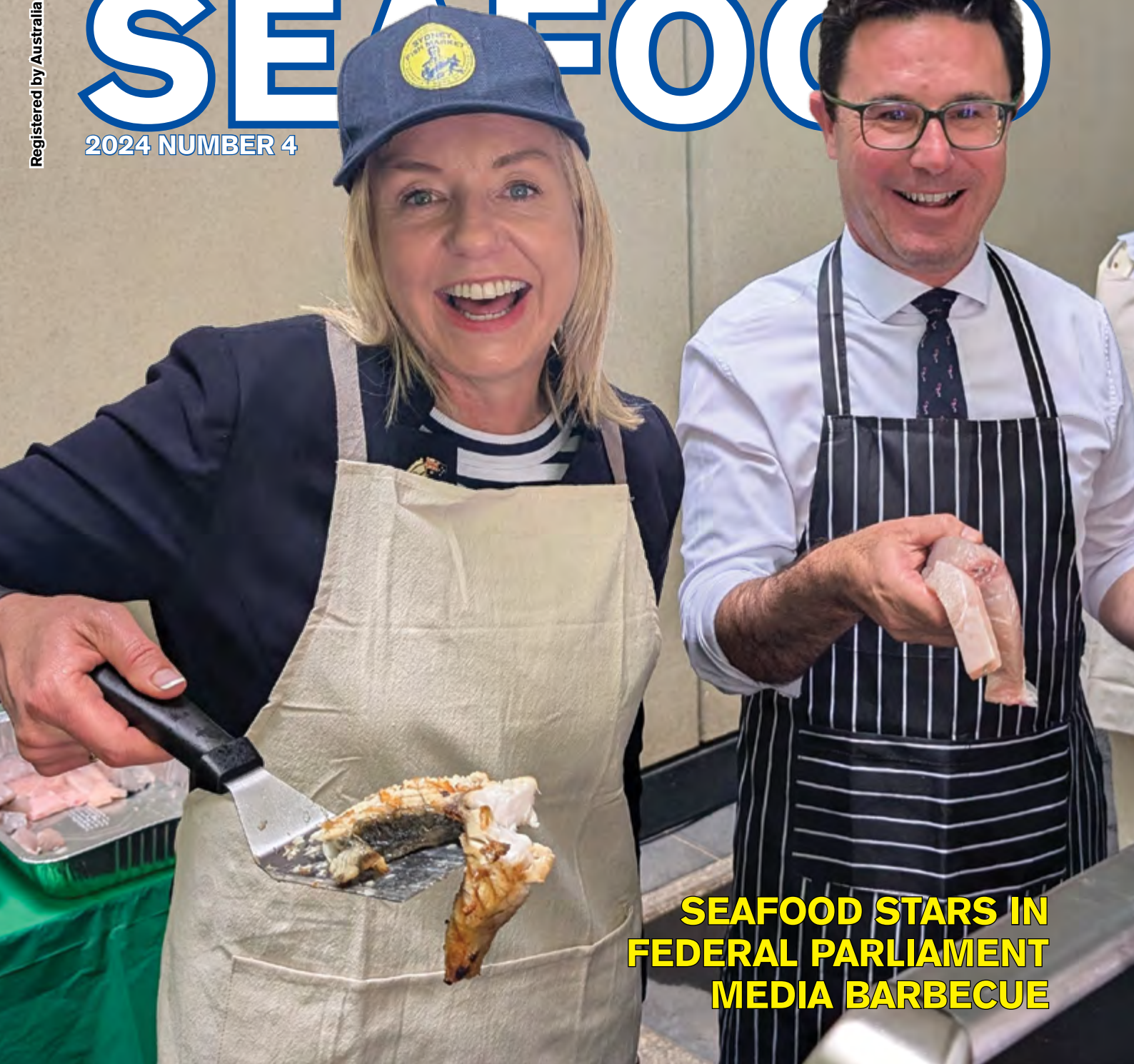


Queensland SEAFOOD

2024 NUMBER 4



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Well-attended QSIA AGM. Page 7.



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In this edition ...

AFTER nine years, the government in Queensland has changed, thanks in particular to a loss of support for Labor in the regions – the places where the State's greatest wealth is generated.

As QSIA President Allan Bobbermen says (page 4), the fishing industry holds hopes that new Minister Tony Perrett can halt the downward spiral seen during the last three terms of government in Queensland.

CEO David Bobbermen says there is some sense of optimism amongst fishers after the change of government, in part because of promised five-year plans for primary industries that could give the fishing industry some stability for the first time in nine years. (See page 5.)

Having the LNP win seats from Labor in Cape York, round Cairns, all three in Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton, Yeppoon, Maryborough and Pumicestone shows what the previous Government did in those areas wasn't supported – including

net bans and the threat of yet more net bans. (See page 10.)

Some recreational fishing activist organisations, including the Fraser Coast Fishing Alliance, strongly supported Labor and attacked the LNP in the lead-up to the election on October 26, recognising then-Premier Steven Miles' promises for more professional-fishing bans and the LNP's historical opposition to unnecessary bans on commercial fishing. Labor's big-swing losses in coastal seats have exposed the myth of the “I fish, I vote” threat from angling activists. (See page 14.)

Researchers in Australia and overseas have questioned the benefits of “no-take” zones for, respectively, protecting fish populations from the impact of climate change and boosting fish catches. See pages 17 and 18.

Given renewed interest in rejuvenating “Queensland Catch”, we take a look back in this edition at how, where and when it began – with a multi-media regional advertising and promotion campaign based in Cairns commencing in 2008.

Front cover: Federal Nationals leader David Littleproud and Senate leader Bridget McKenzie were among several MPs who barbecued seafood for the Parliamentary Press Gallery in Canberra in November in a much-loved annual event showcasing our industry's products. See pages 20-21 for a photo-story.

Queensland Seafood is the official journal of the Queensland Seafood Industry Association Inc, the peak body representing the State's seafood industry.

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PRESIDENT ON THE LINE

Let's hope a new Minister can halt our downward spiral

HELLO, I hope you are all keeping well. With the State elections now behind us, we have a new Minister and we have seen the end of Colgate Miles' mob – who, in my opinion, could not manage a choko vine over a backyard thunder box. We can only hope that the new Minister can halt the downward spiral the previous lot have left us with.

Fishing businesses have been struggling with costs which we have had no control over, along with below-average product prices. Then, to have management sink the boot in with their blunt Instruments ... well, it's no wonder there are mental health issues in this industry.

QSIA has had a briefing with the Minister – Tony Perrett, who held the shadow portfolio in opposition – and he has assured us the Government will support industry and also indicated he will support our organisation.

For members anxiously awaiting payments for round three of the structural adjustment scheme, QSIA has been told verbally it is being reviewed. We are awaiting the outcome; as it stands, there is little hope of receiving assistance the way it was written up by the previous Government.

QSIA's new Board held its first meeting and it was refreshing to see the enthusiasm shown by the new Directors, with fresh ideas to promote our industry.

An issue of concern still being discussed is the suspension / cancellation of licences. There appear to be dodgy clauses in the document. An example is obstructing fisheries officers, for which a licence can be cancelled. In the real world, when has a driver's licence been cancelled for obstructing police?

The sub-committees for the crab and prawn fisheries are still meeting, with a paper for the crab fishery yet to be released.

QSIA lobbied to have the NX fishery reviewed on a regional basis. These are scheduled for December. Feedback I have been receiving is that some serious discussions around the conditions need to take place.

The future fishing study with alternative gear has not produced much to move forward with, other than talkfests. There are fishers who are keen to get involved, so let's see what the New Year brings.

The 2024 Spanish mackerel season in the 18th parallel was almost over before it began. This fishery is eagerly awaiting the new review, due for release early in 2025. Hopefully, this new assessment and a focused review of the harvest strategy can restore confidence in this fishery before it is too late.

I was talking to an old Spanish mackerel fisherman, Jack Hardy, late

last year. He fished around the war time and after at the reefs off Lucinda. He could only shake his head about some of the nonsense being put out there about this fishery. Unfortunately, Jack let go of the rope earlier this year, aged 97.

Our patron, Keith Payne, VC, I am told is about to celebrate a wedding anniversary with his lovely wife of 70 years. I have known Keith since I was a young fellow growing up in the Hinchinbrook region, and I want to convey my congratulations personally and on behalf of all our members. Seventy years of marriage is a wonderful achievement.

Conclusion

Now that we have a change of currency at One William Street, the LNP are sending out the messages industry wants to hear. It is refreshing to hear they are going to reinstate the Productivity Commission, which is a safety net for fishers by the way of a regulatory impact statement (RIS) before any major changes are made.

What is problematic for Minister Perrett is that he is taking control of staff who, for quite some time, have been working unsupervised and who have had a mantra to put industry in decline. With the LNP mission statement of commitment to raising primary production revenue, there will need to be an attitude adjustment in George Street.

In the meantime, I hope you all have a great Christmas with your family and friends. Stay safe.

**Allan Bobbermen
President**



A well-attended QSIA AGM was held at Mooloolaba in October.

FROM THE CEO

Some optimism for the year ahead

TO say 2024 has been eventful is an understatement and, truthfully, I am pleased to see the end of it. There is a significant amount of unfinished business that will be carried over into 2025, including the continued fight for proper compensation for the fishers who have been affected by the changes in the Gulf, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and Great Sandy Strait Marine Park. It is good to know that this will be put before the soon to be re-established Queensland Productivity Commission during 2025 for review.

The change of government brings a sense of optimism for 2025. QSIA has been advised a five-year plan for all agriculture industries will be developed as part of the LNP plan to lift "farm gate" value of primary industries to \$30 billion by 2030. I have been asking for an industry plan for nearly two years now, so it will be good to see this progress. One issue I have made clear is that the removal of investment warnings must be one outcome of this.

A federal election is anticipated in early 2025 (it must be held by May) and the Trump administration will take back the White House at the end of January 2025. Both will have an impact on us, either directly or indirectly.

At our AGM in October, several new faces joined the QSIA Board, which now has eight Directors plus the President. The Board has experience in most fisheries, has a wide range of ages and geographic coverage, and once again includes females. Later in the magazine is more coverage of the AGM. I look forward to working with the Board in the coming year.

The QSIA Board works hard for your industry, volunteering many hours of their time. Further, members on the QSIA Trawl and Crab Committees also volunteer their time. Both groups do this as they are passionate about the industry and want to see it thrive. At times this seems to be a thankless task, but they remain committed. On your behalf, I thank them for this.

During 2025, QSIA will continue to deliver projects for industry. Our Micro-Credential Training project

for on-vessel food handling will be delivered. See page 28.

With the completion of the gap analysis for the east coast otter trawl fishery, some sections of the industry have an appetite to progress into a Fisheries Improvement Program.

Applications have been made for other projects in 2025, some focusing on marketing of our products and lifting awareness of the industry. Hopefully, this will also see the re-invigoration of the "Queensland Catch" brand.

Also in 2025, I will continue to engage with fisheries management and other stakeholders, providing frank and fearless advice. Over the past 12 months, QSIA has quietly helped many industry members with issues. It has been gratifying to see many positive outcomes. Unfortunately, there are times when the result is not what I had hoped for. I do learn from these.

