

RECFISH
AUSTRALIA



PO Box 187
Grange Qld 4051
Phone/fax 07 3356 1111
Email ceo@recfish.com.au
ABN 87 547 561 663
www.recfish.com.au

Media Release

For immediate publication 5 April 2007

Spearfishing competition scores green marks

The Blue Water Classic spearfishing competition has scored four stars in a national assessment of environmental, social and economic impacts and risk management for recreational fishing tournaments.

The annual competition based in the waters of the Solitary Islands Marine Park, offshore from Woolgoolga, near Coffs Harbour NSW, received a fantastic four (maximum of 5) stars in the National Environmental Assessment for Tournament Fishing.

The accreditation scheme rates factors such as the impact on local fish stocks and what the competition gives back to the community.

The Blue Water Classic is a very selective competition that targets pelagic species such as Spanish mackerel and Yellowtail kingfish, and is the first spearfishing tournament and also the first fishing tournament in a Marine Protected Area to be assessed by the standard. Breath-hold freedivers from around Australia and the world travel to Woolgoolga. The freedivers also assist scientists with observations of endangered Grey nurse sharks.

National Chair of the Australian Underwater Federation, Dr Adam Smith said "We are very pleased that spearfishers and this competition have been assessed so highly- it gives support to our mission that we promote sustainable fishing, healthy outdoor activity, sport, awareness of the underwater world and conservation."

CEO of Recfish Australia, John Harrison said "Recfish Australia with support from the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation developed a world first initiative to promote recreational fishing, sustainability and fish welfare within fishing tournaments. We have been very pleased with the uptake by a range of best-practice tournaments targeting barramundi to marlin. This process has been well accepted by government, industry and the community".

"The freedivers who come to the Blue Water Classic have the full support of the community as they are a very professional organisation and their members bring economic benefits to hotels, restaurants and shops and assist in fundraising for the local Coastguard" Mr Harrison concluded.

Media contacts: AUF Communication John Featherstone - 0428 166 092
Recfish Australia John Harrison - 07 3356 1111

For more information on spearfishing and the Australian Underwater Federation see
<http://www.auf-spearfishing.com.au>