particularly for bluefin which take longer to reach maturity. Significant fishing pressure on stocks.
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CURRENT APPROPRIATE CONTROLS FOR MANAGEMENT

Size limits	Yes	Yes	Yes (if fish survive release)
Species bag limits	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mixed bag limits	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gear restrictions (over and above standard hook and line controls)	No	No	No
Species possession limits	Yes	No	Yes
Area closures	No	Possible to protect juvenile or spawning fish.	No
Season closures	No	As above	No
Individual quota: tags, licences	No	No	No
Total allowable recreational catch	No	No	No

NOTE: in table above, F = female, m = male

	SHARK DUSKY AND BRONZE WHALERS <i>Carcharinus species</i>	YELLOW EYE MULLET <i>Aldrichetta forsteri</i>	YELLOW FIN WHITING <i>Sillago schomburgkii</i>
Biology			
Age maturity (years)	M = 13 bronze whaler F = 19 bronze whaler 14 – 18 dusky whalers	2-3 years (Swan River)	2 years
Size at maturity (mm)	2,800 dusky whaler		F = 200, m = 180
Maximum weight/size	323kg dusky whaler 295kg bronze whaler	353mm	400mm
Spawning times	Peak in summer	March - August	December- February
Fecundity/number of eggs	Give birth to live young – bronze whaler 3-14 pups	125 000-630 000(sa)	Multiple spawner
Abundance	Low	High seasonally	Moderate/high
BIOLOGICAL RISK	HIGH	LOW	LOW

Habitat	Continental Shelf waters.	Inshore marine embayments and estuaries.	Unvegetated areas in sheltered to moderately sheltered near shore waters in marine embayments.
Behavioural traits	Both species will move inshore to drop their young.	Schooling fish.	Schooling fish.
Fishing pressure	Low/moderate	Moderate/increasing	High/increasing
Value eating/fishing	High	Low	High
Other issues			
VULNERABILITY DUE TO FISHING AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS	HIGH	LOW	LOW

LEVEL OF RISK OF OVEREXPLOITATION	High, due to time to reach maturity, low fecundity and highly targeted.	Low, due to abundance.	Low, due to abundance.
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CURRENT APPROPRIATE CONTROLS FOR MANAGEMENT

Size limits	Yes	No	Possible, however, low priority due to abundance.
Species bag limits	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mixed bag limits	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gear restrictions	No set lines.	Netting restrictions.	No
Species possession limits	Yes	No	No
Area closures	No	No	No
Season closures	No	No	No
Individual quota: tags, licences	No	No	No
Total allowable recreational catch	No	No	No

NOTE: in table above, F = female, m = male

COD <i>Epinephelus species</i>	
Biology	
Age maturity (years)	Possible hermaphrodite – change sex from female to male.
Size at maturity (mm)	
Maximum weight/size	10kg – rankin cod 20kg+ estuary cod 2.9kg breaksea cod
Spawning times	
Fecundity/number of eggs	
Abundance	breaksea – moderate Rankin and estuary cod low – distribution north of Abrolhos Islands.
BIOLOGICAL RISK	HIGH

Habitat	Reefs. Often found in caves and around rock ledges.
Behavioural traits	Ambush feeders. Often found as single fish, rather than in schools.
Fishing pressure	High/increasing
Value eating/fishing	High
Other issues	Possible mortality issue with fish caught in deep water. Use of technology to improve efficiency at targeting.
VULNERABILITY DUE TO FISHING AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS	HIGH

LEVEL OF RISK OF OVEREXPLOITATION	High, due to low abundance, possible sex change and limited biological information.
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CURRENT APPROPRIATE CONTROLS FOR MANAGEMENT

Size limits	Yes (if survive release)
Species bag limits	Yes
Mixed bag limits	Yes
Gear restrictions(other than standard line and hook controls)	No
Species possession limits	Yes
Area closures	No
Season closures	No
Individual quota: tags, licences	No
Total allowable recreational catch	No

NOTE: in table above, F = female, m = male

APPENDIX B SUMMARY OF PUBLIC RESPONSES TO PROPOSALS IN DISCUSSION PAPER

In addition to individual submissions from community members, the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group received written submissions from the following groups:

Fishing clubs and recreational fishing associations

- Recfishwest
- Hillarys Yacht Club- Angling Section
- West Australian Game Fishing Association
- Marmion Angling and Aquatic Club
- West Coast Angling Club
- West Australian Undersea Club
- Charter Boat Owners and Operators Association
- Australian National Sport Fishing Association
- Australian Angler Association

Conservation groups

- Conservation Council
- Australian Marine Conservation Society

Ministerial Advisory Committees

- Abrolhos Islands Advisory Committee
- Midwest Regional Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee (RRFAC)
- Metropolitan RRFAC
- Peel RRFAC
- Southwest RRFAC

Commercial fishing associations

- Geraldton Professional Fishermen's Association
- West Australian Fishing Industry Council

Submissions from the above groups were considered in detail by the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group during the review of draft proposals. In addition to these submissions, the working group considered the level of support and comments as indicated in returned questionnaires. A break-down of the level of support for each proposal follows:

B1 Guiding principles for management

Proposal 1 – Key principles for management

- a) Government should ensure that adequate funding is available for comprehensive research and effective management of recreational fishing.

Proposal 1a	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	661	53.48%
Agree	516	41.75%
Don't Know	9	0.73%
Disagree	17	1.38%
Strongly Disagree	11	0.89%

- b) A key aim should be to ensure that the biodiversity of fish communities and their habitats, and sustainability of fish stocks, are preserved.

Proposal 1b	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	656	53.07%
Agree	546	44.17%
Don't Know	9	0.73%
Disagree	3	0.24%
Strongly Disagree	2	0.16%

- c) Fisheries management should incorporate controls and measures that anticipate and cover increasing numbers of recreational fishers and their impact on fish stocks.

Proposal 1c	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	464	37.54%
Agree	655	52.99%
Don't Know	31	2.51%
Disagree	37	2.99%
Strongly Disagree	25	2.02%

- d) Management should be based on the best available information and, where critical information is unavailable, a precautionary approach should be adopted to minimise risk to fish stocks.

Proposal 1d	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	470	38.03%
Agree	660	53.40%
Don't Know	28	2.27%
Disagree	44	3.56%
Strongly Disagree	14	1.13%

- e) Fishing rules should acknowledge the importance of equitable access to fishing opportunities across recreational user groups.

Proposal 1e	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	532	43.04%
Agree	638	51.62%
Don't Know	20	1.62%
Disagree	20	1.62%
Strongly Disagree	4	0.32%

- f) The value of recreational fishing should be clearly recognised and given proper weight in all government and community planning processes; for example, with regard to marine parks and industrial developments.

Proposal 1f	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	691	55.91%
Agree	498	40.29%
Don't Know	14	1.13%
Disagree	11	0.89%
Strongly Disagree	4	0.32%

- g) Fishing rules should be kept simple and, where possible and practical, made uniform across the region.

Proposal 1g	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	687	55.58%
Agree	493	39.89%
Don't Know	12	0.97%
Disagree	19	1.54%
Strongly Disagree	7	0.57%

- h) Recreational fishing rules should be designed to protect the sustainability of stocks and manage the total recreational catch, as well as protect fish at vulnerable stages in their life cycle – for example, during spawning aggregations.

Proposal 1h	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	654	52.91%
Agree	528	42.72%
Don't Know	4	0.32%
Disagree	19	1.54%
Strongly Disagree	7	0.57%

- i) Benefits from management of the total recreational catch should flow back to the recreational sector and be reflected in maintaining or improving fishing quality and sustainability.

Proposal 1i	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	597	48.30%
Agree	569	46.04%
Don't Know	24	1.94%
Disagree	7	0.57%
Strongly Disagree	7	0.57%

- j) Clear processes should exist to resolve resource sharing issues which support the integrated management of fish stocks.

Proposal 1j	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	527	42.64%
Agree	607	49.11%
Don't Know	35	2.83%
Disagree	15	1.21%
Strongly Disagree	6	0.49%

B2 Information for management – Biology, catch and fishery performance

Proposal 2 – Major catch survey

- a) A major recreational catch survey should be undertaken every year for a minimum of three years to establish a baseline data set for recreational fishing in the west coast.

Proposal 2a	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	432	34.95%
Agree	678	54.85%
Don't Know	46	3.72%
Disagree	43	3.48%
Strongly Disagree	20	1.62%

- b) The major catch survey should be repeated every three years at a minimum to provide detailed information about the spatial and temporal distribution of recreational activity and catches on which to base management decisions.

Proposal 2b	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	385	31.15%
Agree	700	56.63%
Don't Know	56	4.53%
Disagree	45	3.64%
Strongly Disagree	22	1.78%

As a subset, information should be collected annually on indicator species and areas to monitor recreational fishing quality.

Proposal 2c	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	385	28.15%
Agree	700	59.63%
Don't Know	56	4.53%
Disagree	45	2.64%
Strongly Disagree	22	2.78%

Proposal 3 – Volunteer angler logbook program

Fisheries WA [Department of Fisheries] should introduce a comprehensive volunteer angler logbook program to all key recreational fishing centres in the West Coast Region to provide additional monitoring of trends among regular fishers.

Proposal 3	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	338	27.35%
Agree	639	51.70%
Don't Know	93	7.52%
Disagree	93	7.52%
Strongly Disagree	49	3.96%

Proposal 4 – Priority species for research

Research be undertaken on key recreational species in the west coast – in order of priority – to provide information on species biology and stock structure. Predictive fisheries stock assessment models and, where practical, indices of recruitment, should then be developed for the following important species:

Offshore	Inshore/beach	Estuarine
1. WA dhufish 2. Pink snapper 3. King George whiting 4. Baldchin groper 5. Breaksea cod	1. Tailor 2. Herring 3. Skipjack 4. Whiting 5. Mulloway	1. Black bream 2. Flathead/flounder 3. Crabs 4. Whiting (all species)

Proposal 4	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	512	41.42%
Agree	625	50.57%
Don't Know	38	3.07%
Disagree	29	2.35%
Strongly Disagree	13	1.05%

Proposal 5 – Fishing quality indicators

A range of 'fishing quality indicators' based on angler surveys be developed to identify trends in fishing quality in the region and assist in the review of the effectiveness of this strategy.

These indicators should cover fishing quality, diversity and the value associated with the fishing experience.