Another issue being pursued is the truth behind removal of the N1, N2 and N4 fishery in the GBR Marine Park, as well as the establishment of the net free zones in the Gulf. Flowing on from that is the implementation of the Future Fishing Taskforce recommendations.

After at least two complaints, the University of Queensland has requested its logo be removed from the Net Gains report commissioned by WWF and authored by an Australian Marine Conservation Society employee. No conflict-of-interest statement was made in the report! QSIA has made several Right to Information applications, which we are anxiously awaiting. There are many questions that still need to be answered.

I have now been in this role for two years, and in that time I have met a number of great people who are passionate about what they do, their care for the environment, their knowledge and history. You inspire me and I look forward to being able to continue to learn and be of assistance.

I cannot sign off without acknowledging and thanking Martin Bowerman for publishing this magazine and his tireless efforts supporting our industry. I always learn from our conversations.

Finally, I wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a great 2025.

**David Bobbermen
CEO**

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UPDATES

MORETON BAY - WHITE SPOT DISEASE CLASS ACTION – the claim is still powering along. Big litigation like this takes time as it is complex. The current target to complete is by the end of 2025.

GLADSTONE PORT DREDGING CLASS ACTION – much more complex than the White Spot case, however this is likely to complete around end of 2025 as well.

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2000 - Trawl Plan	2009 - Moreton Island Oil/Container Spill
2004 - GBRMP RAP	2012 - CWTH Adjustment Assistance
2006 - Fishing Future Package	2015 - Net Free Zones Compensation
2006 - CRFF quota allocations	2017 - Qantas Toxic Spill Compensation
2008 - Latent Effort Symbol Removal	Current - Gladstone Dredging Class Action
2008 - Moreton Bay Buyback	Current - White Spot Disease Class Action
2024 - Fisheries Structural Adjustment Package	

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Successful, productive AGM and positive direction for year ahead

THE Queensland Seafood Industry Association (QSIA) held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 18 October 2024 in Mooloolaba. The event was well attended (including some online), reflecting the strong interest and commitment of the members towards the Association's activities and future direction. All motions presented during the AGM were carried, marking a successful and productive meeting.

One of the significant outcomes of the AGM was the confirmation of a full board of eight members, plus the President. This diverse board brings a wealth of experience and expertise, covering most fisheries in Queensland. Notably, the board now includes female members.

Following the AGM, attendees were treated to a series of insightful presentations. Australian Food Super provided an informative session on how superannuation could be utilised as a vehicle to minimise tax for structural adjustment payments. This presentation also covered other issues around superannuation, with many questions being raised by attendees.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority ("Reef Authority") delivered a presentation on the Eye on the Reef Program, emphasising the importance of monitoring and protecting the Great Barrier Reef. While interesting, it showed just how much there is still to learn about the Great Barrier Reef.

I raised the "elephant in the room" question around concerns by fishers that, if they reported various things, this data would be used in the future to restrict their activity. The Reef Authority understood this concern but was unable to provide any reassurances.

Stay Afloat, our industry's mental health and well-being program, gave a quick update on their initiatives and progress.

After a light lunch provided by Stay Afloat and lots of sideline conversations, the focus shifted to research project updates. These included presentations on Spanish mackerel, new fishing methods, and the Futures of Seafood project. The Fisheries Research & Development Corporation (FRDC)

also gave a sneak preview of their "Community of Practice" project for the trawl fishery, which aims to foster collaboration and knowledge-sharing among industry stakeholders.

The forum also saw the participation of representatives from Fisheries Queensland. Their presence was particularly noteworthy, as it provided an opportunity to hear their thoughts on the topics raised, despite the Government being in caretaker mode, with the State election then being just eight days away.

The event concluded with refreshments, allowing attendees to network and engage in valuable conversations. QSIA expressed its gratitude to all presenters and guests for their contributions. Special thanks were extended to Australian Food Super for their ongoing support and to Stay Afloat for providing lunch.

Overall, the QSIA AGM in Mooloolaba was a resounding success, again showcasing the Association's dedication to advancing the interests of the seafood industry in Queensland. The diverse and experienced board, coupled with the informative presentations and active participation of industry stakeholders, set a positive tone for the future.

David Bobbermen
Executive Officer



At the QSIA AGM (from left): David Sterling, David Bobbermen and Bill Gilliland.



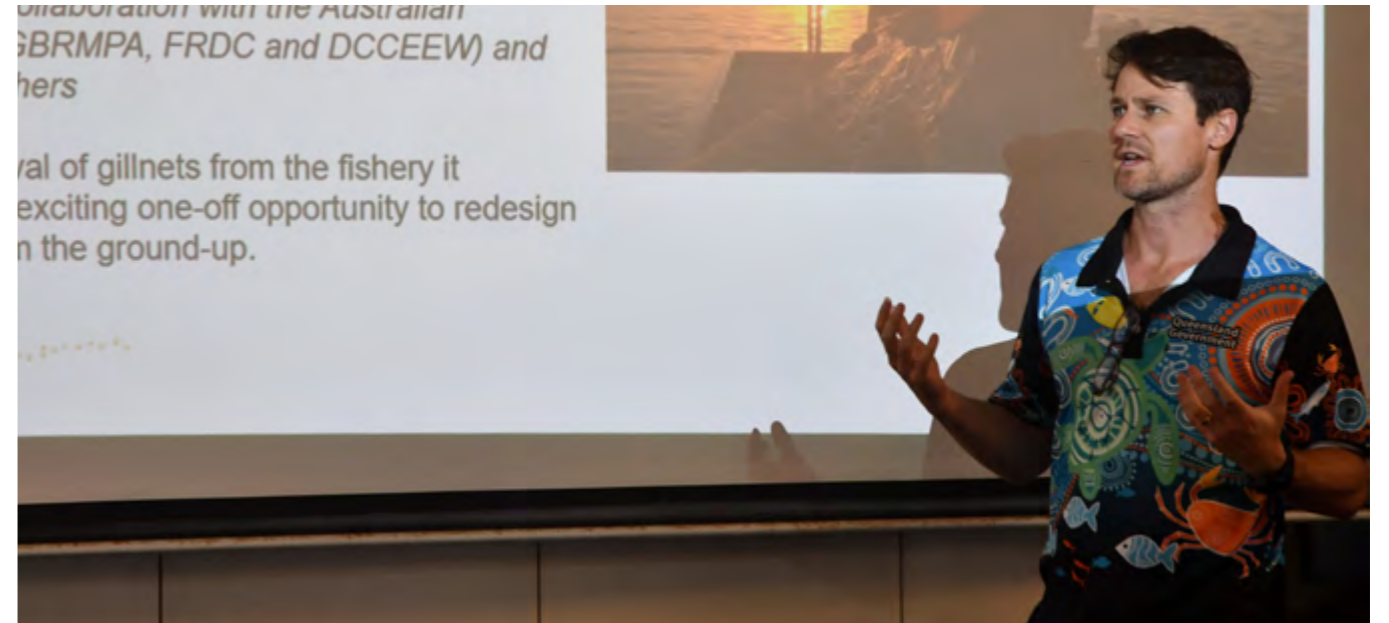
Pauline Jacob, Deputy Director-General with the Queensland Department of Agriculture & Fisheries, with (from left) Tony Riesenweber, Lionel Riesenweber and new director Ryan Hurtado.



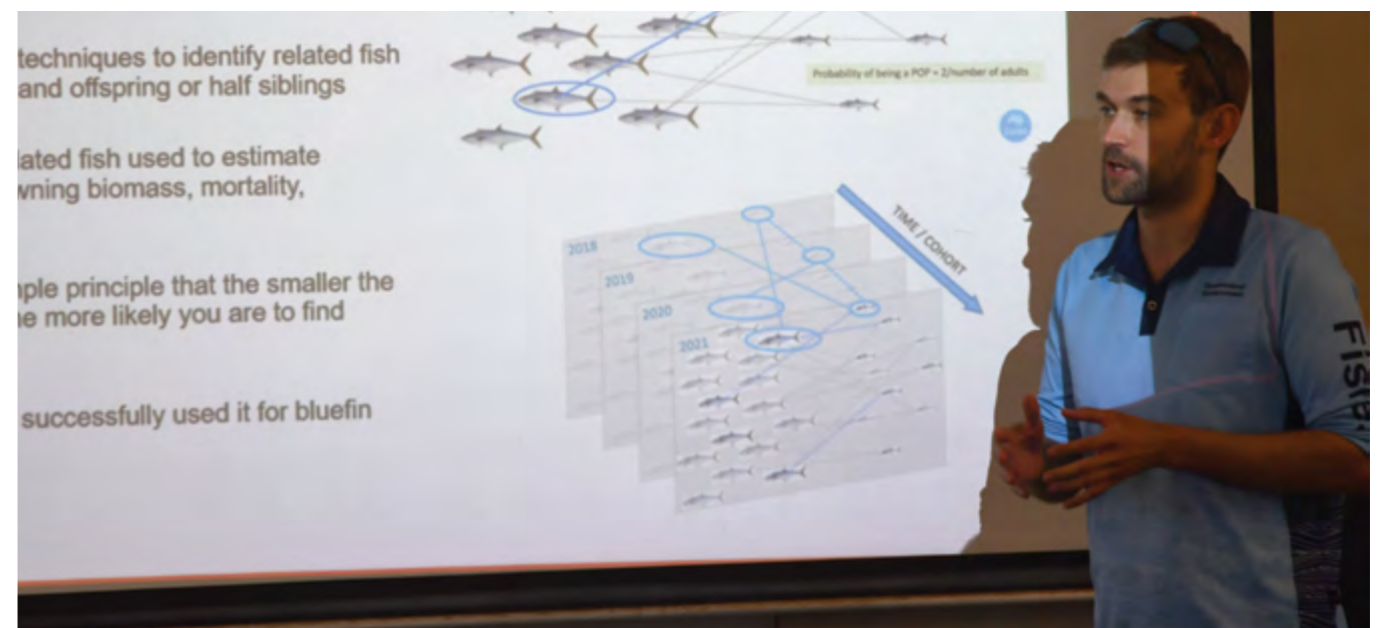
Max Giaroli, newly-elected director Jacky Cartwright from Silver Sea Seafoods and Steve Eayrs from FRDC.



Presentations at the AGM included the "Community of Practice" project from Steve Eayrs, FRDC ...



... the development of new gear to replace gillnets in the barramundi fishery by Sam Williams, Department of Agriculture & Fisheries (DAF) ...



... and Spanish mackerel research by Jon Mitchell, DAF.

CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN QUEENSLAND

Opponents of commercial fishing voted out

Regional Queensland has delivered government to the Liberal National Party at the October 26 State election, including seats where the previous Labor Government had delivered or promised more cuts to commercial fishing in the hope of winning mythical “recreational fishing” votes.

THIS election has proved the “I Fish, I Vote” slogan is hollow. The vast majority of people who fish for fun don’t care enough about that hobby to change their vote.

However, regional Queenslanders do believe in a fair go and they don’t like to see primary producers – including professional fishers – persecuted with widespread unfair bans, extensive job losses, and harsh and unnecessary rules and regulations.

In Maryborough, a seat considered unlosable by the ALP, sitting Labor Government MP Bruce Saunders – “safe” behind a margin of 11.9 per cent – promised to ban gillnets in the Mary River in the thin sliver of water where they are still permitted.

