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MEDIA RELEASE

National recreational fishing strategy draft delivered



Recfish Australia, the peak national body for recreational fishing today welcomed the announcement by Federal Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Minister, Tony Burke of an updated national policy for recreational fishing.

The document released yesterday was part of a \$2 million 2007 election promise to review the 1994 National Policy on Recreational Fishing.

Released as a discussion paper and prepared by Minister Burke's Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee after extensive consultation with

industry leaders, the new strategy reflects much of the intention of the original policy but in a contemporary, industry driven framework.

"The original 1994 National Policy was a well intended document but it lacked mechanisms and a will to see the policy translated into actions." said Recfish Australia Chair, Frank Prokop. "This new strategy has several key actions associated with it, along with some initial funding to kick start these actions."

The Fisheries Research and Development Corporation will play a key role in administering the remaining estimated \$1.7 million of funding associated with the strategy and the minister has indicated that collection of national recreational fishing statistics is a high priority pledging up to \$500,000 to assist this process.

"Recfish Australia enjoys a positive relationship with the FRDC as one of their representative organisations, and in partnership with Recfishing Research, has identified many of the priorities reflected in the national strategy. The nation's most recent statistics for recreational fishing are now ten years old and it's impossible to make meaningful comment about our industry without updated statistics. Recfish Australia is ready to assist the minister in delivering this strategy and will be working closely with the advisory committee and the FRDC," added Mr Prokop.

The strategy is based on 12 key principles and 6 goals that address issues of environmental stewardship, access to a fair share of resources and acknowledgement of recreational fishing as a vibrant, attractive and healthy industry and family activity. Recfish Australia's advocacy and leadership role in recreational fishing over the past 27 years is reflected and referenced well throughout the document from the more recent national workshops around the future of recreational fishing, to creating a toolbox in Marine Protected Areas management, and the development of Australia's first National Code of Practice for Recreational Fishing back in 1994.

Recreational fishers are urged to contact their local recreational fishing associations and put forward their views on the draft discussion paper **by 30 April 2010**.

The discussion paper is available at www.daff.gov.au/fisheries/recreational/rfids

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Recfish Australia is the peak national body for recreational and sport fishing in Australia. Members: Amateur Fishermen's Association of the NT (AFANT); Australian National Sportfishing Association (ANSA); Australian Underwater Federation –Spearfishing (AUF); New South Wales Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing (NSW ACoRF); Western Australian Recreational & Sportfishing Council Inc (Recfishwest); Tasmanian Association for Recreational Fishing (TARFish); Victoria's Recreational Fishing Peak Body (VRFish). Affiliate Members: Recreational Fishing Alliance of New South Wales (RFA); Professional Fishing Instructor and Guides Association (PFIGA)
Our mission – One voice promoting sustainable fishing and representing recreational fishers at a national level