It is proposed that these species be used as key indicators:

Offshore	Inshore/beach	Estuarine
1. Dhufish 2. Pink snapper 3. Baldchin groper	1. Tailor 2. Sand whiting 3. King George whiting	1. Black bream 2. Blue swimmer (manna) crab

Proposal 5	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	382	30.91%
Agree	669	54.13%
Don't Know	70	5.66%
Disagree	65	5.26%
Strongly Disagree	13	1.05%

B3 Protecting vulnerable fish and managing the recreational catch

Proposal 6 – Bag limits

6 (a) Trophy fish

Trophy fish	
Mixed bag limit of 4	
<i>These fish are highly sought after for catching or eating qualities and are vulnerable to overfishing</i>	
<i>Species</i>	<i>Slot limit</i>
Dhufish	
Groper and tuskfish	
Breaksea cod	
Blue groper	(Species bag limit 1)
Coral trout	
Red emperor	
Cods – Rankin, estuary	max size 1.2m
Queen snapper	
Red snapper/nannygai	
Mackerel, Spanish, wahoo	
Mackerel, shark and school	
Mulloway.....	only 1 over 70cm
Spangled emperor/north-west snapper	
Pink snapper	only 2 over 70cm
Samson fish	
Cobia	
Sharks.....	max size 2m
Tuna – southern bluefin, yellowfin, bigeye, dogtooth, bonito	
Marlin, blue, black and striped	
All billfish (e.g. sailfish, swordfish)	
Barracuda	
Mahi mahi	
Salmon	
Yellowtail kingfish	

Mixed daily bag of 4		
Proposal 6a1	Totals	%
S Agree	254	20.55%
Agree	242	19.58%
Don't Know	20	1.62%
Disagree	159	12.86%
S Disagree	530	42.88%

Composition of species		
Proposal 6a2	Totals	%
S Agree	176	14.24%
Agree	368	29.77%
Don't Know	35	2.83%
Disagree	127	10.28%
S Disagree	458	37.06%

6 (b) Prize fish

Prize fish	
Mixed bag limit of 16 Eight of any one species	
<i>These fish are prized by recreational fishers or of relatively low abundance and require protection to minimise local depletion.</i>	
<i>Species</i>	<i>Slot limit</i>
Tailor.....	Only two over 50cm
Flathead	
Flounder	
Bream, black.....	Only four over 40cm
Bream, silver (tarwhine)	
Cobbler and catfish	
Pike/snook	
Skipjack trevally	
Leatherjacket	

Mixed daily bag of 16		
Proposal 6b1	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	259	20.95%
Agree	412	33.33%
Don't Know	34	2.75%
Disagree	144	11.65%
Strongly Disagree	360	29.13%

Composition of species		
Proposal 6b2	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	193	15.61%
Agree	377	30.50%
Don't Know	58	4.69%
Disagree	116	9.39%
Strongly Disagree	383	30.99%

6 (c) Table fish

Baitfish of the sardine and anchovy families (Clupeidae and Engraulididae — mulies, whitebait, scaly mackerel, anchovies) are not included in this category. For these species it is proposed to retain the bag limit of 9lts.

Option A Table fish

Table fish
Mixed daily bag limit of 40
Not more than 30 of any one species
<i>These fish are of higher abundance and highly sought after</i>
<i>Species</i>
Herring
Garfish
Whiting – western sand, school and yellowfin
King George whiting...only four over 35cm
Mullet – sea and yelloweye
Blue mackerel
All species other than baitfish or those listed in other categories

Option B Table fish

Table fish
Mixed daily bag limit of 30
Not more than 20 of any one species
<i>These fish are of higher abundance and highly sought after</i>
<i>Species</i>
Herring Garfish Whiting – western sand, school and yellowfin King George whiting...only four over 35cm Mullet – sea and yelloweye Blue mackerel All species other than baitfish or those listed in other categories

Option		
Proposal 6c Option	Totals	%
A	376	30.42%
B	398	32.20%
Neither	422	34.14%

Composition of species		
Proposal 6c	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	190	15.37%
Agree	472	38.19%
Don't Know	30	2.43%
Disagree	136	11.00%
Strongly Disagree	285	23.06%

6 (d) Crustaceans

Species	Current management	Proposed changes
Prawns, king & school Rock lobster	Bag limit 9 litres Bag limit 8, boat limit 16,	no change <i>Option A.</i> Introduce possession limit of 32 <i>Option B.</i> No change
Crab, blue swimmer (manna)	Bag limit 24, boat limit 48	<i>Proposal</i> bag limit 20, boat limit 40

Option		
Proposal 6d Option	Totals	%
A	405	32.77%
B	676	54.69%
Neither	80	6.47%

Composition of species		
Proposal 6d	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	333	26.94%
Agree	456	36.89%
Don't Know	56	4.53%
Disagree	150	12.14%
Strongly Disagree	181	14.64%

6 (e) Cephalopods

Species	Current management	Proposed changes
Squid, octopus, cuttlefish	Combine bag limit 15 per fisher, boat limit 30	No change

6 (f) Shellfish

The current bag limit for abalone (possession limit of 20 Roe’s abalone) and mussels (9 litres) should continue to apply. For the following species it is proposed that a daily bag limit of 2lt should apply. The collection of other shellfish and live corals should be prohibited.

- cockles
- razorfish
- scallops
- pipis
- sea urchins

Daily bag of 2 litres		
Proposal 6f1	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	349	28.24%
Agree	536	43.37%
Don't Know	258	20.87%
Disagree	41	3.32%
Strongly Disagree	22	1.78%

Composition of species		
Proposal 6f2	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	199	16.10%
Agree	626	50.65%
Don't Know	306	24.76%
Disagree	31	2.51%
Strongly Disagree	13	1.05%

Proposal 7 - Proposed changes to current minimum recreational legal size limits

Species	Old size (cm)	New size (cm)	Size when 50% of the stock reach maturity (cm)
*Baldchin groper	40	45	40
Barracuda.....		60	Not nown
Blue groper	40	60	Not known
Breaksea cod.....		30	Not known
Cod, other		30	Not known
King George whiting	25	28	36
Herring.....		20	22
Mahi mahi (dolphinfish).....		60	Not known
Mulloway.....	45	50	75
Pike	28	30	Not known
Pink snapper.....	41	45	41
Red snapper	23	25	Not known
Skipjack trevally	20	25	28
Snook	33	30	Not known
Tailor.....	25	30	34
Whiting, school and yellowfin.....		20	22
Yellowtail kingfish		50	Not known

NOTE: * Indicates fish which change sex (baldchin groper change from female to male at about 40cm)

Baldchin groper		
Proposal 7a	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	504	40.78%
Agree	247	19.98%
Don't Know	55	4.45%
Disagree	139	11.25%
Strongly Disagree	216	17.48%

Barracuda		
Proposal 7b	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	479	38.75%
Agree	358	28.96%
Don't Know	222	17.96%
Disagree	27	2.18%
Strongly Disagree	56	4.53%

Blue groper		
Proposal 7c	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	578	46.76%
Agree	308	24.92%
Don't Know	100	8.09%
Disagree	55	4.45%
Strongly Disagree	114	9.22%

Breaksea cod		
Proposal 7d	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	505	40.86%
Agree	413	33.41%
Don't Know	117	9.47%
Disagree	47	3.80%
Strongly Disagree	74	5.99%

Cod, other		
Proposal 7e	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	507	41.02%
Agree	384	31.07%
Don't Know	140	11.33%
Disagree	42	3.40%
Strongly Disagree	70	5.66%

King George whiting		
Proposal 7f	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	308	24.92%
Agree	240	19.42%
Don't Know	57	4.61%
Disagree	142	11.49%
Strongly Disagree	415	33.58%

Herring		
Proposal 7g	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	295	23.87%
Agree	275	22.25%
Don't Know	53	4.29%
Disagree	243	19.66%
Strongly Disagree	297	24.03%

Mahi mahi		
Proposal 7h	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	493	39.89%
Agree	357	28.88%
Don't Know	188	15.21%
Disagree	32	2.59%
Strongly Disagree	78	6.31%

Mulloway		
7i	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	331	26.78%
Agree	285	23.06%
Don't Know	58	4.69%
Disagree	132	10.68%
Strongly Disagree	353	28.56%

Pike		
Proposal 7g	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	474	38.35%
Agree	411	33.25%
Don't Know	138	11.17%
Disagree	39	3.16%
Strongly Disagree	90	7.28%

Pink snapper		
Proposal 7k	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	596	48.22%
Agree	312	25.24%
Don't Know	40	3.24%
Disagree	93	7.52%
Strongly Disagree	128	10.36%

Red snapper		
Proposal 7l	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	492	39.81%
Agree	383	30.99%
Don't Know	119	9.63%
Disagree	54	4.37%
Strongly Disagree	106	8.58%

Skippy		
Proposal 7m	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	301	24.35%
Agree	287	23.22%
Don't Know	52	4.21%
Disagree	193	15.61%
Strongly Disagree	330	26.70%

Snook		
Proposal 7n	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	443	35.84%
Agree	344	27.83%
Don't Know	208	16.83%
Disagree	52	4.21%
Strongly Disagree	96	7.77%

Tailor		
Proposal 7o	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	311	25.16%
Agree	243	19.66%
Don't Know	54	4.37%
Disagree	197	15.94%
Strongly Disagree	356	28.80%

Whiting, school&yellowfin		
Proposal 7p	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	283	22.90%
Agree	264	21.36%
Don't Know	50	4.05%
Disagree	172	13.92%
Strongly Disagree	385	31.15%

Yellowtail kingfish		
Proposal 7q	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	322	26.05%
Agree	308	24.92%
Don't Know	195	15.78%
Disagree	84	6.80%
Strongly Disagree	233	18.85%

The West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group recommends that proposed changes to minimum legal sizes be negotiated with the commercial fishing sector and made consistent where possible.

Proposal 8 - Filleting at sea

Filleting of fish at sea should not be permitted. If a fishing trip involves an overnight stay on an island, fish caught can be filleted and then transported back to the mainland.

Proposal 8	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	333	26.94%
Agree	385	31.15%
Don't Know	48	3.88%
Disagree	248	20.06%
Strongly Disagree	204	16.50%

Proposal 9 - Accumulation of fish at sea

Recreational fishers should not be allowed to accumulate daily bag limits when living on-board a boat.

Proposal 9	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	281	22.73%
Agree	236	19.09%
Don't Know	84	6.80%
Disagree	381	30.83%
Strongly Disagree	228	18.45%

Proposal 10 – Recreational boat limit

A boat limit of twice the daily bag limit should apply to all species, when there are two or more people in a boat.

Proposal 10	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	238	19.26%
Agree	269	21.76%
Don't Know	40	3.24%
Disagree	193	15.61%
Strongly Disagree	457	36.97%

Proposal 11 – Charter boat limits

11 (a) That the boat limit proposed for recreational fishers apply. However, if there are more than four paying customers on-board a licensed fishing tour, an additional two 'Trophy Fish' per person over and above the boat limit be permitted for the fifth and additional paying customers.