In a media release in September about his net ban plan, Mr Saunders highlighted the net bans that already had been imposed by the Labor Government and said: “This is something that I’ve been fighting to deliver for Maryborough residents, who want the nets out of the Mary River, ensuring local fishers can benefit from the fantastic fish population in our river.

“Only a Labor Government will give Mary River communities the chance to cash in on the tourism bonanza that comes with well-managed net-free zones in key locations. This is just another way that I’m putting the Maryborough electorate first. Only Labor will deliver for recreational fishers.”

In supporting a Fraser Coast Fishing Alliance petition to State Parliament to ban gillnets from the Mary River, Mr Saunders said he knew what Maryborough residents wanted.

Mr Saunders lost Maryborough to the LNP’s John Barounis with a swing of 14.7 per cent.

In the adjacent seat of Hervey Bay, sitting Labor MP Adrian Tantari boasted in a media release he had fought for commercial net bans in Hervey Bay and Great Sandy Strait.

When most net-fishing was banned throughout Tin Can Bay, Great Sandy Strait, Hervey Bay and adjacent waters, and other forms of fishing further restricted as well, Mr Tantari said in a media release: “I thank the Government for acting and listening to all stakeholders to deliver a plan for the marine park’s future. I want the zoning and management changes to be a prelude to our region becoming an international hub for marine scientific research, education and recreation.”

Mr Tantari lost to the LNP’s David Lee with a 10.5 per cent swing.

In the seat of Pumicestone, centred on Pumicestone Passage, where then Premier Steven Miles launched his Boatin’ Campin’ Fishin’ election promise – including a promise to ban more nets in Moreton Bay – Labor incumbent Ali King lost with a 5.7 per cent swing to the LNP’s Ariana Doolan.

Rockhampton, held continuously by Labor since 1912, where then local MP and Fisheries Minister Bill Byrne banned gill nets from the Fitzroy River and adjacent waters in 2015, has gone to the LNP’s Donna Kirkland ahead of Labor’s Craig Marshall with a 10.4 per cent swing.

Labor has also lost the adjacent coastal seat of Keppel, centred on the fishing port of Yeppoon, where the LNP’s Nigel Hutton attracted a 16.1 per cent swing from Labor’s Brittany Lauga.

Mackay, a Labor seat since the 1930s, where Bill Byrne also imposed “net-free zones”, has gone to the LNP. The LNP’s Nigel Dalton defeated Labor’s Belinda Hassan with a 17.2 per cent swing.

So strong were the seats of Rockhampton and Mackay for Labor previously that they were two of just seven seats retained by the party when the LNP’s Campbell Newman won a landslide election victory to become Premier in 2012 (for one term).

Two of the three seats in and around Cairns – Barron River and Mulgrave – where Bill Byrne imposed the third set of “net-free zones”, have also been lost by Labor. (The third seat, based on the city of Cairns, remained with Labor.)

The seat of Cook, which starts on the east coast just north of Cairns, and includes most of Cape York and the majority of the east coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria, where the State Government has imposed extensive new net bans, has been lost by Labor to the LNP with an 11.8 per cent swing. Labor’s Cynthia Lui has been replaced by the LNP’s David Kempton.

(Note: The rest of the Gulf of Carpentaria coast in Queensland falls in the seat of Traeger, held by KAP leader Robbie Katter, a vocal supporter of commercial fishing, who held his seat comfortably.)

Where seats changed

In total, the LNP won 52 seats, Labor 36, Katter’s Australian Party 3, Greens 1 and Independent 1.

Between the 2020 and 2024 State elections, the LNP and Labor virtually swapped positions.

At the previous election, in 2020, Labor won 52 seats with 53.2 per cent of the two-party preferred vote, and the LNP won 34 seats. This time, in 2024, the LNP won 52 seats on a slightly higher 53.8 per cent of the two-party preferred vote, and Labor won 36 seats.

The new government has 16 more seats than Labor and a majority of



A rally in Ayr in July last year to protest against netting bans drew hundreds of people from throughout local communities, and was addressed by the State and federal MPs Dale Last and Andrew Willcox, who recognised this as a significant regional issue.

11 over all other parties in the new Legislative Assembly.

The seats won by the LNP from Labor (with the swing to the LNP in brackets) are:

- Barron River (6.8%)
- Caloundra (4.9%)
- Capalaba (12%)
- Cook (11.8%)
- Hervey Bay (10.5%)
- Keppel (16.1%)
- Mackay (17.2%)
- Maryborough (14.7%)
- Mulgrave (14.9%)
- Mundingburra (14%)
- Nicklin (2.8%)
- Pumicestone (5.7%)
- Redcliffe (9%)
- Redlands (5.8%)
- Rockhampton (10.4%)
- Thuringowa (13.2%) and
- Townsville (9.1%)

The seat of Mirani, won by One Nation in 2020, also was won by the LNP at the 2024 election.

The LNP gained 18 seats on a Statewide average swing of 7 per cent but, as can be seen from the list above,

the swing in regional seats – particularly in Central and North Queensland – was generally far larger than in the south-east corner.

Twelve of the 18 seats won by the LNP are outside the south-east corner, north of the Sunshine Coast.

North of Bundaberg, Labor now holds only two seats: Gladstone and Cairns. Coming closer to the situation with the federal seats in Queensland, State Labor is now largely a party based in the urban south-east.

As election analyst Antony Green has pointed out, the swing against Labor grew as you moved away from Brisbane. It was 4.6 per cent to the LNP in the Brisbane City Council area, 7.2 per cent in the four city councils that surround Brisbane, 7.5 per cent on the Gold Coast but a smaller 3.7 per cent on the Sunshine Coast. Overall, the swing in south-east Queensland was 5.9 per cent against Labor, but 9.3 per cent in the rest of the State. The swing was 10.1 per cent in North Queensland and 12 per cent in Central Queensland.

Before the election, the 10 seats in North Queensland split seven Labor and three KAP. The LNP gained six seats, leaving Labor with only Cairns.

Where Labor held 12 of the 14 seats defined as Regional City seats before the election, after the election it held only three: Cairns, Gladstone and Bundaberg.

In Queensland, how the regions vote matters more than in other States. Only half of Queensland’s population of 5.65 million people live in greater Brisbane. By contrast, for example, New South Wales has a population of 8 million and 5.5 million live in Sydney, while Victoria has a population of 7 million and 5.4 million live in Melbourne.

At the next election, in 2028, the LNP could lose five of the six seats it won in the south-east corner this time and still form government.

Common sense

At the federal and now State level, Labor has had problems understanding regional Queenslanders. As one fisherman told me recently, regional Queenslanders are like urban Queenslanders but with more common sense.

“They understand the difference between jobs and hobbies and the difference between genuine environmental issues and pandering to



The creation of "net-free zones" in Rockhampton's Fitzroy River and lengthy stretches of adjacent coastal waters (plus at Mackay and Cairns) created immediate protests and lingering resentment amongst not just fishers but also related business operators.

inner-city greenies or overseas activist organisations," he said.

One influential angling writer, who could be expected to have inside knowledge of recreational fishing and politics, has claimed in print that Bill Byrne's establishment of the three net-free zones "cost him his portfolio and, ultimately, his seat in Parliament". (Note: In October 2017, when Mr Byrne announced his resignation from the Agriculture & Fisheries portfolio and his decision not to contest the election later that year, he attributed his decision to health issues.)

If that is the case – the impact of the three net-free zones cost Mr Byrne his parliamentary career – then the Government didn't learn much, because they followed up those net-free zones with more extensive bans on fishing, particularly net fishing, in and around the Great Sandy Marine Park, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Campaigns and public protests at the time of the 2015 net-free zone imposition did not appear to have impact on the Labor Government.

After the the surprise decision to ban most gill-netting from the GBR Marine Park coast was announced in

June 2023, public protests like the Ayr rally in July – which attracted more than 400 people, the vast majority not directly connected with the seafood industry, to a packed meeting in the local Show Ground hall – again the Labor Government didn't seem to take much notice.

However, LNP MPs certainly did. Local State Member Dale Last spoke at the meeting, promising to campaign on behalf of the seafood industry. So did local federal MP Andrew Wilcox.

Mr Last, now Minister for Natural Resources & Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional & Rural Development in the new State Government, recognised that the meeting represented the concerns of a broad range of primary producers, small- and medium-business owners and community representatives who were angry that fellow producers, business people and productive community members were being forced out of a viable, sustainable industry sector unfairly.

At the 2024 State election, the Labor Government has not been rewarded for reallocating fish resources from seafood consumers to a relative handful of skilled anglers – not when 80 per cent of the Queensland population

never ever go fishing but do rely on commercial fishers to provide their share of local wild fish, and the vast majority of anglers don't care enough about that occasional hobby to change their voting intentions.

Commercial fishing an issue

And was commercial fishing really an issue? While it might not be an issue most people would think could normally motivate voters, it was interesting to see interviews on the ABC's Statewide 7pm television news bulletin on Friday, October 25, the night before election day.

One segment ran a series of interviews with voters in various parts of the State, asking how they were going to vote and why.

A local voter at the Sunshine Coast, Ross Duncan, asked on air by a journalist about his voting intentions, said he wasn't happy with the negative approach by the Labor Party.

"They should be dealing with issues like the commercial fishing industry, which has been destroyed by their policies," he responded.

Martin Bowerman
Editor

Labor promised even more netting bans

THE previous Labor Government in Queensland promised more net-fishing bans in Moreton Bay and the Mary River if they had been re-elected on October 26.

Early in the month, launching a "Better Boating Camping and Fishing" plan as part of his election campaign, then Premier Steven Miles promised "more fish for Moreton Bay weekend family fishing".

"Labor's plan will make it cheaper and easier for families to cast a line and reel in a fish on the end of it," Mr Miles said.

"With over one million recreational boat licence holders in Queensland, it's clear that more opportunities for quality recreational fishing are needed."

He said the plan included:

- ❑ building new, accessible boat ramps and car parks to make it easier to get out on the water;
- ❑ free annual pass to fish in dams, with more stocked dams, more fish stock and better recreational facilities for campers and anglers alike; and

- ❑ a net-free-zone fund to establish new net-free fishing zones in Moreton Bay after community consultation, to make more fish available for recreational fishers.

"The combination of net-free fishing zones in Moreton Bay to be implemented after community consultation, alongside the recently announced net-free zone in the Mary River and removal of gillnets from the Great Barrier Reef by 2027, will give recreational fishers access to a bigger, better supply of fish.

"And with more boat ramps, better parking and ramp cams to check conditions, punters can get out on the water with ease.

"Only Labor will do what matters to preserve our environment and lifestyle now and for future generations."

He also promised \$4 million in grants to fishing clubs and a consultative body to liaise with a re-elected Labor Government on boating, camping and fishing issues.

LNP against bans

"The LNP only seek to take Queensland backwards. The LNP were the masterminds of some of the largest rollbacks of environmental protections since Federation," Mr Miles said.

"When last in government, they cut 28 per cent of Queensland Boating & Fishing (sic) Patrol and Fisheries Queensland staff.

"And, they voted against net free fishing zones in Cairns, Mackay and Rockhampton.

"A day on the water is quintessentially Queensland.

"And I'm doing what matters to make that experience world-class.

