



Publication The Mercury  
Keywords Guy Barnett  
Story ID 249274  
Customer ID 16

Words 503  
Area of Clip 248.94 cm²

Date 30/09/2020  
Page 23  
Circulation 87000

# Weighing up the state of our sea fish

Help Tassie strike the right balance on recreational fishing, says **Guy Barnett**

TASMANIA has some of the best recreational sea fishing in the world, with more than 100,000 recreational fishers who love nothing more than casting a line and enjoying our beautiful state.

Recreational fishing is part of our way of life and much loved by many Tasmanians, including myself, and we are committed to ensuring it has a bright and sustainable future.

That's why we are developing the state's first Recreational Sea Fishing 10-year Strategy, and Tasmanians are invited to have their say through a discussion paper that can be viewed online.

The paper will seek feedback on the proposed vision, outcomes and

us strike the right balance between providing access for today's fishers and ensure we have fish for future generations.

We also want more women, children and families to embrace recreational fishing as a great form of exercise and to take advantage of Tasmania's world class coastlines and estuaries as part of their lifestyle choices.

Public submissions can be



strategic initiatives for recreational fishing in Tasmania, and incorporates feedback from over 3200 Tasmanians who responded to the "For a Better Fishing Future" survey in June and July. It will give us the information we need to inform the long-term vision for recreational sea fishing in Tasmania.

We know from the 2017-2018 IMAS survey of recreational fishing that almost one in four Tasmanians cast a line, fishing an average of five days per year, with flathead the main target species. In fact, recent IMAS research shows that about 1.7 million flathead were caught in the 2018-18 period (with 56 per cent released).

The research also showed fishers spent an average of \$1800 per person on boats, fuel, fishing gear and other equipment. So fishing is not only important to us as a pastime but also delivers economic and social benefits to the community.

The strategy demonstrates our strong support and recognition of the importance of recreational marine fishing to our state and I encourage Tasmanians to jump online and let us know their thoughts.

With your input, it will help

## Tassie fish: Catch it or buy it.

made until October 25. Small public meetings will also be held across the state to share results from prior public engagement, to seek fisher and community views and discuss priorities for action.

The discussion paper, consultation schedule, and a summary of the results from the For a Better Fishing Future Survey are available at: [www.fishing.tas.gov.au/rec-strategy](http://www.fishing.tas.gov.au/rec-strategy)

The draft Tasmanian Recreational Sea Fishing Strategy will be released for public comment early next year.

And while we are talking fishing, not all of us are able to cast a line ourselves, so let's also support local fishers and buy local seafood.

The Tasmanian Seafood Industry Council has an Eat More Seafood Campaign, and I encourage you to get behind our workers and visit a local seafood outlet this school holidays.

Find out where to go at <https://www.tsic.org.au/eatmoreseafood.html>.

**Lyons MHA Guy Barnett is the Tasmanian Primary Industries and Water Minister.**

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