Proposal 11a	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	230	18.61%
Agree	569	46.04%
Don't Know	118	9.55%
Disagree	146	11.81%
Strongly Disagree	143	11.57%

11 (b) The working group says the same logic should apply to dive charters taking rock lobster, where a boat limit of 16 applies. It proposes that if there are more than eight licensed paying clients on a dive charter, the ninth and additional licensed paying customers should be allowed possession of two lobsters each.

Proposal 11b	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	235	19.01%
Agree	565	45.71%
Don't Know	116	9.39%
Disagree	135	10.92%
Strongly Disagree	126	10.19%

Proposal 12 – Possession limits for the West Coast Region

- 20 kg of fillets, or
- 10 kg of fillet plus one day’s bag limit of whole fish, or
- two days’ bag limit of whole fish

Proposal 12	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	290	23.46%
Agree	521	42.15%
Don't Know	46	3.72%
Disagree	150	12.14%
Strongly Disagree	190	15.37%

Proposal 13 – Closures to fishing

13 (a) Fishing for baldchin groper at the Abrolhos Islands should be prohibited within the Fish Habitat Protection Area during December, January, February and March.

Proposal 13a	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	418	33.82%
Agree	531	42.96%
Don't Know	188	15.21%
Disagree	42	3.40%
Strongly Disagree	31	2.51%

13 (b) Fishing for pink snapper should be prohibited from 15 September to 31 October between Cape Bouvard and Ocean Reef Marina.

Proposal 13b	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	434	35.11%
Agree	430	34.79%
Don't Know	112	9.06%
Disagree	126	10.19%
Strongly Disagree	101	8.17%

Both these proposals should be developed through negotiation with the commercial fishing industry.

Proposal 14 – Set and haul net fishing

14 (a) Set and haul nets be prohibited for recreational fishers in the west coast except for attended set nets in the Peel/Harvey Estuary and the Hardy Inlet.

Proposal 14a	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	348	28.16%
Agree	415	33.58%
Don't Know	131	10.60%
Disagree	111	8.98%
Strongly Disagree	192	15.53%

14 (b) Within the Peel/Harvey Estuary and Hardy Inlet outside existing closures, attended set nets be permitted. Set nets should have a maximum drop of 25 meshes and float from the surface. All attended nets must be lifted and cleaned every hour.

Proposal 14b	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	298	24.11%
Agree	501	40.53%
Don't Know	174	14.08%
Disagree	84	6.80%
Strongly Disagree	141	11.41%

14 (c) Throw nets be permitted in marine waters throughout the region (except for any estuarine and river systems and ‘no fishing’ zones such as sanctuary zones and fish protection areas).

Proposal 14c	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	336	27.18%
Agree	574	46.44%
Don't Know	140	11.33%
Disagree	79	6.39%
Strongly Disagree	59	4.77%

Proposals 15 – Prawn drag nets

15 (a) Hand trawl nets be prohibited for recreational fishers in the Peel/Harvey and Leschenault estuaries.

Proposal 15a	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	211	17.07%
Agree	270	21.84%
Don't Know	294	23.79%
Disagree	258	20.87%
Strongly Disagree	177	14.32%

- 15 (b)** Hand trawl nets be prohibited for recreational fishers in the waters adjoining nature reserves on the Swan River.

Proposal 15b	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	237	19.17%
Agree	295	23.87%
Don't Know	249	20.15%
Disagree	241	19.50%
Strongly Disagree	174	14.08%

Proposal 16 – Changes to legal fishing gear

Unattended set lines to be prohibited; one attended bait trap per person (salt water only) – bait trap to be defined.

Unattended set lines to be prohibited		
Proposal 16a	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	440	35.60%
Agree	483	39.08%
Don't Know	82	6.63%
Disagree	82	6.63%
Strongly Disagree	83	6.72%

One attended bait trap per person (salt water only)		
Proposal 16b	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	283	22.90%
Agree	572	46.28%
Don't Know	188	15.21%
Disagree	58	4.69%
Strongly Disagree	93	7.52%

Proposal 17 - Fishing competitions

- 17 (a)** All fishing competitions with more than 100 participants must formally register in advance with Fisheries WA [Department of Fisheries].

Proposal 17a	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	385	31.15%
Agree	506	40.94%
Don't Know	141	11.41%
Disagree	83	6.72%
Strongly Disagree	89	7.20%

- 17 (b)** Competition organisers must keep an accurate record of participation, catch and effort and forward catch returns to Fisheries WA [Department of Fisheries] for inclusion in the recreational fisheries database.

Proposal 17b	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	406	32.85%
Agree	593	47.98%
Don't Know	99	8.01%
Disagree	62	5.02%
Strongly Disagree	43	3.48%

17 (c) Fisheries WA [Department of Fisheries] should develop a formal code of conduct for fishing competitions in consultation with fishing clubs and organising bodies. Competitions must be conducted in line with recreational fishing ethics and meet requirements under the *Animal Welfare Bill*.

Proposal 17c	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	420	33.98%
Agree	553	44.74%
Don't Know	126	10.19%
Disagree	56	4.53%
Strongly Disagree	51	4.13%

Proposal 18 – Position statement on recreational fishing by indigenous people

It is recognised that in the past members of the Aboriginal community have collected fish to provide food for their community, and there should be provision to allow this custom to continue in the future. In certain circumstances – such as Aboriginal ceremonies – members of the Aboriginal community should be allowed to collect fish for the whole community.

Where these activities involve the possibility of exceeding the daily bag limit, such fishing should be carried out only with prior written approval from Fisheries WA [Department of Fisheries]. In the interest of preserving fish stocks, no-one should be allowed to keep undersize fish, use illegal fishing gear or fish outside approved times or in areas closed to fishing.

Proposal 18	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	566	45.79%
Agree	401	32.44%
Don't Know	60	4.85%
Disagree	67	5.42%
Strongly Disagree	111	8.98%

B4 Protecting recreational fishing quality

Proposal 19 – Code for recreational fishing at Rottnest Island

- When visiting the island catch only enough fish to eat fresh for yourself and family.
- Take the time to release all undersize or unwanted fish.
- When keeping fish for the table, dispatch them quickly and ensure they are kept in cool place in the shade.
- Clean your catch as soon as possible. Fillets should be placed in waterproof plastic bags to keep the flavour in and the water out.
- Regardless of the length of your stay on Rottnest, do not take more than one day's bag limit of fish away from the island.
- Take a camera, not a spear-gun.

- Respect the sanctuary areas around Thomson Bay and Parker Point and stay on marked trails to protect the fragile environment.
- Aim to always fish safely around the island and treat the ocean with respect.
- Though commercial fishing around Rottneest is already restricted, the working group recommends that no commercial fishing (purse seine, wetline, demersal gill net and long line) be allowed within two nautical miles of the island. As with all resource sharing proposals, the group urges that any changes should be negotiated with the commercial sector.

Agreement with recreational fishing code for Rottneest		
Proposal 19	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	446	36.08%
Agree	545	44.09%
Don't Know	78	6.31%
Disagree	57	4.61%
Strongly Disagree	83	6.72%

Proposal 20 – Position statement on restocking as a stock enhancement strategy

Management of wild fish stocks should always be the primary focus for recreational fisheries management, and restocking should only be considered as a strategy to assist with the recovery of a stock where it can be identified that the stock has been significantly depleted.

Proposal 20	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	386	31.23%
Agree	654	52.91%
Don't Know	111	8.98%
Disagree	35	2.83%
Strongly Disagree	22	1.78%

B5 Resource sharing

Proposal 21 – Resource sharing

Sustainable catch shares for key recreational species should be determined by negotiations with the commercial sector through a resource sharing process.

Public comment is sought on the following possible outcomes for the recreational fishing community. These should be achieved through proper resource sharing and the commercial sector should be involved in negotiations.

- 21 (a)** Commercial fishing that has a significant impact on the quality of the recreational fishery should be restricted within three nautical miles of the coast. This includes the West Coast Demersal Gillnet and Longline Fishery, trawl fisheries and commercial wetline fishing. The working group believe there is a case for extending this closure in areas of high recreational use – for

example, five nautical miles around Kalbarri. Community views are sought on this proposal.

Commercial fishing impacting recreational fishing to be 3nm off coast		
Proposal 21a1	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	719	58.17%
Agree	368	29.77%
Don't Know	45	3.64%
Disagree	39	3.16%
Strongly Disagree	41	3.32%

Closure extended to 5nm in areas of high recreational use		
Proposal 21a2	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	684	55.34%
Agree	387	31.31%
Don't Know	66	5.34%
Disagree	32	2.59%
Strongly Disagree	20	1.62%

- 21 (b)** Herring and tailor have a high recreational value and low commercial value. Priority for their management should be recreational and the recreational catch share should reflect their importance to this sector.

Proposal 21b1	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	574	46.44%
Agree	575	46.52%
Don't Know	34	2.75%
Disagree	17	1.38%
Strongly Disagree	8	0.65%

Further, the total herring catch should be managed within a total allowable catch for both sectors. Resource sharing should be achieved through creating a purely recreational fishery on the west coast and a reduction in commercial catch on the south coast.

The aim should be to adjust the current 80 per cent commercial / 20 per cent recreational catch shares to 50 per cent for each sector. This should encourage value adding within the commercial fishery and an improved social and economic return to the WA community.

Herring catch managed as total allowable for commercial/recreational		
Proposal 21b2	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	479	38.75%
Agree	601	48.62%
Don't Know	71	5.74%
Disagree	35	2.83%
Strongly Disagree	16	1.29%

Aim to adjust commercial/recreational share as 50/50		
Proposal 21b3	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	530	42.88%
Agree	493	39.89%
Don't Know	119	9.63%
Disagree	38	3.07%
Strongly Disagree	20	1.62%

- 21 (c)** The sale of tailor south of Shark Bay should be phased out in recognition of their high value as a recreational species and low commercial value.

Proposal 21c	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	652	52.75%
Agree	476	38.51%
Don't Know	58	4.69%
Disagree	29	2.35%
Strongly Disagree	7	0.57%

- 21 (d)** Commercial salmon fishing should not be allowed on beaches in the west coast zone over Easter and the Anzac Day holiday periods.

Proposal 21d	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	606	49.03%
Agree	439	35.52%
Don't Know	99	8.01%
Disagree	50	4.05%
Strongly Disagree	21	1.70%

- 21 (e)** The ban on recreational netting upstream of Fisher Road on the Blackwood River, near Augusta, should apply to commercial netting to protect black bream stocks.