"Our plan, if elected, will mean bigger fish biting more often and easier access to the water.

"This announcement is about getting more Queenslanders out and about, enjoying everything that makes our State great."

The then Fisheries Minister Mark Furner joined the Premier, saying: "There's nothing better than throwing a line into Queensland's wonderful waterways, and the Miles Labor Government will make that easier and more accessible than ever.

"Our Government is committed to making sure fishing is fun and sustainable, so that Queenslanders can enjoy it today, but their children and grandchildren can well into the future."

08 QUEENSLAND ELECTION | 24

The Courier-Mail Monday October 7, 2024

Housing waits on trunk call

Hayden Johnson

Huge new housing developments are being left unbuilt due to a lack of government-provided trunk infrastructure including water, roads and electricity, stakeholders say.

The Local Government Association of Queensland and Urban Development Institute of Australia have joined forces to push the next government to expedite critical funding for trunk infrastructure they say will tackle the housing crisis and support delivering one million new homes by 2046.

LGAQ chief executive Alison Smith and UDIA Queensland chief executive Kirsty Chessher-Brown said councils and the property industry were eager to build.

"Trunk infrastructure is the backbone of liveable communities," Ms Smith said.

"Without urgent action, ratepayers could be forced to cover a \$2.2 billion trunk infrastructure funding black hole over the next four years."

Newman

Then Premier Steven Miles went fishing for votes in the October election but didn't get a bite.

Cash splash but not everyone's taking the bait

Labor angles for votes of recreational fishers



Hayden Johnson

Boaters will get more ramps, better fishing and free access to stocked dams under Premier Steven Miles's plan to win over recreational anglers.

The \$100m "better boating, camping and fishing plan" includes new net-free fishing zones in Moreton Bay – a move that has drawn strong criticism from commercial fishers.

Mr Miles visited Sandstone Point Hotel on Sunday afternoon to announce Labor would invest \$30m for new boat ramps and infrastructure and make annual passes to fish in some dams free for four years.

Paradise Dam, Enoggera Reservoir and Mt Morgan No.7 Dam will be added to the stocked dam scheme and per-

Labor will also introduce net-free fishing zones in Moreton Bay and Mary River after community consultation, as part of a \$38m plan it says will give recreational fishers access to a bigger supply of fish.

Queensland Seafood Association chief executive David Bobbermen argued the plan was the latest "incremental" effort to hurt commercial fishing.

"This is a very disappointing, but perhaps not unexpected, announcement from the state Labor Party," he said.

"Yet again they have vilified Queensland's commercial fishers for their political gain.

"Already commercial fishers have been excluded from large areas of Moreton Bay. What they do is supply fresh, local, nutritious seafood to the South

Anglers' reps backed Labor, attacked LNP

Anglers' representative bodies have backed the then Labor Government and attacked the Liberal National Party in the lead-up to the October State election.

THESE bodies include the Fraser Coast Fishing Alliance, a longtime opponent of commercial fishing and champion for more net-fishing bans in particular.

In one post on the Fraser Coast Fishing Alliance (FCFA) Facebook site ahead of the election, a FCFA spokesperson said: "While we have recently had some of the largest fisheries reforms in Queensland's history applied, we still need more net-free zones in Queensland."

In another post, FCFA said: "The Fraser Coast Fishing Alliance Chairman and Committee feel that this election will be critical for recreational fishers across Hervey Bay, the Fraser Coast, and the State.

"Purely on recreational fishing issues, we believe we need to openly support the Miles Queensland Labor Government.

"Our members have personally called Hervey Bay LNP candidate David Lee and Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry and Gympie LNP member Tony Perrett, and left messages requesting a call or meeting, with NO reply.

"We emailed Tony Perret, asking for him and his party to formalise their position on key recreational fishing issues, and even called his office, which confirmed they had received the emails – still no reply.

"Over the last 15 years, the FCFA

has worked openly and as a-politically as possible throughout the review of the Great Sandy Marine Park. At NO point did the LNP EVER support the removal of the red-cross hatched 'anomaly' which was the designated 'Great Sandy Area.'

"That zone did not exist in any other marine park in the country and allowed large-mesh commercial netting to continue in Yellow Conservation Park Zones!

"The LNP also opposed the introduction of Net Free Zones at Rockhampton, Mackay and Cairns. They even moved a disallowance motion against them! The LNP also cut 28 per cent of jobs in Fisheries Queensland when last in power.

"The Miles Queensland Labor Government is committed to supporting Queensland recreational fishers and has listened to local anglers and the Australian Fishing Trade Association, and will ban gillnet fishing in the Mary River above the Great Sandy Marine Park (GSMP) boundary if re-elected.

"The Miles Queensland Labor Government has seen the success and acknowledges the benefits that come with the introduction of net-free zones and is proposing more NEW net-free zones in Moreton Bay for local recreational fishers to enjoy if re-elected.

"The Queensland Labor Party has

implemented the most significant fisheries reforms across Queensland to date, including:

- ❑ Net Free Zones introduced at Rockhampton, Mackay and Cairns;
- ❑ Commercial Fishing Regional Zoning;
- ❑ Voluntary buy-back offered to commercial fishers;
- ❑ Commercial Quota system introduced;
- ❑ Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) applied to commercial vessels; and
- ❑ the Great Sandy Marine Park Review was completed and came into effect on the 21st of May 2024, with Commercial Large Mesh Gill Nets now removed from ALL the Yellow Conservation Park Zones.

"Here we are in 2024 and what is the LNP proposing they will do if elected – a Peer Review with the potential to unravel this!

"THIS WILL BE A CRITICAL ELECTION for Recreational Fishers across Queensland – MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT!"



Former Maryborough MP Bruce Saunders discovered his constituents really didn't want a Mary River net ban after all.

Queensland Labor

Make Your Vote Count!

Will Deliver a Net Free Mary River

Fraser Coast Fishing Alliance 3 days ago

If Recreational Fishing is your passion - There really is only one choice this election - Queensland Labor #MakeYourVoteCount

Fraser Coast Fishing Alliance 5 days ago

A Steven Miles Queensland Labor Government WILL commit \$38 million for a Net-Free Zone Fund to establish New Net-Free Zones in the Mary River, as well as Moreton Bay after community consultation #makeyourvotecount #netsoutqueensland #NetFreeZone #netfreearea #RecreationalFishing #MaximumEconomicYield #thisisqueensland #visitfrasercoast #tourism

Adrian Tantari MP; Bruce Saunders; Mark Furner MP for Ferny Grove; Steven Miles ; Queensland Labor

LNP's Fishy Failures

The LNP has failed recreational boats, campers and fishers - when they were in government and now.

Fraser Coast Fishing Alliance 4 days ago

Who remembers Ted ?...
Past Behavior is the best predictor of future performance...
#makeyourvotecount #RecreationalFishing #thisisqueensland #MaximumEconomicYield #NetFreeZone #netfreearea #netsoutqueensland #tourism #visitfrasercoast

Adrian Tantari MP; Bruce Saunders; Steven Miles ; Queensland Labor

Fraser Coast Fishing Alliance October 22 at 6:20 AM

The LNP MOVED A DISALLOWANCE MOTION AGAINST THE NET-FREE ZONES AT ROCKHAMPTON, MACKAY & CAIRNS in 2015! #makeyourvotecount

Some of the Fraser Coast Fishing Alliance's pre-election Facebook posts.

Continued on page 16.

ISUZU MARINE

MARINE PROPULSION AND MARINE POWER GENERATION

PROPULSION

Isuzu Japan Factory Marinated Up to 730hp and 15.6 Litre

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FOR DIESEL ENGINES, RELIABILITY IS EVERYTHING ISUZU



This Labor scheme missed the point non-anglers want their share of fish too.

LNP supports pros

In another post, the FCFA posted TV news footage from years ago and said: "Here is some more history with previous LNP Member Ted Sorensen and colleagues who pushed back against 'Correcting' the Great Sandy Marine Park and reform recommendations under the Sustainability Strategy 2017-2027.

"The LNP has a long history of biasedly supporting the commercial fishing industry to the detriment of our local fishing stocks and recreational fishing. We have already seen an improvement in local fishing stocks since the New Zoning Plan for the GSMP came into effect on the 21st of May 2024 – with more and larger whiting, flathead, bream and mackerel being reported. We cannot afford to have ANY of these reforms reverted or rolled back #makeyourvotecount"

Dismay and disgust

In another pre-election post, FCFA displayed more historical material and said: "It was with some dismay

and disgust that recreational fishers and those with an interest in the marine environment see federal LNP politicians, including deputy prime minister Michael McCormack, Keith Pitt and George Christensen, interfering with Queensland's Fisheries Management!

"It is beyond belief that they have taken a stance against recreational fishers and the wider community in an attempt to manipulate years of community, science and agency efforts to rebuild fish numbers after decades of over-harvesting and outdated management practices in Queensland.

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"The current reforms have brought Queensland into the 21st century and are recognised as best practice, just like those already in place for most of our Federally managed fisheries under AFMA.

"The irony of this is that it was the Queensland LNP Newman government that commissioned the MRAG Review of the state's fisheries in 2014 that precipitated the current round of reforms. How was it that Queensland, and then national coalition members openly railed against those long overdue reforms that they initiated and supported five years prior ?

"Sadly, it is no real surprise that the Queensland LNP is behaving this way again, after all, in recent years while in opposition, they have repeatedly shown no concern for sensible fisheries management, do not consult with key stakeholders, and play cheap and foolish political tricks in respect to fisheries management reforms in the state.

"We all remember how the LNP fought tooth and nail against the introduction of three new Net Free Zones, but their federal counterparts ought to know better, especially on the eve of another election and particularly after the flogging they copped when they brought in disgraced factory trawl ships into Australian waters for a quick buck at everyone else's expense ...

"Sadly – Nothing Changes #makeyourvotecount"

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ENVIRONMENT NEWS

Australian study finds GBR no-take zones offer limited benefit in climate-change scenario

AN Australian study suggests no-take marine reserves (NTMRs) will not protect coral reef fish species from the impacts of climate change.

In a media release from James Cook University (JCU), coral reef ecologist Maya Srinivasan said marine park zones where fishing is banned improve the picture to some degree, providing a buffer for the species that are usually targeted by fishers.

"However, we found that no-take marine reserves are unlikely to mitigate the impacts of an increasingly chaotic climate for all fish species in the long term," Dr Srinivasan said.

Dr Srinivasan is a co-author of a recently-published report based on surveys of 100 reef sites around the Palm Islands, Magnetic Island, Whitsunday Islands and Keppel Islands over a 14-year period.

The survey reveals fish communities are struggling to cope with increasingly frequent disturbances, including coral bleaching, floods and cyclones.

"In the Keppel Islands, we observed a dramatic drop after major flood events in 2011 and 2013, with fish abundance falling to nearly one-tenth of its previous levels – and, although many sites recovered, the worst hit sites didn't and are now covered in algae, with very little coral," she said.

In the Whitsunday Islands, Cyclone Debbie in 2017 caused a steep drop in fish abundance.

"Cyclone Debbie's intense impact on coral cover and physical damage to reef structures reduced available habitat, especially for coral-dependent species. This loss has made it challenging for fish populations to maintain stability in these areas."

