

Rocky Reef Fin Fish Fishery Review – Port Meetings

Summary of key issues raised during consultation meeting

Location: Caloundra
Number of attendees: 35

Not government policy

Fisheries Queensland is undertaking public consultation on the Rocky Reef Fin Fish Fishery with a focus on snapper. This summary consolidates the range of issues raised by individuals who attended the public meeting listed above to discuss the current and future management of the fishery.

These views will be considered by the government in reviewing the current Rocky Reef Fish Fishery management arrangements.

Fees

Issues raised include the following:

- Proposals under options 1 and 2 - vessels would need to be registered under Queensland Transport to hold a permit,
- Discussion around whether kayaks and small tinnies should also be required to obtain the permit (under options 1 and 2) - the use of these vessels to take snapper is growing and they should take responsibility for paying for a permit and reporting their catches.
- Under options 1 and 2 would NSW registered vessels also need to hold a permit if taking snapper in Queensland waters.

Closures

Issues raised include the following:

- Why the co-caught species pearl perch and teraglin jew are included in the interim snapper closure.
- Concerns raised about the inclusion of pearl perch and teraglin jew in the closure and the economic impact on the charter sector.

Impacts of RIS proposals

Issues raised include the following:

- Tackle shops have a low turn-over in February and a six-week closure during this time would have a major impact to their business.
- Charter operators have faced reduced number of charter trips this year because of the weather and a February and March closure would have a major economic impact.
- Extended closures during June and July would have a major impact to the tackle shop trade.
- Discussion around whether in-depth socioeconomic impact assessments have been conducted in relation to charter operators, bait and tackle and boat supply business sectors.
- Under option 3 a bag limit of two snapper will result in waste as released snapper will not survive.
- Concerns raised over industry profitability as everybody comes to the Sunshine Coast to fish and the RIS proposal would significantly impact businesses.
- Green zones now and in future on top of the RIS proposals will have a major economic impact on

the charter sector.

- Question around whether Fisheries Queensland has resources to assess the economic impacts on the charter and commercial sectors – they don't doubt Fisheries Queensland's knowledge of snapper biology.
- Concerns raised about pending green zones in the Fraser and Tweed regions as a result of the national system of marine protected areas and the resulting economic impact to the recreational, charter and commercial sectors.

Alternative management strategies

Issues raised include the following:

- Discussion around increasing the minimum size of snapper to 40cm or 50cm to rebuild the fishery - this has worked for red emperor and 35 cm snapper are too small to eat anyway.
- Habitat protection for juvenile snapper and removal of trawling particularly in Moreton Bay should be introduced.
- Introducing a bag limit for snapper above a certain size.
- Introducing a voluntary tag and release program for snapper, such as they have done in NSW will provide better estimates of recreational catches.

Data and science

Issues raised include the following:

- More movement studies are required to determine the movement of snapper between Queensland and NSW - fishing experience shows that snapper move up the NSW coast and into Queensland as the season progresses.
- What research plan is being implemented with the RIS to enhance the recovery of snapper e.g. what biological information such as recruitment and nursery habitats is required.
- How is the data used that is collected from snapper measured and recorded at boat ramps.
- Question integrity of the data used in the snapper stock assessment, therefore question the outcomes of the stock assessment.

Process

Issues raised include the following:

- Discussion around what happens when the recreational sector reaches 260 tonne of catch and how government will know when the total allowable catch (TAC) has been reached.
- Discussion around how the recreational snapper catch is estimated under options 1 and 2.
- What is the penalty for taking snapper during the 6 week closure.
- Concerns about the transparency of the consultation process and whether government has already made a decision on the new management arrangements.
- Inadequate consultation with the bait and tackle sector in the development of the options

For further information on the review of the fishery, or for records of other individual meetings held along the east coast of Queensland, please visit www.fisheries.qld.gov.au