Proposal 21e	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	653	52.83%
Agree	391	31.63%
Don't Know	165	13.35%
Disagree	7	0.57%
Strongly Disagree	4	0.32%

- 21 (f)** A minimum level of commercial fishing should be retained in the major estuary systems on the west coast to provide a source of fresh fish for consumers. A ceiling on commercial effort and catch should be established, which is essential to maintain fish stocks and values in these areas.

Proposal 21f	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	507	41.02%
Agree	537	43.45%
Don't Know	57	4.61%
Disagree	51	4.13%
Strongly Disagree	54	4.37%

- 21 (g)** The working group supports management being implemented for the wetline fleet and the benchmark date of November 1997, for continued access to the wetline fishery. It recommends that the fleet pay for the cost of its fishery management.

Proposal 21g	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	582	47.09%
Agree	446	36.08%
Don't Know	135	10.92%
Disagree	26	2.10%
Strongly Disagree	19	1.54%

21 (h) No commercial fishing (purse seine, wetline, demersal gill net and long line) should be allowed within two nautical miles of Rottneest Island.

Proposal 21h	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	764	61.81%
Agree	359	29.05%
Don't Know	38	3.07%
Disagree	20	1.62%
Strongly Disagree	25	2.02%

21 (i) No commercial fishing should be allowed in the proposed closed area to fishing around the Abrolhos Islands.

Proposal 21i	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	754	61.00%
Agree	356	28.80%
Don't Know	80	6.47%
Disagree	14	1.13%
Strongly Disagree	4	0.32%

Recreational sectors catch percentage for the following species:

Herring		
Total	Count	Average
462.29	800	57.79%

KG Whiting		
Total	Count	Average
446.59	798	55.96%

Tailor		
Total	Count	Average
556.01	793	70.11%

Skipjack trevally		
Total	Count	Average
642.262	774	82.98%

Pink snapper		
Total	Count	Average
353.83	809	43.74%

Baldchin groper		
Total	Count	Average
412.25	807	51.08%

Dhufish		
Total	Count	Average
566.45	824	68.74%

B6 Protection of fish habitats

Proposal 22 – Low impact wilderness fishing experiences

That the area north of Kalbarri to the Zuytdorp Cliffs be managed on a trial basis as a remote wilderness fishing area. The trial should determine the level of community support and potential for retaining wilderness fishing values in the area.

Proposal 22	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	348	28.16%
Agree	545	44.09%
Don't Know	224	18.12%
Disagree	58	4.69%
Strongly Disagree	27	2.18%

The working group defines a wilderness area as:

"An area previously protected by a high level of remoteness which provided a unique fishing experience unavailable in other areas, and characterised by getting there under your own steam."

The working group agrees on the following guiding principles for the management of wilderness areas:

- Low take
- Low environmental impact

[These principles should apply to finfish, lobster, abalone and other popular marine organisms.]

- Code of practice should apply to tour operators
- Manage vehicle and assisted access to limit environmental impact.

Proposal 23 – Protection of sensitive habitat areas and fish stocks around new marina developments

23 (a) Developers should contribute funds for the management of fish resources and the marine environment when there is an increase in recreational fishing as a result of building new marinas and boat ramps.

Proposal 23a	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	597	48.30%
Agree	450	36.41%
Don't Know	71	5.74%
Disagree	68	5.50%
Strongly Disagree	31	2.51%

23 (b) If there are unique or important fish habitats close to a new facility, these should be set aside as a 'no-go' area. What areas should be set aside should be decided during the development of each site.

Proposal 23b	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	585	47.33%
Agree	460	37.22%
Don't Know	88	7.12%
Disagree	58	4.69%
Strongly Disagree	17	1.38%

B7 Improving community stewardship – education and compliance

Proposal 24 – West Coast Region community education plan

24 (a) Regional fishing guide

A comprehensive regional guide to recreational fishing in the West Coast Region should be produced to inform and educate fishers about recreational fishing management, fishing ethics, research, conservation issues and promoting stewardship for fish stocks and the environment.

Proposal 24a	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	551	44.58%
Agree	578	46.76%
Don't Know	33	2.67%
Disagree	40	3.24%
Strongly Disagree	11	0.89%

24 (b) Educational resource materials

Adequate quantities of practical educational tools such as measuring gauges, fish rulers, adhesive bag limit guides and boat ramp and fishing venue signs should be produced to support the regional fishing guide.

Proposal 24b	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	577	46.68%
Agree	563	45.55%
Don't Know	28	2.27%
Disagree	32	2.59%
Strongly Disagree	9	0.73%

24 (c) Annual media campaign

An annual media campaign be implemented to promote recreational fishing and fishing ethics in the west coast.

Proposal 24c	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	450	36.41%
Agree	574	46.44%
Don't Know	73	5.91%
Disagree	64	5.18%
Strongly Disagree	38	3.07%

Proposal 25 – Additional patrol capacity

That to achieve a ten per cent contact-to-trip ratio with recreational fishers by Fisheries Officers and VFLOs an additional eight patrols (16 Fisheries Officers) be dedicated to recreational field compliance and education activities during peak fishing seasons in the West Coast Region.

Proposal 25	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	374	30.26%
Agree	597	48.30%
Don't Know	117	9.47%
Disagree	61	4.94%
Strongly Disagree	58	4.69%

These resources should be allocated to:

- Kalbarri-Port Gregory. One additional patrol crew to be based in Kalbarri. At present, effective compliance presence is sporadic at best.
- Abrolhos Islands. One additional patrol crew to service peak season fishing at sea and in the Geraldton area.
- Jurien Bay-Lancelin. One additional patrol crew to be based in Jurien Bay.
- Perth north metro: Hillarys-Yanchep. One additional patrol crew. to be based at Hillarys to cover the northern suburbs from Hillarys up to Two Rocks.
- Perth south metro. Two additional patrol crews based in Fremantle to provide additional compliance for the Swan River, Cockburn Sound and Warnbro Sound.
- Mandurah/Bunbury. One additional patrol crew during the summer crab and tailor fishing seasons.
- Busselton. One additional patrol crew for Geographe Bay and the Capes region

Proposal 26 – Volunteer Fisheries Liaison Officer Program

- 26 (a)** The VFLO program must be adequately resourced with educational materials and support from Fisheries WA staff. The focus of VFLO activities should be redirected towards beach front contacts with recreational fishers, to achieve a target contact rate of 10 per cent of all fishers.

Proposal 26a	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	347	28.07%
Agree	664	53.72%
Don't Know	87	7.04%
Disagree	51	4.13%
Strongly Disagree	47	3.80%

- 26 (b)** A junior VFLO Program be established in the West Coast Region as a trial and then expanded across the state. The program will need to operate in conjunction with the existing VFLO Program and work through schools.

Proposal 26b	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	357	28.88%
Agree	605	48.95%
Don't Know	119	9.63%
Disagree	69	5.58%
Strongly Disagree	41	3.32%

Proposal 27 – Recreational Fishing Management Officer

The appointment of a specific person responsible for implementing the West Coast Regional Review, coordinating community consultation and education activities, and providing executive support for community advisory committees.

Proposal 27	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	289	23.38%
Agree	565	45.71%
Don't Know	165	13.35%
Disagree	109	8.82%
Strongly Disagree	72	5.83%

Proposal 28 – Regional Recreational Fisheries Council

A Regional Recreational Fisheries Council be established to oversee the implementation and operation of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Management Strategy.

The council should replace the existing Regional Recreational Fishing Advisory Committees in the West Coast Region, but should continue to report to the Minister for Fisheries as part of the State Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee network.

Proposal 28	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	208	16.83%
Agree	557	45.06%
Don't Know	308	24.92%
Disagree	71	5.74%
Strongly Disagree	46	3.72%

Representation on the new council should be both regional and expertise-based and Fisheries WA [Department of Fisheries] should be formally included as a committee member, rather than simply providing executive support.

B8 Providing adequate resources for management and enhancement

Proposal 29 – Funding for recreational fisheries management

29 (a) The State Government should increase the level of funding for recreational fisheries management to \$10 million for the next three financial years. In

following years the government contribution should be on the basis of 5% of the direct economic impact of recreational fishing on the economy.

Proposal 29a	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	515	41.67%
Agree	530	42.88%
Don't Know	70	5.66%
Disagree	52	4.21%
Strongly Disagree	34	2.75%

- 29 (b)** If the State Government does not increase funding in this manner, it should introduce a general recreational fishing licence to provide essential funds. However, even if a licence is introduced it is essential that government funding should continue at the present level, so that a licence does not merely replace current funding.

Proposal 29b	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	230	18.61%
Agree	187	15.13%
Don't Know	54	4.37%
Disagree	160	12.94%
Strongly Disagree	547	44.26%

- 29 (c)** If a general angling licence is introduced it should be on the following basis:
- Apply only to people above the age of 16.
 - Sales could be through tackle shops and shire offices.
 - Normal discount for seniors and pensioners.
 - Licence revenue must go into a trust account for recreational fisheries management.
 - Also introduce temporary licences – for example, two days or two weeks.
 - Identify and publicise how the money will be used

Proposal 29c	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	247	19.98%
Agree	177	14.32%
Don't Know	30	2.43%
Disagree	98	7.93%
Strongly Disagree	503	40.70%

APPENDIX C NAMES OF INDIVIDUALS AND ASSOCIATIONS WHO FORWARDED SUBMISSIONS TO THE WEST COAST RECREATIONAL FISHING WORKING GROUP