Most types of fish in the study showed a decline in population density, except for species like herbivorous damselfish and parrotfish.

"These species increased in numbers

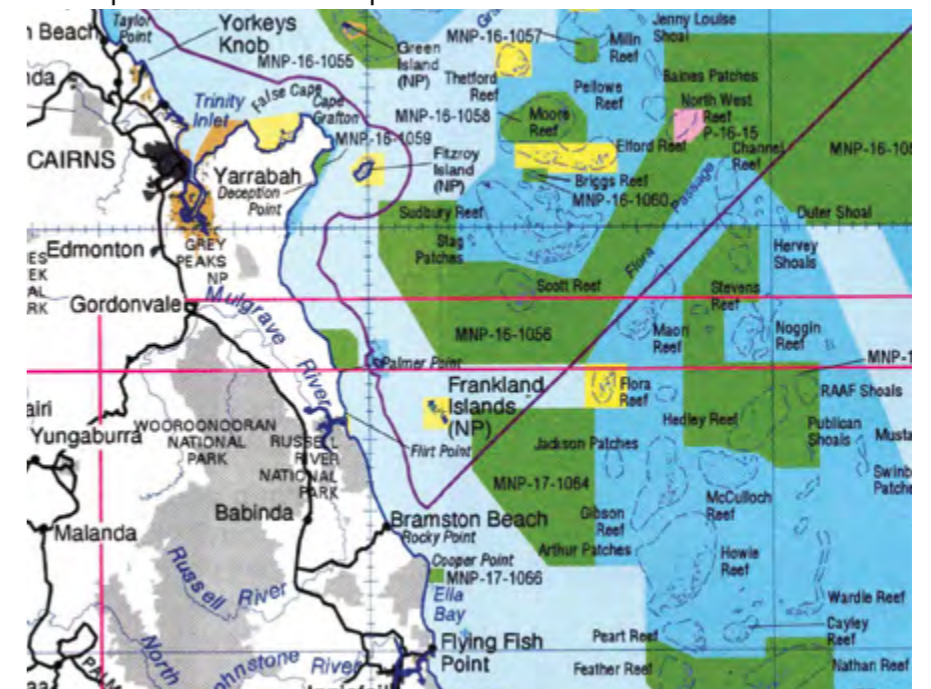
because they feed on algae, which is more abundant on degraded reefs. We get winners and losers in this age of human impact, but there tends to be more species at the losing end of the scale," Dr Srinivasan said.

The study was published in October in the journal *Global Change Biology* in a paper titled "Regional-scale disturbances drive long-term decline of inshore coral reef fish assemblages in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park". (See below.)

The summary said the 2007 to 2021 study showed each region had a unique disturbance history, in conjunction with long-term changes in physical and habitat variables.

Phases of recovery were apparent in the years between disturbance events at all locations but these were not long enough to prevent substantial declines in reef fish density and species richness.

"The main drivers of change in fish assemblages varied among regions; however, the most rapid changes followed cyclone and flood events. Limited recovery periods resulted in temporal shifts in fish species



A study has found green zones are "unlikely to mitigate the impacts of an increasingly chaotic climate for all fish species".

except farmers, grazers, omnivores and parrotfish.

"No-take marine reserves (NTMRs) had small and inconsistent effects on total fish assemblages but delivered benefits for fishery-targeted piscivores.

"Our findings suggest that coral reef responses to local stressors and cumulative escalating climate change impacts are highly variable at regional scales, and that small NTMRs are unlikely to mitigate the impacts of increasingly frequent climatic disturbances.

"Nearshore coral reefs worldwide are high-value habitats that are either already degraded or vulnerable to degradation and the loss of important fish groups.

"Global efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions must be coupled with effective local management that can support the functioning and adaptive capacity of coral reefs."

Reference

"Regional-scale disturbances drive long-term decline of inshore coral reef fish assemblages in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park" by Daniela M. Ceccarelli, Murray Logan, Richard D. Evans, Geoffrey P. Jones, Marji Puotinen, Caroline Petus, Garry R. Russ, Tane Sinclair-Taylor, Maya Srinivasan, David H. Williamson, published in *Global Change Biology*, 14 October 2024.

Review of California marine protected areas questions benefits

Well-known international fisheries scientist Ray Hilborn has written an article questioning the benefits of marine protected areas.

IN an article headed “Show me the benefits: 10 years in, what have marine protected areas accomplished in California?”, Professor Hilborn reviewed the outcomes of no-fishing zones in that State.

His article was published in a California newspaper in early October.

Professor Hilborn is a well-credentialed fisheries scientist. He is a professor in the School of Aquatic & Fishery Sciences at the University of Washington (State) and served on the Science Advisory Team during Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) planning for Santa Barbara (California) reserves. He has been awarded the World Fisheries Science Prize and the Volvo Environmental Prize.

“More fish, more sustainable fisheries and an ecosystem better protected from threats was the promise of the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) and the 124 MPAs now in place in California,” he wrote. “Ten years on, what have they accomplished?”

“The recently completed 10-year review by the California Department of Fish & Wildlife, as well as numerous scientific papers, suggest that our hopes were misplaced. The review concludes ‘Statewide and regional trends across habitats showed no difference in biodiversity inside compared to outside MPAs’

“As to the very real threats to California’s coastal ecosystems – climate change and recent marine heat waves – the review is decidedly not sanguine: ‘Analysis across habitats in the central coast revealed that MPAs did not provide strong resilience against the marine heatwave.’ Ouch!

“Finally, there is not even evidence that there are any more fish in California State waters now, except for some of the areas that are closed to fishing.

“The only study to look at whether there were more fish overall suggests that the answer is no. Where fishing

is intense, there are definitely more fish inside the closed area, but the fishing boats simply moved outside the boundary and caught them there.

“The structure of the 10-year review alone squashes any expectations that the MPAs might be protecting our ocean from any threats.

“The review devotes nine pages to governance and partnerships, 22 pages to research, 15 pages to outreach and education and 14 pages to enforcement. A paltry four pages deal with how marine species have changed and another four pages deal with climate resilience. The blatant absence of ‘good news’ is spun into research, public engagement and enforcement as if those had been the goals the MPAs were meant to achieve.

“Unsurprisingly, the only threat the MPAs do address is over-fishing, and that is not a problem in State waters. The Marine Life Protection Act was conceived and implemented at a time of serious concerns about declines in many rockfish species in federal waters, but are not the focus of fisheries in State waters and are rarely found there. One should not expect major benefits from no-fishing zones when there is no over-fishing to begin with.

“Make no mistake, California coastal ecosystems face many threats. These include climate-change-related warming, ocean acidification, storm severity and sea-level rise. Moreover, the coasts face a wide range of terrestrial impacts from coastal development, sedimentation, land-based runoff of sediments and pollutants, and water diversions. New exotic species and diseases have arrived, and ship traffic is increasing.

“California’s MPA network provides no protection from any of these threats, and yet the MPA advocates are still claiming to have protected the ocean.

“The Marine Life Protection Act

was born in a research network of academics who formed a group call PISCO that published a report called *The Science of Marine Reserves* in 2007. The opening paragraph states: ‘Fish, shellfish, and other species are declining in many places. The changes are impairing the ocean’s capacity to provide food, protect livelihoods, maintain water quality and recover from environmental stress.’ Whatever happened to food and livelihoods? There is not a whisper or mention of those in the 10-year review.

“Does California need even more marine reserves? The public should demand to know what the objectives are, how success is measured, what perceived threats are being addressed, and would the funds be better spent to address the real threats to California’s coastal ecosystems.

“In a pinch, we could say that MPAs to some extent restrict fishing. But wait, we already have an agency that does that, the California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW). Perhaps funding to implement more MPAs should be redirected to CDFW to do its job even better? Perhaps, more importantly, the funds could be used to better regulate terrestrial impacts on the coastal ecosystem.”

Response to critic

Ray Hilborn’s article was published in early October and a fortnight later he circulated a response to the inevitable criticism – particularly criticism from one researcher – arguing in favour of the proposition that marine protected areas (MPAs) produce more fish overall.

This critic disagreed with Prof. Hilborn’s argument that, in the last decade since the MPA network was established in California, there have been no benefits to the marine ecosystems there and, thus, what are the proposed benefits to even more MPAs?

Prof. Hilborn says the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) 10-year review does not show that there are more fish in California because of the MLPA. It only shows that there are more fish inside some of the closed areas. The question of MPA effectiveness (in relation to fish) is how MPAs affect fish populations as a whole, not just in a closed area. There is no science that shows an increase in fish across California.



Professor Ray Hilborn, photographed during a previous visit to Australia.

“During the planning process, many of us suggested there would be no overall benefit unless the stocks were over-fished, and there was no evidence that over-fishing was taking place. Everyone ... seems to accept that the amount of response you see inside the MPA depends on how much fishing pressure there was before the closure.”

Prof. Hilborn said his critic had failed to grasp that most of the review and the science in the report was looking at fish abundance inside the MPAs versus so-called “reference sites” outside the MPAs.

“In theory, a reference site has similar habitat to the MPA so the abundance in the reference site is potentially what would have happened to the MPA without closure. You can think of it as what scientists would call a ‘control’ site.

“What many MPA advocates don’t understand about MPA science is the fallacy of comparing reference sites outside a protected area to fish

abundance inside after the MPA is established.

“Reference sites cannot be used as a scientific control because they are a ‘treatment’. After an MPA is established, the reference sites would have been fished harder after areas were closed because some of the fishing effort would have moved there. It is not a true control group as the establishment of the MPA essentially ‘treats’ the reference site to more fishing.”

He said this fallacy permeates all of the quotes from the 10-year review his critic had used to argue for positive benefits.

“If the MPAs show more stability because fishing effort was removed, would we not expect the reference sites to show less stability because fishing effort increased there?”

He said it had been suggested that having some areas with more fish means the MLPA was a success.

“But, if there are more fish in closed areas and fewer fish outside, is this a success? I frankly doubt that the California legislature, or the people of California, would have supported the MLPA if it had been put to them that there would be no increase in fish abundance because of the MPAs but instead there would be more fish in some closed areas, but everywhere people wanted to go fishing would have fewer fish.

“There are certainly advantages in having some closed areas as special sites for diving tourism and scientific study but, as the 10-year review said regarding tourism, ‘MPAs that allow some level of take and have nearby infrastructure, such as easily accessible parking lots, attract more human uses’. So does California need even more no-take areas?

“Finally, I go back to a key point of my critique of the 10-year review: if the MLPA was a biological success, why are only four pages out of a 120-page report devoted to changes in species abundance?”

Note: The original 10-year review of the MPA network can be accessed here: https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MPAs/Management/Decadal-Review/Events_et_entis_sinulles_non_post_volorisum_re_esti_con_custius

STOP PRESS

Bid to reverse net bans defeated

A BID by Katter’s Australian Party (KAP) to reverse the gill-netting bans along the GBR coast and in the Gulf of Carpentaria has been defeated by Government and Labor MPs voting against the KAP motion.

During debate on the disallowance motion in State Parliament on December 10, Primary Industries Minister Tony Perrett said it was not possible to “unscramble the egg”.

