

*Fishing for the Future*
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Submission by Sunfish Queensland, 30 April 2012**Commonwealth Inquiry into the Role of Science for Fisheries and Aquaculture****Introduction**

Sunfish Queensland Inc is the peak body representing recreational fishing in Queensland. The membership of Sunfish includes all the major Queensland recreational fishing associations, clubs and groups, and a network of regional branches throughout Queensland – with a membership of some 45,000 individual Queensland residents. The executive and management committee of Sunfish are elected democratically by the membership each year at the Annual General Meeting. The policies and formal submissions to Government produced by Sunfish are determined via an internal consultation process involving the membership. Further details about Sunfish are available on the website: www.sunfishqld.com.au

Sunfish is primarily a voluntary, apolitical organisation which aims to represent the best interests of Queensland's recreational fishers. Sunfish receives small amounts of annual funding from the Qld Government from funds raised by the recreational fishing levy on annual private vessel registrations. Sunfish receives no funding from the Commonwealth Government even though Sunfish is expected to represent the recreational fishing sector on various Commonwealth advisory committees and also expected to provide submissions on various matters such as this one. All the advocacy work done by Sunfish on behalf of the Qld recreational fishing sector is done on a voluntary basis.

Sunfish appreciates the importance of science in understanding and managing fisheries in Qld. At the Sunfish Annual General Meeting of its member organisations in September 2011, a new position of Sunfish Scientific Officer was established, and Dr. Barry Pollock, an experienced fisheries scientist, was appointed on an honorary basis. Sunfish has been represented on several scientific advisory bodies such as the Qld Fisheries Scientific Advisory Committees, the Qld Fisheries Research Advisory Body, and advisory bodies reporting to the GBRMPA (e.g. ERAC)

Comments on the Terms of Reference**a) The relationship between scientific knowledge of fish species, ecosystems, biodiversity and fish stock sustainability.**

It has always been the view of Sunfish that fish stocks caught by recreational fishers must be sustainable, and the impacts on biodiversity should be minimal. Sunfish strongly supports the publication by Governments of annual fisheries status reports to identify sustainable and unsustainable fisheries.

b) Fishery management and biosecurity.

Sunfish supports regular assessments of all fish stocks. However Sunfish is seeking greater involvement in the stock assessment processes in line with "World's best practice". For details refer to the EU publication by Rockmann et al (2012). Marine Biology 36 (5) pp1072-1085

Representing the interests of Recreational Fishing

Sunfish will cooperate with Governments and other stakeholders in managing for aquatic pests and diseases. In particular Sunfish is concerned about Tilapia introductions and the appearance of the Saddleback deformity in bream and other important recreational fishing species.

Sunfish strongly supports projects like the current Jungle Perch research partly funded by FRDC.

c) Research, development and applied science of aquaculture.

Sunfish strongly supports research into propagation fish species for the stocking of impoundments for recreational fishing purposes.

d) Governance arrangements relating to fisheries and aquaculture, including the implications for sustainability and industry development

Governance of recreational fisheries in Queensland is primarily the role of the Qld Government fisheries agency. However tuna management remains as a Commonwealth responsibility. Sunfish supports these arrangements. However the GBRMPA has expanded its role into the area of regulating the recreational fishing sector. This has been done primarily by zonings within the GBRMP. The current GBRMP zonings remain a concern where recreational fishing opportunities are adversely impacted.

The new and proposed Commonwealth bioregional zones off the Qld coastline are a major concern to Sunfish, particularly in those instances where current or future recreational fishing could be adversely impacted.

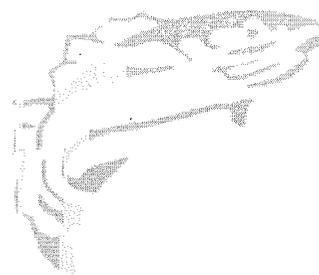
Comments on FRDC

Sunfish has been a strong supporter of FRDC and its consultative processes for many years. Sunfish affiliated persons have held positions on the FRDC board and the QFRAB. Sunfish has supported the allocation to FRDC of \$120,000 annually from the Qld Government levy for recreational fishing on private vessel registrations.

However the QFRAB has only one recreational fishing representative – and is dominated by the commercial fishing/marketing sector. The membership of QFRAB should be regularly reviewed to ensure fairness and balance. Sunfish provides input to the QFRAB particularly on recreational fishing R&D priorities.

Any additional information can be provided by Dr. Barry Pollock

or Judy Lynne



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