Abbott, Natalie	Austin, Bret	Bell, Chris
Abraham, David	Australian Anglers Assoc	Bell, Janet
Abrolhos Islands Management Advisory Committee	Australian Marine Conservation Society WA	Bell, Jean
Ackroyd, Mary	Australian National Sportsfishing Assoc WA Branch	Bell, John
Adam, Rod	A'Vard, Todd	Bell, Kenneth
Adams, Thomas	Axford, Jack	Bell, Mabel
Africh, Eddy	Babarskas, P	Bell, Steve
Agnew, Terence	Badgery, Tony	Benjamin, Robert
Aitken, Alan	Bailey, Michael	Bennett, William
Aitken, Edward	Baker, David	Benny, Jason
Aitkin, Michael	Baker, David	Bensted, Tony
Akehurst, Alan	Baker, David	Bentley, EA
Alder, Terry	Baker, Hazel	Bently & McCallum, Ken & Wendy
Allchin, PC	Baker, Joe	the Bergs
Alldis, John	Baker, Ken	Beurteaux, N
Allen, S	Baker, Kerry	Bezant, Melanie
Allum, Stephen	Ballard, Allen	Bianchi, P
Allwood, Bryn	Ballard, D	Bibra, Craig
Allwood, Diane	Ballard, Jason	Bird, D.
Anderson, Stuart	Ballard, Shane	Bird, Kevin
Anderton, C	Barber, Derry	Black, Ken
Anderton, Graham	Barker, Alan	Blacker, K
Anderton, Ivan	Barker, E	Blair, Leith
Anderton, Peter	Barlson, B	Blakeley, PE
Angwin, Ben	Barrett, Mark	Blakers, Geoff
Angwin, Ian	Barton, Bill & Judith	Blight, Lindsay
Angwin, LC	Bascombe, David	Blowitch MLA, Bob
Angwin, Neil	Bascombe, Steven	Blyth, Peter
Angwin, Nicholas	Basnett, CR	Bone, Robert
Angwin, Pam	Batchelor, D	Boothman, Nathan
Annear, R	Batten, Dudley	Bowman, Martin
Archer, Rick	Baxter, Charlie	Bowman, Stuart
Areiss, W	Bayliss, Matthew	Bowra, Chris
Armstrong, Arthur	Bayliss, Steve	Boxhorn, Jan
Armstrong, Christine	Bean, Marjorie	Boyce, Elizabeth
Armstrong, Jim	Bean, Sydney Thomas	Boyd, A
Armstrong, T	Beck, Carl	Boyd, Phil
Armstrong, William	Beck, R	Boyd, Sommer
Arnett, Paul	Beerrens, Michael	Bradfield, Geoffry
Arnett, Tracey	Beesley, Selwyn	Brambles, B
Asfain, Colin	Beeson, Adam	Brambles, Marg
Atkin, Ross		Bransby, Keith
		Bransby, Lorraine

Bratley, Clive	Castledine, Ryan	Constantine, Geoff
Bray, John	Cato, Coral	Constantine, Michael
Bray, PD	Cato, William	Contos, Adam
Brazier, Roland	Cattermule, Rodney	Cook, D
Brewer, G	Cavanagh	Cook, Ian
Bright, Peter	Centa, Marc	Corbett, Ben
Brindle, David	Chamberlain, Cecil Edwin	Corbett, Dani
Bristow, John	Chambers, Rodney	Corbett, Tali
Broadbent, A	Charlton, R	Cordell, Steve
Broadbent, Cary	Charter Boat Owners	Cordell, Sue-Ellen
Broadbridge, Len	Association	Core, Wilfred
Brooker, Les	Charters, Green Islets	Cornish, G
Brookes, Leslie	Chatty, William	Cotterell, Kevin
Brown, Gresley	Cherry, D	Craig, Keith
Brown, K	Chesson, Martin	Craig, RK
Bryce, Geoff	Chester, David	Craigie, F
Bryce, Kevin	Chester, Jamie	Cramer, Kim
Bull & Firby, D & NR	Childs, Ross	Cramer, Max
Burdinat, G	Christon, Eileen	Crane, Ed
Burgin, Lee	Christon, Teena	Criddle, Sean
Burgin, Mick	Churack, John	Crisafulli, Anthony
Burke, B	Clancey, Paul	Crisp, Brad
Burnett, David	Clark, Gillian	Crisp, Christine
Burns, Russell	Clark, L E	Crisp, Dean
Burns-Howlett, Lorraine	Clarke, Andrew	Crisp, Ian
Burton, Brent	Clarke, Garry	Crisp, Jane
Burton, Harry	Clarke, Shani	Crisp, PJ
Burton, Kim	Clegg, Doug	Cross, James
Burwiek & Grant, Mick & Chris	Clements, R Ian	Crow, R
Busby, Frank	Clifton, Mike	Cullen, Terry
Busby, Robert	Close, Michael	Culloton, D
Bushe-Jones, T	Clowes, Matthew	Culloton, James
Bussel, Aaron	Cobby, Brendan	Cummins, David
Byers, RA	Cobby, Graham	Curnow, Sarah
Byrne, John	Cockman, Malcolm	Currill, Frank
Byrne, John Waldron	Cole, Greg	Cusack, Ross
Cadby, John	Cole, Linda	Cuthbert, Betty
Calabro, Joanne	Cole, Shaun	Cuthbert, Gordon
Calabro, Joe	Collett, M	Cuthbert, Jon
Calabro, Mal	Collins, Danielle	Cuthbert, Les
Callum	Collins, Jennifer	Cvitan, Anthony
Caporn, Cheryl	Collins, L	Daff, Kevin & Coralline
Caporn, Kevin	Collins, Lance	Danzi, Paul
Carey, A	Collins, Lesley	Davenport, Craig
Carlton, Ashley	Collins, Rob	Davey, Chris
Carlton, Kathy	Collins, S	Davidson, L
Carter, Noel	Compton, PA	Davis, Scott
Caruana, B	Conroy, Douglas	Davis, W
Caruana, Victor	Conroy, Lorraine	Dawes-Smith, Cameron
Castigliuni, Gavin	Conservation Council of WA Inc	Dawson, Arthur
		Dawson, Frank

Dawson, Kathleen
 Dawson, Phil
 de Beer, Charles
 de Jong, P
 de Mamiel, Laurie
 Dean, Cyril James
 Deardon, S
 Delaporte, Carolyn
 Delaporte, Graham
 Dellagatta, Sebastiano
 den Boer, J
 Dewdney, David
 Digney, Kerrin
 Dimoff, Debra
 Dimoff, Krystal
 Dimoff, Olivia
 Dixon, Brad
 Doddemead, W
 Donoghue, G
 Dorney, Merv
 Dorney, Sandra
 Doughty, Kevin
 Down, J
 Drake, Robert
 Dransfield, Rod
 Duck, Peter
 Dufall, S
 Duncan, Ross
 Duncan, Steven
 Duncun, Mark
 Dunstan, Keith
 East, Richard
 Ebsworthy, Joshua
 Ecclestone, Barry
 Edge, Alan
 Edsworthy, Bob
 Edward, Mark
 Edwards, Karl
 Edwards, Martin
 Ellis, J
 Ellis, M
 Ellul, Raphael
 Ellul, Raphael
 Elsegood, William
 Emmerson, Angus
 Empson, Jeffrey
 Evans, Carmen
 Evans, Keith
 Evans, Murray
 Evans, PD
 Evans, Patricia

Evans, Peter
 Evans, Wayne
 Fabiseal, Charles
 Fabling, Joy
 Facius, V
 Fanowrios, Tony
 Faranda, C
 Farrell, Dawn
 Farrell, John
 Faulkner, Jason
 Fawcus, Shane
 Fearn, Brian
 Featherstone, Darryl
 Ferguson, Mark
 Fernie, Brian
 Ferraloro, N
 Fiend, Brian
 Fitzgerald, Peter
 Fitzgerald, W
 Fitzgibbon, Redmond
 Fitzhardinge, John
 Fleming, Bob
 Fleming, Kevin
 Fletcher, Alan
 Flewelling, Daniel
 Flintoff, Quentin
 Flugge, Brett
 Flynn, Keith
 Forrest, Barry
 Forsyth, Angus
 Forsyth, Chris
 Forsyth, Patricia
 Foster, Craig
 Foster, Gavin
 Foster, Kristy
 Foster, Patricia
 Foster, Paul
 Fowler, Rob
 Francis, B
 Frank, Peter
 Franklin, T
 Fraurud, John
 Freeman, Eileen
 Freeman, Ian
 French, Graeme
 French, Tony
 Fuller, Ray
 Fuller, Terry
 Fullerton, Dean
 Gaffin, R A
 Galvin, Paul

Gardiner, Graeme
 Gardiner, Trevor
 Gardner, Terry
 Gare, Natalie
 Gare, Wayne
 Garrie, G
 Garton, Peter
 Gault, Jim
 Gederero, Richard
 Gee, Anthony
 Gee, G
 George, Brenton
 Geraldton Professional
 Fishermen's Association
 Gerrick, T
 Gibson, Alan
 Gibson, Craig
 Gibson, Lyndon
 Gilbert, Colin
 Giles, Peter
 Gillard, John
 Gillard, Steven
 Gilles, Les
 Gimm, Maxime
 Gimm, Nicholas
 Ginivan, Robert
 Gislingham, Chris
 Glagon, Monique
 Glass, Peter
 Godecke, Gail
 Godecke, Phil
 Gorey, Peter
 Gorey, Trevor
 Gornall, Keith
 Gottler, Lindsey
 Gould, Jeff
 Graham, McManus
 Grandal, Carl
 Grant, Jim
 Gray, Barry
 Gray, Cameron David
 Gray, Ross David
 Green, David
 Green, John
 Greenslade, Frank
 Greer, Craig
 Griffiths, Bradley
 Griffiths, David
 Griffiths, J
 Grimshaw, Peter
 Grosvenor, Hugh

Growden, John
 Guelpa, R
 Gunning, RA
 Guthridge, George
 Guthridge, Ian
 Hailstone, Robert
 Hale, Bruce
 Hales, K
 Hall, Alek
 Hall, John
 Hall, PA
 Hall, R
 Hall, R
 Hall, Robert
 Hall, Ron
 Hall, Tom
 Hall, Wathana
 Halligan, Ivan
 Hallybone, J
 Halse, Eric
 Halsted, Craig
 Ham, Greg
 Hamblin, M
 Hamling, Bruce
 Hancey, Burt
 Harbord, Lindsay
 Hardwick, Frank
 Harman, J
 Harrington, Graham
 Harrison, Ben
 Harrison, Bradley
 Harrison, Bryan
 Harrison, Diana
 Harrison, Geoffrey
 Harrison, John
 Harrison, Russell
 Harrod, Mike
 Hart, Alfred
 Hart, L
 Hart, R
 Hartley, M
 Harvey, Euan
 Harwood, Justin
 Hasler, Brad
 Hasler, Carol
 Hawkin, D
 Hawkins, Paul
 Hawkins, Shane
 Head, MG
 Healy, Stephen
 Heather, Don

Heathwood, Bill
 Heaven, Peter
 Heglund, Jarrod
 Henderson, A W
 Henderson, Eric
 Henderson, Geoffrey
 Henderson, R
 Heptinstall, David
 Heptinstall, Jessica
 Herlihy, Astrid
 Heterick, Brian
 Hicks, Bill
 Hicks, Diane
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Just, Margaret	Lawson, Simon	Lumberg, N
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APPENDIX D CURRENT BAG AND SIZE LIMITS

STATE BAG AND SIZE LIMITS

Prize fish - 4 of each species, total mixed bag 8

Prize fish are highly sought after for catching or eating qualities and some are vulnerable to overfishing.