The entire disallowance debate can be read by going to the link below, then scrolling down to page 265. The debate can also be viewed on video by clicking on the projector symbol 📽 beside Robbie Katter’s name.

https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/events/han/2024/2024_12_10_DAILY.pdf

SEAFOOD PROMOTION

Seafood barbecue wows national media

Two seasonal social events help measure the year in Parliament House in Canberra: one is the Midwinter Ball hosted by the Federal Parliamentary Press Gallery and the second is the end-of-year seafood barbecue hosted for that same Press Gallery by the Nationals.

THIS year's barbecue was held on November 26 – in the last sitting week for 2024 – in the Senate Courtyard in Parliament House.

As usual, hundreds of journalists, photographers and cameramen, plus Parliamentarians from across the country, consumed tens of kilos of seafood (much of it from Queensland waters) in what has become one of the most anticipated events in the parliamentary calendar.

It was commenced by then Senator Ron Boswell and NT Senator Nigel Scullion back around 2012 but, with their retirement, is now organised by Central Queensland-based Senator Matt Canavan, with the strong support of senior colleagues.

As media people, Parliamentarians and political staffers filed past barbecue plates in a grassy courtyard in the grounds of Parliament House, and piled their plates with seafood and salads, they were served by chefs who included: Nationals parliamentary leader David Littleproud; Matt Canavan; Nationals Senate leader Bridget McKenzie; Townsville-based Senator

Susan McDonald; NT Senator Jacinta Nampijinpa Price; Rockhampton-based MP Michelle Landry; Gladstone-based MP Colin Boyce; and NSW Senator Perin Davey.

Also in attendance were Opposition Leader Peter Dutton, former Nationals leader Barnaby Joyce, Bundaberg-based MP Keith Pitt, shadow Fisheries Minister Jonno Duniam, former Minister Senator Richard Colbeck, and MPs Anne Webster, Sam Birrell, Ian Goodenough and Simon Kennedy.

Generous quantities of seafood – including cooked king prawns, king prawn cutlets, tiger prawn cutlets, scallops, bugs, barramundi and crocodile ribs – were donated to the event by Therese Murphy from the Australian Ocean King Prawn Company at Urangan, Sydney Fish Market and John and Lillian Lever from the Koorana Crocodile Farm at Rockhampton, plus a range of beverages from Luke McKenzie at IGA Supermarkets. The event would not happen without the support of these businesses.

Mr Dutton, Mr Littleproud, Senator McKenzie and Senator Canavan all

praised the quality of the seafood, the economic contribution of the industry to regional, State and national economies from sustainably-sourced seafood, and environmental stewardship of the Australian fishing industry.

While this is an event staged by the Nationals – not a seafood industry promotion – once again the Press Gallery barbecue was a very positive public relations and promotional event for our industry, courtesy of some seafood-loving Members of Parliament and the continuing generosity of the businesses involved.

Martin Bowerman



NT Senator Jacinta Nampijinpa Price.



MPs behind the barbecue plates included (from left) Senators Perin Davey from NSW, Susan McDonald, based in Townsville and Matt Canavan, based in Rockhampton.



The Nats barbecue always attracts a media focus on seafood.



Opposition leader Peter Dutton took the opportunity to praise the seafood industry.



Rockhampton-based Member for Capricornia Michelle Landry (left) and Senator Susan McDonald.



Hundreds of media reps, politicians and political staffers attended during the two-hour lunch.



SEAFOOD PROMOTION

Queensland Catch – where it all began

With renewed interest in rejuvenating the Queensland Catch seafood promotion campaign, let's take a look back at where it all began – in Cairns in 2007.

THE Queensland Catch seafood promotion campaign had its beginnings in decisions by the Federal Government to put money into the Cairns regional economy to partly compensate for losses incurred by onshore businesses due to buybacks in the northern trawl fishery and tuna fishery that particularly impacted the city.

The Coalition Government led by John Howard (with Senator Eric Abetz as Fisheries Minister) approved a QSI grant application to the "Securing Our Fishing Future" program for \$409,000 to be spent in the region promoting seafood. Further support in cash and kind from QSI took it to a \$500,000 project.

Half-a-million dollars might seem like a lot of money, especially in 2007 dollars, but the Howard Government had already paid out close to \$250 million compensating fishing and other businesses for the severe economic impacts of massive fishing closures by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority in its 2004 rezoning plan, so another \$500,000 didn't really seem like so much at the time. However, it did go a long way.

The project was approved in October 2007 but, with an election in November 2007 that saw the ALP

take government and Kevin Rudd become Prime Minister, with Jim Turnour elected as the Labor MP for the Cairns-based seat of Leichhardt, the campaign was funded by the new Labor Government.

QSI identified this as a terrific opportunity to promote Queensland seafood and also to build bonds across related industries. It was essentially an advertising campaign, though it required the development of a network of fishers, retailers, restaurants and others to fully develop the project.

The idea was to increase demand for regional seafood from both local consumers and tourists alike, plus at the same time build closer links through the whole seafood chain from catching to plating. It was also an opportunity to promote the worth of the fishing industry to the community.

Another aspect of the project was to promote the use of sustainably harvested quality Queensland seafood by local restaurants, liaising with restaurant owners and chefs about the availability of different varieties, based on their seasonality, and also introducing them to where they could buy this seafood.



The launch of Queensland Catch was announced in the magazine in November 2008.

Project details

At the time, Neil Green was QSI President, there was a QSI Promotions Committee chaired by Elaine Lewthwaite, I managed the Queensland Catch project and we eventually had two staff in Cairns – Nola Craig and Shirley Wicks – liaising with seafood retailers and restaurants involved in the campaign.

There was also a Cairns-based steering committee of QSI representatives, local fishers, wholesalers, retailers and restaurant-owners helping guide the project.

We invited pitches from three advertising agencies in Cairns, finally selecting Gary Cutler and his agency, Mediapower, to help develop the campaign, create the material required,



SO CLOSE TO HOME WE BARELY NEED A BOAT.

Is your seafood local?
Insist on the superior quality of Queensland Catch.

QUEENSLAND CATCH
www.queenslandcatch.com.au

ASK 'IS IT LOCAL?' AND INSIST ON QUEENSLAND CATCH.



A range of species-specific point-of-sale leaflets were printed for retailers and thousands of copies of a branded recipe book direct-distributed to homes.

and plan and place the TV, radio and newspaper advertising bookings.

The campaign was officially launched by Jim Turnour in October 2008, with TV, press and radio advertising – covering the region from around Innisfail to Cairns to Port Douglas and up onto the Atherton Tableland – urging seafood consumers to ask "Is it local?" and look for a label identifying "Queensland Catch".

Mr Turnour told guests at the launch lunch that local fishers had prime seafood available for sale. "Residents and tourists want to eat it. This campaign is designed to make sure local seafood is readily available, and that consumers can identify it in retail outlets and restaurants. That's what this campaign is all about."

The initial 15-month Queensland Catch advertising campaign was designed to create awareness and then guide retail customers and restaurant-goers to choose local seafood options.

TV, radio and some newspaper advertising created awareness of the availability and superiority of locally-caught seafood, and then further newspaper ads listed retail outlets and restaurants where local seafood could be found.

In-store promotional material further highlighted local seafood and, in the display cabinets, ice picks identified specific local seafood products. Queensland Catch seafood options were also identified in participating restaurants.

Thousands of "Queensland Catch" full-colour seafood recipe booklets

were distributed direct to homes in Cairns, featuring favourite dishes created by well-known local restaurant chefs.

The advertising, while vital to the success of the campaign, was considered just the "tip of the iceberg".

Advertising was the most visible aspect of the campaign but QSI worked behind the scenes to recruit more and more local retailers and restaurants to support it, while making sure there was a steady supply of product from fishers to keep pace with increased sales.

Setting up improved supply networks from local fishers through the chain to seafood consumers was seen as a key to the long-term success of this campaign.

QSI employed a fulltime liaison officer, as well as a part-time training officer to develop education modules to create greater awareness about the fishing industry in the local area.

Setting up the networks involved a "regional branding" marketing strategy, which included:

- ❑ establishing supply and marketing chains between the catching sector and retailers / restaurants;
- ❑ establishing a "seafood trail", incorporating local seafood restaurants and suppliers who support locally caught seafood products;
- ❑ developing a website, logo, stickers and brochures to educate retailers, residents and visitors about local seafood products and where to enjoy them;



❑ as part of the marketing campaign, using newspapers, radio and television to support the supply chains and the demand for local product; and

❑ training for retailers and restaurant staff to increase seafood knowledge and encourage the education of the local community and visitors to the Cairns region.

The project was strongly supported by Jim Turnour and other North Queensland MPs, and in mid-2009 the QSI received a further \$68,500 from then federal Fisheries Minister Tony Burke to continue seafood marketing, including registering copyright for the "Queensland Catch" name and logo.

Martin Bowerman

Seafood festivals

THE Queensland Catch campaign coincided with broader QSI promotion activities, particularly seafood festivals along the Queensland coast.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, QSI conducted seafood festivals in several ports, including the long-running event in Hervey Bay, plus others in Cairns, Townsville, Bowen, Mackay, Bundaberg, Tin Can Bay, Mooloolaba (a very successful "prawn festival"), Redcliffe and Redlands, usually coinciding with the winter tourist season.

QSI also operated an information stand and on-stage cooking demonstrations – and sold cooked seafood – at the Brisbane Ekka, and participated in a number of other food-related events in Brisbane and elsewhere in the State.

IS YOUR CHEF FISHING FOR COMPLIMENTS?

Local chefs know local seafood is at the pinnacle of freshness and taste. So the next time you dine out, ask if the chef is using Queensland Catch and you'll know he's out to impress.

QUEENSLAND CATCH
SUPPORT THE RESTAURANTS THAT SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL SEAFOOD.
www.queenslandcatch.com.au

ASK 'IS IT LOCAL?' AND INSIST ON QUEENSLAND CATCH.

Samples of the several advertisements that appeared in regional newspapers from Innisfail to Port Douglas.

LETTERS

GBRMPA response on “unsustainable fishing” comment

THE Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority has responded to an inquiry from *Queensland Seafood* about a reference to “unsustainable fishing”. Below are letters exchanged on the issue.

QS letter

I note the Reef Authority on September 19 published a blog (Link: <https://www2.gbrmpa.gov.au/news/tales-species-survival>) saying in part: “The *Outlook Report 2024* has shown us that the impacts of Climate Change remain the main concern for the Reef, and are only compounding the cumulative effects of other chronic impacts like unsustainable fishing, pollution and sedimentation.”

For publication in *Queensland Seafood* magazine, could you please advise which fishery / fisheries in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park the

Reef Authority considers unsustainable.

Martin Bowerman
Editor

GBRMPA letter

Thank you for your enquiry about sustainable fishing in the Great Barrier Reef (the Reef). The Reef Authority recognises fishing as a long-established and valued activity for many people and we support ecologically sustainable fisheries consistent with the long-term protection and conservation of the Reef. Sustainable fisheries and healthy fish populations are critical to maintaining a healthy ecosystem and a functioning Reef. The Queensland Government regulates fisheries management and has been implementing reforms through its *Queensland Sustainable Fisheries Strategy 2017-2027*.

The *2024 Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report* presents a range of information on commercial and recreational fishing. (See Chapter 5 Commercial and non-commercial use.) The assessment of the benefits and impacts of fishing draws on information provided by various sources, including fishery stock assessments and the status of Australian fish stocks reports published by the Fisheries Research

and Development Corporation. The Outlook Report also synthesises information about the Reef’s habitats and species, including in relation to fishing-related activities and practices. Successive Outlook Reports have identified various issues associated with fishing activities, including incidental catch of protected species, extraction of predators, extraction from spawning aggregations, and discarded catch. The Outlook Report does not provide specific recommendations in relation to the management of these matters.

Our Position Statement on Sustainable Fisheries further outlines what can be done to achieve ecologically sustainable fisheries in the Marine Park based on the best available science.

We are committed to working with the Queensland Government, industry, recreational fishers and other partners and stakeholders to support sustainable fisheries. All fishers – whether recreational, commercial, traditional or charter – rely on a healthy and resilient Reef ecosystem.

Josh Thomas
CEO
GBRMPA

CONFERENCE

Seafood Directions event in Hobart a huge success

The biennial Seafood Directions conference and exhibition in Hobart in September was a huge success, attracting a record 580 delegates to hear more than 50 presentations.

SEAFOOD Directions soared into “information overload” territory, with an impressive array of Australian and international speakers covering every imaginable seafood-related topic.

Equally valuable were the countless “corridor conversations”, where industry members caught up with colleagues they might not have seen since the last conference two years ago and, in some cases no doubt, far longer.

It is impossible to summarise here the presentations and speeches delivered on the first, part day and the following two full days, including the conference dinner and national seafood awards announcements.

Even attending the event, it was impossible to participate in everything on offer, given that, aside from keynote addresses, there were generally up to five presentations available in different venues simultaneously.

The event was officially opened by the then recently appointed new federal Fisheries Minister, Julie Collins, a Tasmanian but at the time of the

conference away in Canberra at a sitting of Parliament, and so appearing via video.

Also welcoming delegates (in person) was Eric Abetz, Tasmanian Minister for Business, Industry & Resources (and a long-time former federal Senator and federal Fisheries Minister).

Shadow federal Fisheries Minister Jonno Duniam, a Tasmanian, spoke at the awards dinner on the final evening of the conference.

Keynote addresses were delivered in the first morning of the first full day by futurist Jordan Nguyen – exploring innovative solutions available through emerging technologies – and in the afternoon by demographer Bernard Salt – offering insights into the demographic and social trends shaping future consumer behaviour.

Also speaking on the first day was David Jochinke, President of the National Farmers Federation, fresh from a national farmers rally outside Federal Parliament the day before and still clearly pumped with the adrenalin

of vigorously taking primary producers’ issues direct to the decision-makers in Canberra.

The opening address on the second full day was from Grant Prentice from the international firm Food-Minds, which has partnered with several global seafood organisations and contributed to the Futures of Seafood study, intended to be a groundbreaking project charting the course for Australia’s seafood expansion. He took delegates through Australia’s first “SeaFoodscape”, highlighting the nutritional and cultural contributions of seafood, barriers and drivers to consumption, and emerging consumer and societal trends, insights said to be invaluable for understanding the intersection of today’s healthy and sustainable food systems with tomorrow’s consumer demands. (For more details on the Futures of Seafood study, go to: <https://www.frdc.com.au/are-we-prepared-sail-mapping-future-australias-seafood-voyage>.)

Another international visitor opened the afternoon session: Linda Sams, Sustainable Development Director at Cermaq Canada, with a career spanning over 36 years in marine biology and environmental toxicology, and dedicated to advancing sustainability and environmental stewardship in the aquaculture sector. She had valuable insights into sustainable management of aquaculture, salmon aquaculture in particular.



WHEN IT COMES TO SUPER, WE'RE A VERY GOOD CATCH

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To find out how Australian Food Super can help you plan for the future, call **Daniel Musson** on 1800 517 210 or drop him a line at danielm@ausfoodsuper.com.au

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A record 580 delegates attended the Seafood Directions conference in Hobart.



Demographer Bernard Salt.



NFF President David Jochinke.



Shadow Fisheries Minister Jonno Duniam.

There were several panel presentations and discussions during the conference sessions, including the views of industry organisation leaders. Chaired by Catherine Sayer from the Family Business Association, the session brought together Brett McCallum, a longtime industry advocate, QSIA CEO David Bobbermen, Kim Hooper from the Australian Prawn Farmers Association and Daniel Casement, Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Industry Association.

The Fisheries Research & Development Corporation (FRDC) brought together what they called the "FishTank", highlighting FRDC-funded research projects. Presenters included Queensland researchers Julie Robins and Sam Williams, discussing respectively mud crab research and alternative fishing gear.

Seafood Directions was established in 1999 as a FRDC initiative to provide an industry forum for the exchange of ideas and to showcase research.

In 2020, FRDC contracted Seafood Industry Australia to convene the conference for the next three events.

For more information on the Hobart conference, go to the FRDC website at: <https://www.frdc.com.au/sunshines-hobart-seafood-directions-2024>

For the Seafood Directions program of sessions and speakers, go to: <https://www.seafooddirections.com.au/program/at-a-glance/>



The conference venue overlooked fishing vessels at the Hobart docks in the centre of town.



Delegates were welcomed by Tasmanian Minister Eric Abetz ...



... and Federal Fisheries Minister Julie Collins.



MC Nicole Livingstone (left), Seafood Industry Australia CEO Veronica Papacosta and FRDC CEO Patrick Hone closed the conference.



QSIA's David Bobbermen (second from left) was among spokespeople examining the role of industry bodies.



Bernard Salt explained that Australians are the tenth-wealthiest people on the planet,



Seafood Directions asked some big questions.



Queensland crab pot research featured in the "Fish Tank" talks on FRDC-funded projects.



NFF President David Jochinke discussed primary industry advocacy.

Helping set a new standard: seafood post-harvest vessel training for Queensland operators

Queensland’s commercial wild-catch sector is renowned for its excellence and professionalism, and now there’s a way to help prove it: a new Seafood Post-Harvest Vessel Food Safety & Handling Training program.

THE Seafood Post-Harvest Vessel Food Safety & Handling Training program equips vessel operators and crew with practical, up-to-date knowledge to ensure top-tier food safety standards, protect their brand reputation, and meet evolving industry expectations.

This free of charge, remotely accessible program is key to safeguarding businesses and help secure the future of Queensland’s commercial wild-catch sector.

When it comes to seafood, Queensland’s commercial wild-catch industry is a cornerstone of excellence. But in today’s world of ever-evolving food safety standards and increasing consumer scrutiny, staying ahead isn’t just about delivering a quality catch. It’s about proving it across the supply chain.

That’s where the new Seafood Post-Harvest Vessel Food Safety & Handling Training comes in – a collaborative initiative by QSIA and Intuitive Food Solutions, aimed at protecting brand reputation and securing the future of the industry.

This training program, led by QSIA and Intuitive Food Solutions (IFS), developed with input from industry experts and funded by the Department of Employment, Small Business & Training (DESBT), is tailored specifically for Queensland vessel operators and their crew, and will be free for Queensland residents.

The big picture: why food safety matters

Commercial fishing has always been about more than just the catch. It’s about demonstrating professionalism, ensuring quality, and meeting the rigorous food safety standards that consumers, retailers, and regulators demand.

Executive Officer of QSIA, David Bobbermen says: “With comprehensive traceability and food safety systems,

gone are the days when a simple ‘I didn’t know’ could get you out of a tight spot. From the deckhand to the skipper, liability now follows every link in the supply chain. This training isn’t just a box-ticking exercise – it’s an insurance policy against potential due diligence risks and a crucial step toward securing a stronger future for Queensland’s wild-catch industry.”

Training that’s tailored for vessels

Designed specifically for Queensland vessel operators, this program understands the unique challenges of the commercial wild catch industry. Seasonal crew changes, remote working conditions, and the high-stakes nature of food safety and handling on the high seas are all part of the equation.

What makes this training so valuable? Seafood Post-Harvest Vessel Food Safety & Handling Training is:

- **An insurance policy for food safety systems**

A lack of knowledge or oversight shouldn’t cost a hard-working business everything. This training equips operators and crew with the skills to handle catch correctly and ensure compliance with relevant sections of food safety regulations while being able to prove it. It’s about protecting businesses, crews, and the commercial viability of a product.

- **Accountability in a new era of transparency**

With cameras being installed on some vessels as part of evolving

regulatory standards, it’s no longer just about doing the right thing when no-one is watching. People *will* be watching, and this training ensures vessels can confidently *prove* their commitment to product quality, food safety and best practice.

- **Keep customers happy with fresher, longer-lasting produce**

Proper post-harvest handling isn’t just a food safety requirement – it’s a way to improve the shelf life and consistency of the catch. When the catch stays fresher for longer, businesses build stronger relationships with buyers and solidify their brand’s reputation.

- **Prove Queensland seafood is a cut above the rest**

We all know Queensland seafood significantly outshines imported alternatives. But proving this superiority means meeting – and exceeding – global food safety standards. This training supports operators and their crew’s commitment to delivering the best quality products.

- **Make the most of downtime with training for new and returning crew**

Seasonal crew turnover is a reality in the commercial wild catch industry. With this training, businesses can make the most of quiet periods and steaming time to bring new crew members up to speed efficiently. It’s also an excellent refresher for returning crew, ensuring everyone – whether they’re new to the team or seasoned veterans – is consistent when it comes to current food safety and handling practices.



- **Accessibility for all**

Accessible through a mobile app, leveraging remote access technology, the training will be available anytime, anywhere – whether docked at port or kilometres offshore due to its ability to work offline.

- **No cost to Queensland residents**

The Seafood Post-Harvest Vessel Food Safety & Handling Training is completely **free** for Queensland residents. Funded by DESBT, the program removes financial barriers, so operators and crew can focus on learning, growing, and implementing better, more consistent food safety and handling practices.

A step towards a stronger industry

Professional development is a priority for every industry, not just seafood. In an industry as dynamic as the commercial wild-catch industry, staying updated on food safety and handling practices is a necessity. This training isn’t a one-and-done affair – it’s designed to evolve alongside changing standards, keeping vessel-operated businesses updated with current standards.

Why this training matters now

Taking proactive steps is no longer optional – it’s essential. This training isn’t just about protecting current operations; it’s about setting a new benchmark for the industry and contributing to ensure a thriving future for Queensland’s commercial wild-catch sector.

David Bobbermen states: “We don’t want to wait for an incident to shine a spotlight on potential gaps in food safety practices within the wild-catch sector. We encourage vessel operators to be proactive and prepared.

“At QSIA, we will continue to work to better the industry and provide opportunities for Queensland vessel operators to prove to their customers, regulators, and crew that they’re committed to excellence and quality.”

For more information, email Meaghan Dodd, Director, Intuitive Food Solutions at team@intuitivefoodsolutions.com.au

Closing thoughts

Queensland’s commercial wild-catch industry has long been recognised

APPOINTMENTS

Appointments at SFM announced

THE board of Sydney Fish Market (SFM) has appointed Daniel Jarosch as the new Chief Executive Officer, effective from November 25.



This follows the departure of former CEO Greg Dyer in September.

SFM Chair Craig Davison described Mr Jarosch as an accomplished executive leader with over 30 years’ experience across diverse sectors, including real estate, aviation, infrastructure, financial services and risk management.