Billfish such as marlin, sailfish and swordfish (*Xiphiidae* and *Istiophoridae* spp) **mixed bag of 4**

Cobia (*Rachycentron canadus*)

Cods (*Serranidae* family) **mixed bag of 4** (inc. Harlequin fish and Breaksea cod) Fish over 1200mm or 30kg are protected

Coral Trout (*Plectropomus* spp) [450mm]

Dhufish,WA (*Glaucosoma hebraicum*) [500mm]

Mackerel, wahoo (*Acanthocybium solandri*) and **Spanish, broad-barred** [750mm] **Spanish narrow-barred** (*Scomberomorus* spp) [900mm]

Mackerel, shark (*Grammatorcynus bicarinatus*) **Spotted and Old school** (*Scomberomorus* spp) [500mm]

Mahi mahi (dolphinfish - *Coryphaena hippurus*)

Mulloway (*Argyrosomus hololepidotus*) and **Northern mulloway** (*Protonibea diacanthus*) **combined bag of 4** [450mm]

Queenfish (*Scomberoides commersonianus*)

Salmon, Australian (*Arripis truttaceus*) [300mm]

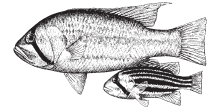
Samson fish (*Seriola hippos*) [600mm]

Sharks (all species except protected species) **mixed bag of 4**

***Trout, brown & rainbow combined** (*Salmo trutta* and *Oncorhynchus mykiss*) see separate guide for details of fishing rules

Tuna, Southern bluefin (*Thunnus maccoyii*)

Yellowtail kingfish (*Seriola lalandi*)



Reef fish - mixed bag 8

Reef fish are usually resident species and are highly vulnerable to overfishing.

Emperor, red (*Lutjanus sebae*) [410mm]

Groper & tuskfish excluding western blue groper (baldchin *C. rubescens*, blue tuskfish *C. cyanodus* & black spot tuskfish *C. shoeneleini*) [400mm]

Snapper, pink (*Pagrus auratus*) Special rules apply in Shark Bay and Perth metro area – contact the Department of Fisheries [410mm]
In Wilson Inlet, minimum size is [280mm]

Snapper, North-west (*Lethrinus* spp) and all other *Lethrinus* species [280mm]

Snapper, queen (blue morwong *Nemadactylus valenciennesi*) [410mm]

Spangled emperor *Lethrinus nebulosus* [410mm]



Key angling & sport fish - 8 per fisher

An important protection category - cobbler and tailor stocks have both declined in recent years, with fish often caught before spawning.

Black bream (in Swan/Canning River) (*A.butcheri*) [250mm total length]

Bonito (*Sarda orientalis*, *Cybiosarda elegans*)

Cobbler (*Cnidoglanis macrocephalus*) [430mm total length]

Tailor (*Pomatomus saltatrix*) [250mm]

Mangrove jack (*Lutjanus argentimaculatus*)

Fingermark bream (*Lutjanus russelli*)

Giant threadfin salmon (*Eleutheronema tetradactylum*)

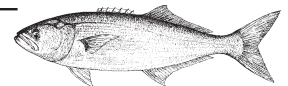


Table fish - 20 per fisher

This group contains many of WA's most popular angling species and bag limits are crucial for maintaining future stocks.

Bream, black, (outside Swan/Canning River) (**Northwest black and yellowfin** (*A.butcheri*, *A. palmaris*, *A. latus*) [250mm]

Flathead (*Platycephalus* spp) [300mm] and **flounder** (*Pseudorhombus* spp) (combined) [250mm]



Leatherjackets (<i>Monacanthidae</i> family)	[250mm]
Pike (<i>Dinolestes lewini</i>) [280mm] and snook (<i>Sphyraena novaehollandiae</i>) (combined)	[330mm]
Skipjack trevally (<i>Pseudocaranx spp</i>)	[200mm]
Snapper, red (<i>Centroberyx spp</i>)	[230mm]
Tarwhine (silver bream)(<i>Rhabdosargus sarba</i>)	[230mm]
Threadfin (bluenose salmon) Northern, Gunther's and black-finned salmon (<i>Polydactylus spp</i>)	
Whiting, King George (<i>Sillaginodes punctata</i>) [250mm]	[South coast east of Pt D'Entrecasteaux - 280mm]

Bread & butter fish - 40 per fisher - no legal size

Baitfish of the sardine and anchovy families (Clupeidae and Engraulididae - mulies, whitebait, scaly mackerel, anchovies), redfin perch, goldfish, carp and tilapia are NOT in this category. Popular 'bread and butter' species are all fish not listed in other categories including: garfish (Hyporhamphus spp), Australian herring, (Arripis georgianus), blue mackerel, (Scomber australasicus,) sea and yellow eye mullet (Mugil cephalus, Aldrichetta forsteri) and western sand, school and yellowfin whiting, (Sillago spp).

Shellfish - 2 litres

WA's delicious shellfish are often slow-growing and extremely vulnerable to overpicking from inshore reefs. A mixed bag of 2 litres of whole edible shellfish applies unless a separate bag limit is specified.



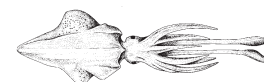
***Abalone, Greenlip and brownlip** see separate guide for details of fishing rules

***Abalone, Roe's** see separate guide for details of fishing rules

Mussels **bag limit 9 litres**

Cephalopods and Echinoderms

Squid, octopus, cuttlefish combined bag limit 15 per fisher, boat limit 30



Sea urchins **daily bag limit 40** closed season applies

Crustacea

WA's crustaceans make fine dining during open seasons but a licence is needed for marron and lobster.

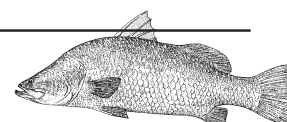


Crab, mud	bag limit 10 combined	green [150mm] brown [120mm]
Crab, blue manna	bag limit 24, boat limit 48 (min. 2 people)	[127mm]
Cherabin	bag limit 9 litres	gear restrictions apply
*Marron	see separate guide for details of fishing rules	
Prawns, king and school	bag limit 9 litres	closed season Swan River & Mandurah
*Western and Southern Rock lobster	see separate guide for details of fishing rules	

Special bag limits

Individual bag limits may be set as a conservation strategy for species considered rare or vulnerable to overfishing.

Barramundi (<i>Lates calcarifer</i>) - possession limit 5 (only one rod to be used at any one time) in lower Ord River possession limit 1 , none over 800mm	[550mm]
Groper, Western blue (<i>Achoerodus gouldi</i>) - daily bag limit 1	[400mm]



Protected species *These species are totally protected and may not be taken*

Potato cod (*Epinephelus tukula*)

Leafy seadragon (*Phycodurus eques*)

Whale shark (*Rhiniodon typus*)

Great white shark (*Caracharodon carcharias*)

Humphead maotri wrasse (*Cheilinus undulatus*)

Grey nurse shark (*Cheilinus undulatus*)



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APPENDIX F FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PAPERS

- No.1** The Report of the Southern Western Australian Shark Working Group. Chairman P. Millington (1986).
- No.2** The report of the Fish Farming Legislative Review Committee. Chairman P. Rogers (1986).
- No.3** Management Measures for the Shark Bay Snapper 1987 Season. P. Millington (1986)
- No.4** The Esperance Rock Lobster Working Group. Chairman A. Pallot (1986).
- No.5** The Windy Harbour - Augusta Rock Lobster Working Group. Interim Report by the Chairman A. Pallot (1986).
- No.6** The King George Sound Purse Seine Fishery Working Group. Chairman R. Brown (1986).
- No.7** Management Measures for the Cockburn Sound Mussel Fishery. H. Brayford (1986).
- No.8** Report of the Rock Lobster Industry Advisory meeting of 27 January 1987. Chairman B. Bowen (1987).
- No.9** Western Rock Lobster Industry Compensation Study. Arthur Young Services (1987).
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- No. 99** Management of the South Coast Purse Seine Fishery. J Fowler, R Lenanton, Kevin Donohue, M Moran & D Gaughan.
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- No. 102** Marine farm planning and consultation processes in Western Australia. Dave Everall (August 1997)
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- No. 142** Fisheries Environmental Management Plan for the Gascoyne Region (*in press*)

- No. 143** Western Rock Lobster. Discussion paper for seasons 2001/2002 and 2002/2003 (July 2000)
- No. 144** The Translocation of Brown Trout (*Salmo trutta*) and Rainbow Trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) into and within Western Australia. Prepared by Jaqueline Chappell, contributions from Simon Hambleton, Dr Howard Gill, Dr David Morgan and Dr Noel Morrissy. (*in press*)
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- No. 146** Sustainable Tourism Plan for the Houtman Abrolhos Islands (February 2001)
- No. 147** Draft Bycatch Action Plan for the Shark Bay Prawn Managed Fishery (Full Report)
- No. 148** Draft Bycatch Action Plan for the Shark Bay Prawn Managed Fishery (Summary Report)
- No. 149** Final Plan of Management for the Lancelin Island Lagoon Fish Habitat Protection Area (March 2001)
- No. 150** Draft Plan of Management for the Cottesloe Reef Proposed Fish Habitat Protection Area (April 2001)
- No. 151** Review of the Land Conservation Values of the Houtman Abrolhos Islands (May 2001)
- No. 152** Guidelines for the Establishment of Fish Habitat Protection Areas (June 2001)
- No. 153** A quality future for Recreational Fishing on the West Coast of Western Australia. A five-year management strategy prepared by the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group
- No. 154** A quality future for Recreational Fishing in the Gascoyne. A five-year management strategy prepared by the Gascoyne Recreational Fishing Working Group (*in press*)
- No. 155** Final Plan of Management for the Cottesloe Reef Proposed Fish Habitat Protection Area (*in press*)

RECREATIONAL FISHING MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR THE WEST COAST

MINISTER'S INITIAL RESPONSES TO FINAL REPORT OF THE WEST COAST RECREATIONAL FISHING WORKING GROUP (FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PAPER No. 153)

**The Honorable Kim Chance, MLC,
Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries**

OCTOBER 2001



1. INTRODUCTION

In the last ten years, participation in recreational fishing in WA has more than doubled. In 1987 an estimated 287,000 people fished each year. This year, in 2001, over 600 000 people will go fishing.

People are also fishing more regularly and effort has increased from three million angler days to around 10 million angler days. It is important that we manage for this increasing fishing effort and for the future challenges that lie ahead.

To ensure recreational fishing in WA has a bright future, a series of regional management strategies are being developed which have the following objectives:

1. Review the appropriateness of current controls, given the significant growth in recreational fishing.
2. Ensure that effective management is in place for the recreational fishing sector that contributes to the sustainability of WA's fish stocks.
3. Position recreational fishing so it can be incorporated into an integrated management framework in which resource sharing issues can be addressed.

The regional reviews for the Gascoyne and West Coast are now complete and I would like to thank all members of the working groups for their effort in what has been a complex and challenging task.

I have met with the Chairmen of both working groups and discussed their findings in detail. I have also carefully considered the public feedback provided on both draft strategies. In particular, I noted the wide range of community views expressed in the 2010 submissions received on both discussion papers. I also noted the strong support for the vast majority of recommendations in both reports.

After careful consideration of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group's recommendations, I have decided to release my initial responses to the recommendations for a period of public comment. It is important that my initial responses are read in conjunction with the Final Report of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group (Fisheries Management Paper No. 153).

This package focuses on managing the recreational catch, which attracted the greatest amount of comment in submissions. My response to the other working group recommendations is attached as an appendix (Appendix 1).

While abalone management arrangements were not part of the West Coast Regional Review, I am also providing people with an opportunity to comment on the proposed management changes to the recreational abalone fishery. These changes have been provided as Appendix 2 of this document.

With regard to those recommendations on resource sharing, a number of major initiatives have been undertaken, including a recent \$8 million buy-out of commercial fishing licenses. A process to develop a new integrated management framework is also well underway.

The Government is committed to developing a new management approach for our fisheries that incorporates economic, social and environmental considerations. Within this broad context of 'ecologically sustainable development', or ESD, the issue of how fish resources can be best shared between competing users requires consideration.

Resource sharing issues are complex and the Integrated Fisheries Management Review Committee is currently examining alternative management frameworks and principles for allocating fish stocks to ensure maximum benefit to community. Until these processes are complete, each sector will continue to be managed responsibly within current catch ranges.

Kim Chance MLC
MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES

2. MAKING A SUBMISSION

After careful consideration I have decided to release my initial response to the recommendations of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group's final report (Fisheries Management Paper No. 153) for public comment. Because my response differs somewhat from the draft discussion paper (Fisheries Management Paper No. 139) circulated for public comment, I am providing a final opportunity for interested parties to raise any new information or issues for my consideration by 7 December 2001.

Please note I have reviewed the existing public submissions. Further submissions should contain new or additional information that has not already been provided.

When making a submission, please reference the number of each strategy you wish to comment on. Clearly describe the subject you wish to address and suggest alternative ways to resolve the issues identified in the strategy. For example, as there are many different views on what the bag limit for a particular species or group of fish should be, a response therefore of "I think the bag limit should be X" is insufficient. Clear reasons must be included in your response so your views can be properly considered.

Submissions are welcome until 7 December 2001 and should be addressed to the Minister for Fisheries and sent to the following address:

Recreational Fishing Regional Review
Locked Bag 39
Cloisters Square Post Office
PERTH WA 6850

If you require additional information, please contact Nathan Harrison from the Department of Fisheries on 9482 7368.

3. STRATEGIES FOR PROTECTING VULNERABLE FISH AND MANAGING THE RECREATIONAL CATCH

3.1 Bag and size limits

A consistent approach using a three-tiered bag limit framework will be introduced for all regions, based on an assessment of risk of overexploitation of each species or stocks within that region (Category 1 fish require a high level of protection, Category 2 fish require moderate protection and Category 3 fish require lower levels of protection).

If additional management controls are deemed necessary for species currently in a lower category, the species should be generally 'promoted' into a higher risk category.

Where revised minimum size limits are proposed, changes will be negotiated with the commercial fishing industry prior to my final determination.

Strategy W1 Bag Limit and Size Limits - Category 1 Fish

This strategy refers to Recommendation 6a in the Final Report of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group (Fisheries Management Paper No. 153).

The following table represents my response in relation to Category 1 fish. My response differs from the Final Report of the West Coast Recreational Working Group in that it is my view that there should be a consistent total mixed bag limit of seven fish for both the West Coast and Gascoyne Regions. I am also of the view that a slot limit for mullocky should not apply, nor should some proposed changes to minimum legal sizes due to a lack of biological research, or management outcomes.

Category 1 Fish – total mixed daily bag limit of seven			
Category 1 fish are considered to have the highest risk of overexploitation. Many fish in this category have low catch rates and levels of abundance, while others may be highly valued for their fishing and eating qualities. Many Category 1 fish are slow growing and mature at four years plus. For these reasons, Category 1 fish require a high degree of protection. (NOTE: * denotes proposed change to current management)			
<i>Species</i>	<i>Species bag limit</i>	<i>Size limit</i>	<i>Other controls</i>
Billfish (sailfish, swordfish, marlins)	1*		
Blue groper	1	400mm	
Cobbler	4*	430mm	
Cobia	2*		
Cods (Serranidae family) inc. breaksea and harlequin	2*		Max. size 1.2m
Coral trout	2*	450mm	
Dhufish	2*	500mm	
Baldchin groper / tuskfish	2*	450mm*	Closed season Abrolhos *
Mackerel – spanish,	2*	900mm	
Mackerel – wahoo	2*	750mm	
Mackerel – shark	2*	500mm	
Mahi mahi	2*		
Mulloway	2*	500mm*	
Nannygai / red snapper	4*	230mm	
North-West snapper	4*	280mm	
Pink snapper	4*	450mm*	Closed season – metro area*
Queen snapper	2*	410mm	
Red emperor	2*	410mm	
Salmon, Australian	4	300mm	
Samson fish/Amberjack	2*	600mm	
Shark	2*		Max. size 2m*
Spangled emperor	4*	410mm	
Trevally, golden/giant	2*		
Tuna – southern bluefin, yellowfin, bigeye	2*		
Yellowtail kingfish	2*	500mm*	

Strategy W2 Bag and Size Limits - Category 2 Fish

This strategy refers to Recommendation 6b in the Final Report of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group (Fisheries Management Paper No. 153).

The following table represents my response in relation to Category 2 fish. My view is that yellowfin whiting should be placed in this category, due to their value as an angling species, their tendency to aggregate in near-shore areas, and recent incidents including excessive take in the Peel/Harvey Estuary and Swan River by individuals.

Category 2 Fish – total mixed daily bag limit of 16			
Category 2 fish have a moderate risk of overexploitation. Many fish in this category have moderate catch rates and levels of abundance. Category 2 fish are mostly found in inshore and estuarine areas, are highly sought after by recreational fishers and mature at three to four years. (NOTE: *denotes proposed change to current management)			
<i>Species</i>	<i>Species bag limit</i>	<i>Size limit</i>	<i>Other controls</i>
Bream – black	4*	250mm	Only 2 fish over 40cm*
Bonito	8		
Flathead/flounder (combined)	8*	300/250mm	Only 4 fish over 35cm*
Goatfish	8*		
King george whiting	8*	280mm*	
Leatherjacket	8*	250mm	
Mackerel – school	4	500mm	
Mangrove jack	4*		
Skipper / trevally	8*	200mm	Only 2 fish over 50cm*
Snook	8*	300mm*	
Tailor	8	300mm*	
Yellowfin whiting	16*		

Strategy W3 Bag and Size Limits - Category 3 Fish

This strategy refers to Recommendation 6c in the Final Report of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group (Fisheries Management Paper No. 153).

The following table represents my response in relation to Category 3 fish. In my view, a mixed bag of 40 fish with no individual species limits should apply, due to an assessment of lower risk.

Category 3 fish – total mixed bag Limit 40		
Category 3 fish have a lower risk of overexploitation. Fish in this category generally have higher catch rates and levels of abundance and are mainly found inshore. These fish have a widespread distribution and mature at two-plus years. Category 3 fish includes all fish not in other categories except baitfish of the sardine and anchovy families (clupeidae and engraulididae), redfin perch, goldfish, carp and tilapia. Popular Category 3 fish include: blue mackerel, garfish, herring, mullet, whiting, pike and tarwhine. (NOTE: *denotes proposed change to current management)		
<i>Species</i>	<i>Size limit</i>	<i>Other controls</i>
Blue mackerel		
Garfish		
Herring		
Mullet – sea		
Mullet – yelloweye		
Pike *	300mm*	
Tarwhine (silver bream)*	230mm	
Whiting – sand, school,		

Strategy W4 Bag Limits - Crustaceans

This strategy refers to Recommendation 6d in the Final Report of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group (Fisheries Management Paper No. 153).

(NOTE: *denotes proposed change to current management)

Crustaceans		
<i>Species</i>	<i>Bag limit</i>	<i>Other controls</i>
Prawns, king & school	9 litres	*Different boat limits apply to Fishing Tour Operators – see Strategy W8 (boat limits)
Rock lobster	8, boat limit of 16	
Crab, blue swimmer (manna)	20*, boat limit of 40*	

Strategy W5 Bag Limits - Cephalopods

This strategy refers to Recommendation 6e in the Final Report of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group (Fisheries Management Paper No. 153).

Cephalopods		
<i>Species</i>	<i>Bag limit</i>	<i>Other controls</i>
Squid, octopus, cuttlefish	Combined bag limit 15 per fisher, boat limit 30	

Strategy W6 Bag Limits - Shellfish

This strategy refers to Recommendation 6f in the Final Report of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group (Fisheries Management Paper No. 153).

(NOTE: *denotes proposed change to current management)

Shellfish		
<i>Species</i>	<i>Bag limit</i>	<i>Other controls</i>
Cockles (<i>Cardiidae</i> family)	2 litres	*Protected
Razorfish (<i>Pinna bicolor</i>)	*20	
Scallops (<i>Pectinidae</i> family)	*20	
Pipis (<i>Donacidae</i> family)	2 litres	
Sea urchins (<i>Echinoderms</i>)	2 litres	
Mussels	9 litres	
All other shellfish and live coral		

NOTE: Abalone is a licensed recreational fishery and managed separately.

I have announced a temporary ban on the take of live coral and rocks encrusted with living organisms while the Department of Fisheries investigates long-term management options. The collection of specimen shells will be included in this review.

Strategy W7 Landing of Whole Fish

This strategy refers to Recommendation 7 in the Final Report of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group (Fisheries Management Paper No. 153) and is consistent with the Gascoyne Recreational Fishing Working Group recommendations.

On a state-wide basis, filleting or dismembering of fish at sea should not be permitted, so as to allow enforcement of bag and size limits. Fish can be gilled and gutted but must be landed in a whole form. If a fishing trip involves an overnight stay on an island, fish landed on an island may be filleted and then transported back to the mainland. The only exemption to this is fish taken in the Abrolhos Islands Fish Habitat Protection Area. Fish taken in this area can only be filleted on the Abrolhos Islands if they are to be consumed on the Abrolhos Islands. Any fish transported back to the mainland from the Abrolhos Islands

must be landed whole (gilled and gutted). Mackerel may be filleted at sea provide the skin is left on.