“Having served as CEO and Investment Director at Aeria Management Group (formerly Sydney Metro Airports) since 2015, he brings with him significant experience in leading transformational growth for prominent businesses.

“Daniel has a proven track record for stewarding organisational transformation through master planning, acquisitions, developments, upgrades and rebranding. His aptitude for stakeholder engagement and management across government, industry, customer and community will

for its excellence and professionalism. This new Seafood Post-Harvest Vessel Food Safety & Handling Training, available mid- to late-2025, will give vessel operators an opportunity, free of charge, to demonstrate that commitment to the highest standards.

By completing this training, it’s not just ticking a compliance box – it’s reinforcing brand reputation, proving

be of enormous benefit to the Market as it prepares to relocate to its new world class facility in 2025.”

Mr Jarosch said he is thrilled at the opportunity to lead the Market “into its dynamic and exciting future”.

“In addition to delivering operational and business outcomes, my priority is to support the dedicated team and the Market’s stakeholders through this period of evolution,” he said.

“I look forward to leveraging the rich history of the Market and building on the momentum as we prepare to move to the new premises at Blackwattle Bay in collaboration with Government, the seafood industry and community.”

SFM has also announced the appointment of Adam Mourad as Chief Commercial Officer, who joins the Market from Woolworths, where he most recently held the role as Head of Commercial Own Brand.



SFM said Mr Mourad will lead the seafood trading function of the Market, including operations, business development and innovative strategies to enhance seafood sales, with more than 20 years in commercial strategy and business growth, and having driven significant results across the seafood category at Woolworths.

due diligence, and safeguarding operations against potential liability.

The Seafood Post-Harvest Vessel Training is funded through the Micro Credentialing Program, powered by the Queensland Government’s *Good people. Good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2032*.

Meaghan Dodd
Director
Intuitive Food Solutions

INVESTMENT MATTERS

Australian Food Super: supporting the future of the seafood industry

Australian Food Super, formerly known as AMIST Super, has been a key player in supporting the food production industry for over 35 years.

WITH a recent rebranding to Australian Food Super, the fund is expanding its reach to support others working in Australia's food industries, including the seafood sector.

This shift underscores our commitment to offering a uniquely valuable superannuation, retirement and insurance offer to a broader range of employers and members.

The foundation of Australian Food Super's value proposition is providing low fees, solid investment returns, affordable and accessible insurance, and personalised service to its members and employers.

Our ability to deliver a low-complexity, low-cost approach has been honed over the last 35 years and represents a unique offering that combines the customer intimacy of a small fund with comparative financial returns of the multi-industry mega-funds.

In the competitive landscape of superannuation funds, Australian Food Super has demonstrated its value by consistently ranking well in comparison to other funds.

According to APRA's official statistics as of June 30, 2024, Australian Food Super's MySuper fund is ranked #2 for three-year returns, #8 for five-year returns and #4 for fees out of 32 comparable My Super funds. These rankings highlight the fund's strong performance in delivering value to its members.

Furthermore, Australian Food Super distinguishes itself through its emphasis on personal service. Members can engage with the fund's team at industry events and on-site visits, enabling a deeper understanding of their superannuation options.

Additionally, the fund has prioritised insourcing its contact centre and insurance claims management to

ensure a personalised and accountable approach to serving our members and employers.

QSIA partnership

Australian Food Super's partnership with the Queensland Seafood Industry Association (QSIA) further strengthens its commitment to supporting sectors within the food industry.

By collaborating with QSIA, Australian Food Super aims to provide seafood industry employers and staff with access to tailored financial solutions and educational resources, empowering them to make informed decisions about their superannuation and financial future.

One such area of interest is tax planning. Australian Food Super can help its members access information about strategies to minimise personal income tax through superannuation investments, such as leveraging small business tax concessions to reduce Capital Gains Tax liabilities.

Insurance is another key component of being a member with Australian Food Super.

Our long heritage in the meat production and retail industries means that we are uniquely placed to provide access to insurance cover that is designed to help protect our members by offering Life Insurance, Total & Permanent Disability Insurance and income protection that provides protection and peace of mind.

Australian Food Super's dedication to the food industry extends beyond its tailored services, competitive performance, and commitment to personalised support. It's in our DNA.

By embracing a holistic approach to financial wellbeing, the fund continues to play a vital role in helping individuals in the food industry, including those in the Queensland seafood sector, secure a stable and prosperous future.



Daniel Musson from Australian Food Super.

You see, we know that Australia's food security is delivered on the backs of the unsung heroes that make our access to high quality and fresh food seem so easy for the rest of us, and that's what motivates us to do better for our members.

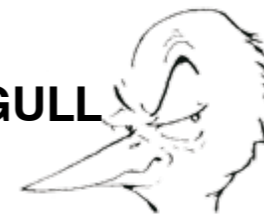
Like to know more?

If you would like to know more, call Daniel Musson on 1800 517 210 or drop him a line at danielm@ausfoodsuper.com.au

Daniel Musson
Chief Experience Officer
Australian Food Super

Note: Prepared by Australian Meat Industry Superannuation Pty Ltd ABN 25 002 981 919, AFSL No. 238829, as Trustee for the Australian Meat Industry Superannuation Trust (the "Fund"), ABN 28 342 064 803 (Australian Food Super). This information is general information only. It does not take into account your particular objectives, financial situation or needs. Before acting on this information you should consider the appropriateness of the information having regard to your particular objectives, financial situation and needs. You should obtain financial advice tailored to your personal circumstances. Before deciding whether to join Australian Food Super you should read the Product Disclosure Statement (PDS) and Target Market Determination (TMD) available online at ausfoodsuper.com.au.

THE GULL



An omen

MAYBE it was an omen ... I was surprised and delighted to see an item on the Statewide ABC TV nightly news on Friday, October 25 – the night before the State election – where voters in various locations were asked who they would vote for, and why.

A voter at the Sunshine Coast said he wasn't happy with the negative approach by the Labor Party, and added: "For example, they should be dealing with issues like the commercial fishing industry, which has been destroyed by their policies ..."

It was obvious from the election results he wasn't the only one who felt that way.

White spot

I NOTICED in a supermarket recently a warning on a packet of uncooked overseas prawns that they should not be used for fishing bait.

Presumably, this is acknowledgement the prawns could be carrying white spot or some other foreign disease, and represent a risk to our wild crustacean stocks and aquaculture prawns.

So, tell me if I'm missing something here, but does that mean an overseas prawn farmer can sell anywhere in Australia prawns that might be carrying white spot or another disease, but an Australian trawler operator or prawn farmer somewhere like Moreton Bay or Yamba in northern New South Wales – where white spot has already been introduced, most likely from use of imported prawns for fishing bait – cannot sell his product because it might be carrying white spot?

In short, overseas producers can

sell prawns throughout Australia that might be carrying white spot disease but Australian producers can't.

Why would Australian authorities enforce bans on Australian operators they won't impose on overseas operators?

Politics vs science

IT'S a familiar story in management of the fishing industry that politics wins out over science. Maybe in future in Queensland that will change.

In Victoria, inshore net fishing has been banned pretty much everywhere except Corner Inlet, a waterway in the South Gippsland region in the southwest of the State. The pressures on professional fishermen in Victoria ahead of bans in places like Port Phillip Bay (Melbourne) and Corio Bay (Geelong) are spelt out in a sympathetic 2016 ABC TV *Landline* segment, titled "Fishing for votes".

It also covers Queensland, especially Moreton Bay, and is worth watching again because, as the October election campaign showed us all, the pressures to ban netting haven't gone away. In fact, very little has changed since this show was first aired, except there have been more bans, more seafood lost by non-angling consumers and more mental stress caused to professional fishing families.

At the end of the story, the reporter (Sean Murphy) concludes: "Australia's fishing industry is small by world standards but it is well-managed. The challenge for governments is to manage the recreational sector just as well – to find a balance where amateurs and professionals can co-exist and *all* Australians benefit from the national resource. Right now, the only certainty for commercial fishers is more uncertainty."

This comprehensive 40-minute report makes fascinating viewing.

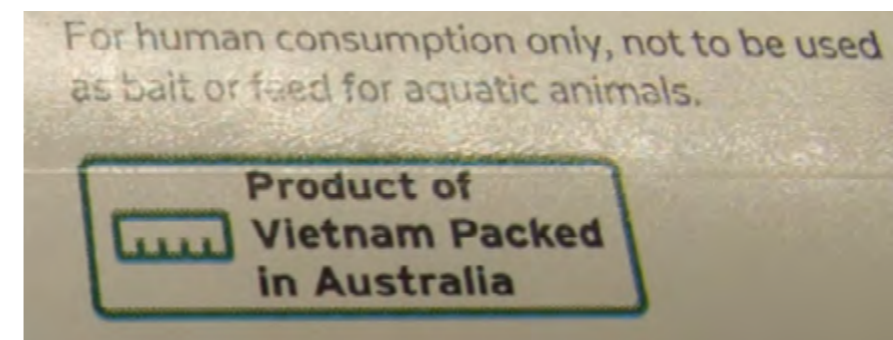
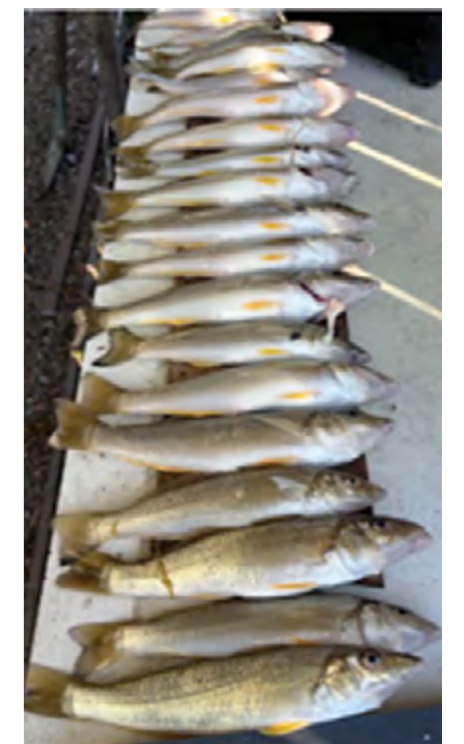
You can find it via the following link. (You may have to cut and paste this link into your search engine.) https://www.abc.net.au/news/rural/programs/landline/2016-11-19/fishing-for-votes/8042152?utm_campaign=abc_news_web&utm_content=link&utm_medium=content_shared&utm_source=abc_news_web

Whiting biting

I SAW a Facebook post earlier in the year with a photo of a whiting catch from Shelly Beach at Hervey Bay: around 20 fish caught by a single angler one afternoon.

There was a comment that: "It has only been a few months since large mesh nets have been stopped from being used within ALL the Yellow Conservation Zones throughout the Great Sandy Marine Park and we are already hearing positive feedback from local anglers about improved numbers of whiting, bream, flathead and blue salmon. While Shelly Beach and the Esplanade beaches have always been closed to netting these fish may never have made it there previously."

Well, longtime locals can tell you there was a time when professional net-fishing was in fact allowed all along those Esplanade beaches, including Shelly Beach, and Shelly Beach at that time was a top spot for catching a feed of whiting on a rod and reel, especially if you fished on a rising tide at first light with wriggler worms for bait.



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