Strategy W8 Recreational Boat Limit

This refers to Recommendation 9 in the Final Report of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group (Fisheries Management Paper No. 153).

My view is that boat limits for new species should not be introduced at this stage.

I would prefer to consider the need for boat limits after the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group's proposals have been implemented and charter boat operators have considered the matter further.

Strategy W9 Possession Limits for the West Coast Region

This strategy refers to Recommendation 10 in the Final Report of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group (Fisheries Management Paper No. 153) and will apply state-wide.

- 20kg of fillet or parts of fish, or
- 10kg of fillet plus one day's bag limit of whole fish, or
- Two days bag limit of whole fish

Strategy W10 Accumulation of Fish at Sea

This strategy refers to Recommendation 8 in the Final Report of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group (Fisheries Management Paper No. 153).

In the interests of equity and conservation of key fish species, no accumulation of fish should be permitted above the recommended possession limit of whole fish. On this basis Regulation 20(2) of the *Fish Resources Management Regulations 1995*, which currently allows people to accumulate specific species of fish while living on board a boat, will be repealed.

Strategy W11 Closures to Fishing

This strategy refers to Recommendation 11 in the Final Report of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group (Fisheries Management Paper No. 153).

- 11 (a) The take and landing of baldchin groper at the Abrolhos Islands will be prohibited within the Fish Habitat Protection Area during the peak spawning period from November to January inclusive.
- 11 (b) The proposal to prohibit the take and landing of pink snapper from 15 September to 30 November between Cape Bouvard and the Ocean Reef Marina should be developed through negotiation with the commercial fishing industry. In the interim, the existing closure to fishing for pink snapper in Cockburn Sound will continue to apply on the basis that the take and landing of pink snapper will be prohibited in Cockburn Sound from September 15 to 31 October.

Strategy W12 Set and Haul Net Fishing

This strategy refers to Recommendation 12 in the Final Report of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group (Fisheries Management Paper No. 153).

My view differs from the working group in that I do not support recreational netting being allowed on Wednesday nights only. Instead I support the continuation of netting of recreational netting in Leschenault Estuary outside existing closures for mullet only.

- 12 (a) Set nets will be prohibited for recreational fishers in the west coast except for attended set nets in the Peel/Harvey and Leschenault estuaries and the Hardy Inlet.
- 12 (b) Attended recreational netting outside existing closures be allowed on the Leschenault Estuary.

***Please note that I invite submissions on the appropriateness of introducing further restrictions to netting within the Leschenault Estuary system.**

- 12 (c) Throw and haul nets will continue to be permitted in ocean waters throughout the region (except for any waters currently closed to netting). Haul nets will have a mesh size of 75mm with a maximum length of 60m and a maximum drop of 25 meshes.

Strategy W13 Prawn Drag Nets

This strategy refers to Recommendation 13 in the Final Report of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group (Fisheries Management Paper No. 153).

My view differs from the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group in that I support a prohibition on the use of hand trawl nets (drag nets) in the Leschenault Estuary.

- 13 (a) Prohibition on the use of hand trawl nets between the traffic bridges on the Peel/Harvey Estuary.
- 13 (b) Prohibition on the use of hand trawl nets in the Leschenault Estuary.
- 13 (c) Hand trawl nets (drag nets) will be prohibited for recreational fishers in the waters adjoining nature reserves on the Swan River.

Strategy W14 Changes to Legal Fishing Gear

This strategy refers to Recommendation 14 in the Final Report of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group (Fisheries Management Paper No. 153).

- 14(a) Unattended set lines will be prohibited. Attendance will be defined as “recreational fishers must be within 10 metres of any line which is being fished”. The legal permitted fishing methods will be drafted as regulations within the *Fish Resources Management Regulations 1995*.
- 14(b) One attended bait trap per person (saltwater only) will be allowed, i.e. bait traps will not be allowed in rivers. Bait traps should be clearly marked to identify ownership. The legal dimensions of a bait trap will be defined.

Strategy W15 Fishing Competitions

This strategy refers to Recommendation 15 in the Final Report of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group (Fisheries Management Paper No. 153). This recommendation will apply state-wide.

- 15 (a) All fishing competitions with more than 100 participants will need to formally register in advance with the Department of Fisheries. No fee will be charged for registration.
- 15 (b) Competition organisers will need to keep an accurate record of participation, catch and effort and forward catch returns to the Department of Fisheries for inclusion in the recreational fisheries database.
- 15 (c) The Department of Fisheries will develop a formal code of conduct for fishing competitions in consultation with fishing clubs and organising bodies. Competitions should be conducted in line with recreational fishing ethics. The code of practice will be created under the *Fisheries Resources Management Act 1994* as specified in the *Animal Welfare Bill*.

Appendix 1 Ministerial response to recommendations

Please note the full recommendations of the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group are contained in their final report (Fisheries Management Paper No. 153).

Working Group Recommendation	Ministers Response
Recommendation 1 – Key Principles for Management	The guiding principles of management for the West Coast Region should be adopted across all regions.
Recommendation 2 to 5 - Biology, Catch and Fisheries Performance	Recommendations 2 to 5 should form the basis of priorities for research. The level of research during the term of the plan will be subject to state-wide priorities and availability of funds
Recommendations 6 to 15	These recommendations are covered in the strategies I have outlined in the beginning of the document.
Recommendation 16 – Position Statement on Recreational Fishing by Indigenous People	Management issues involving traditional, cultural and subsistence fishing are being addressed by the Aboriginal Fishing Strategy. The position statement generated by the working group has been referred to the group developing the Aboriginal Fishing Strategy for their consideration.
Recommendation 17 - Code for Recreational Fishing at Rottnest Island	Given the special status of Rottnest Island, a code of practice for recreational fishers should be developed in consultation with the Rottnest Island Authority and recreational groups.
Recommendation 18 – Restocking as a Stock Enhancement Strategy	I support the sustainable management of wild stocks as the primary focus for recreational fisheries management. There is a need for a formal policy on restocking and stock enhancement.
Recommendation 19 – Resource Sharing	I have noted all recommendations on resource sharing and the level of support by recreational fishers. I believe these recommendations accurately represent the views of recreational fishers and should be considered in a resource sharing process. Resource sharing issues will need to be resolved through either the Integrated Fisheries Management framework under development, or the marine reserves planning process.
Recommendation 20 – Low Impact Wilderness Fishing Experiences	To protect the remote, wilderness nature of the beach fishing experiences immediately north of Kalbarri, a code of practice for recreational fishers should development in consultation with stakeholder groups.
Recommendation 21 – Protection of Sensitive Habitat Areas and Fish Stocks Around New Marina Developments	The creation of reserve or no-take areas will need to be considered as part of the marine reserves planning process. I support recommendations 21(b) and (d).

<p>Recommendation 22 – West Coast Region Community Education Plan</p>	<p>The recommendations on community education form the basis of a sound education strategy that must be considered in the context of state-wide priorities and availability of funds.</p>
<p>Recommendation 23 – Additional Patrol Capacity</p>	<p>Proposals on providing additional patrol capacity for the West Coast Region will need to be considered in the context of current budget approvals. Efficiency gains from Government reform agenda may assist with regional servicing for recreational fisheries management.</p>
<p>Recommendation 24 – VFLO Program</p>	<p>I support the VFLO program. Funding for the program to achieve specific goals needs to be considered in the context of state-wide priorities and the availability of funds.</p>
<p>Recommendation 25 – Recreational Fishing Management Officer</p>	<p>I support in principle, but it will need to be considered in the context of current budget approvals.</p>
<p>Recommendation 26 – Regional Recreational Fisheries Council</p>	<p>To ensure adequate and effective community consultation in the development of recreational fisheries management arrangements, the Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee will proceed with a review on the adequacy of current consultative structures and report back on its findings. Major stakeholders including Recfishwest will be consulted as part of the review.</p>
<p>Recommendation 27 – Funding for Recreational Fisheries Management</p>	<p>Funding for the future management of recreational fisheries management needs to be considered in the context of the State Government budget process. The Government’s policy is that no saltwater angling licence will be introduced in this term. The Integrated Fisheries Management Review Committee will be reporting in part on funding issues associated with finfish management.</p>

Appendix 2 Proposed management changes to the recreational abalone Fishery

Management arrangements for the recreational abalone fishery have been developed through a separate consultation process that has involved licensed recreational abalone fishers and other stakeholders. To provide all interested recreational fishers with an opportunity to comment, I am releasing the proposed recreational abalone management arrangements for comment with my initial responses to the West Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group. The following changes are proposed for the recreational abalone fishery:

Proposal 1 – Fishery boundary

To assist in managing illegal abalone fishing and containing management compliance cost, three management zones will be created for the recreational abalone fishery. These are:

Zone 1: Busselton Jetty - Greenough River Mouth

Zone 2: Greenough River Mouth - NT Border

Zone 3: Busselton Jetty - SA Border

Proposal 2 – Season

Fishing in Zone 1 will reflect the current management arrangements for the Perth metropolitan fishery. Fishing in Zones 2 and 3 is proposed to allow for a six-month fishery. This will allow for greater protection of abalone stocks.

Zone 1: Six consecutive Sundays, starting the first Sunday in November

Zone 2: First Sunday in November until 30 April

Zone 3: First Sunday in November until 30 April

Proposal 3 – Fishing times

Fishing times in Zone 1 will reflect the current time fishing is allowed in the Perth metropolitan fishery. Fishing in Zones 2 and 3 will be allowed all day.

Zone 1: 7 am - 8:30 am

Zone 2: All day

Zone 3: All day

Proposal 4 – Fishing days

Currently fishing is only allowed on Sundays in the Perth metropolitan fishery, which is proposed to apply to Zone 1. Fishing will be allowed on all days during the proposed season in Zones 2 and 3.

Zone 1: Sundays only

Zone 2: Every day during season

Zone 3: Every day during season

Proposal 5 – Bag limit greenlip and brownlip

The current bag and possession limit for greenlip and brownlip is 10, which yields a shucked weight of around 1.5kg. It is proposed that the bag limit be reduced to five, to bring the shucked weight of a bag limit

of greenlip or brownlip in line with the shucked weight of 20 Roe's abalone.

Proposal 6 – Possession limit greenlip and brownlip

Currently a combine possession limit of 10 applies to greenlip and brownlip abalone. It is proposed that the possession limit remains at 10 and is not reduced to the proposed daily bag limit of five.

Proposals 7 – Possession limit at place of residence

As significant commercial quantities of abalone can be accumulated at a place of residence, it is proposed that a possession limit of four times the proposed daily bag limit (80 Roe's and 20 greenlip/brownlip) apply in the place of residence.