


# TASMANIAN **RECREATIONAL** SEA FISHING STRATEGY



## 2021 - 2030







*In recognition of the deep history and culture of this island, we acknowledge the palawa people as the traditional and original owners and ongoing custodians of land and sea country of lutrawita/Tasmania and pay respects to their elders past and present.*

# CONTENTS

MINISTERS FOREWORD .....	5
INTRODUCTION .....	7
VISION .....	7
DELIVERING THE VISION .....	9
OUTCOMES .....	10
1. Ensuring the long-term sustainability of fish stocks and habitats .....	10
2. Promoting responsible recreational fishing .....	12
3. Involving the community in fisheries management .....	14
4. Valuing recreational sea fishing .....	16
5. Making it easier for people to go fishing .....	18
6. Improving capacity to support recreational fishing .....	20
ACRONYMS AND GLOSSARY .....	21





# MINISTER'S FOREWORD

As the Minister responsible for Fisheries and a keen fisher, I am delighted to release the *Tasmanian Recreational Sea Fishing Strategy*.

The Strategy is a forward-thinking approach to our recreational sea fishing future. To develop it, we consulted closely with recreational fishers, stakeholder groups and the community.

Recreational fishing is an important way of life in our island state. Over 100,000 Tasmanians go fishing each year, enjoying our wonderful waterways while catching a feed of fish such as flathead, squid and rock lobster. Many have treasured moments hooking their first fish or realising a goal of landing a tuna or kingfish. As well as the lifestyle benefits recreational fishing provides, the economic benefits are considerable, especially in regional areas.

The Strategy focuses on fishers looking after fish stocks and being involved in determining the future of recreational fishing. As pressures on fish stocks and the marine environment increase, it has never been more important to fish responsibly and instill a positive fishing ethic in our younger generation.

Making it easier for people to go fishing is another important initiative of the Strategy. To help people access our world-class fisheries, I am committed to providing facilities to help Tasmanians to go fishing.

Demonstrations of the Tasmanian Government's commitment to recreational fishers include funding to install and upgrade fishing infrastructure, address flathead depletions, and make fishing easier for women, youth and people of all abilities. We have also committed funds to modernise the fisheries website and further support the peak body, TARFish.

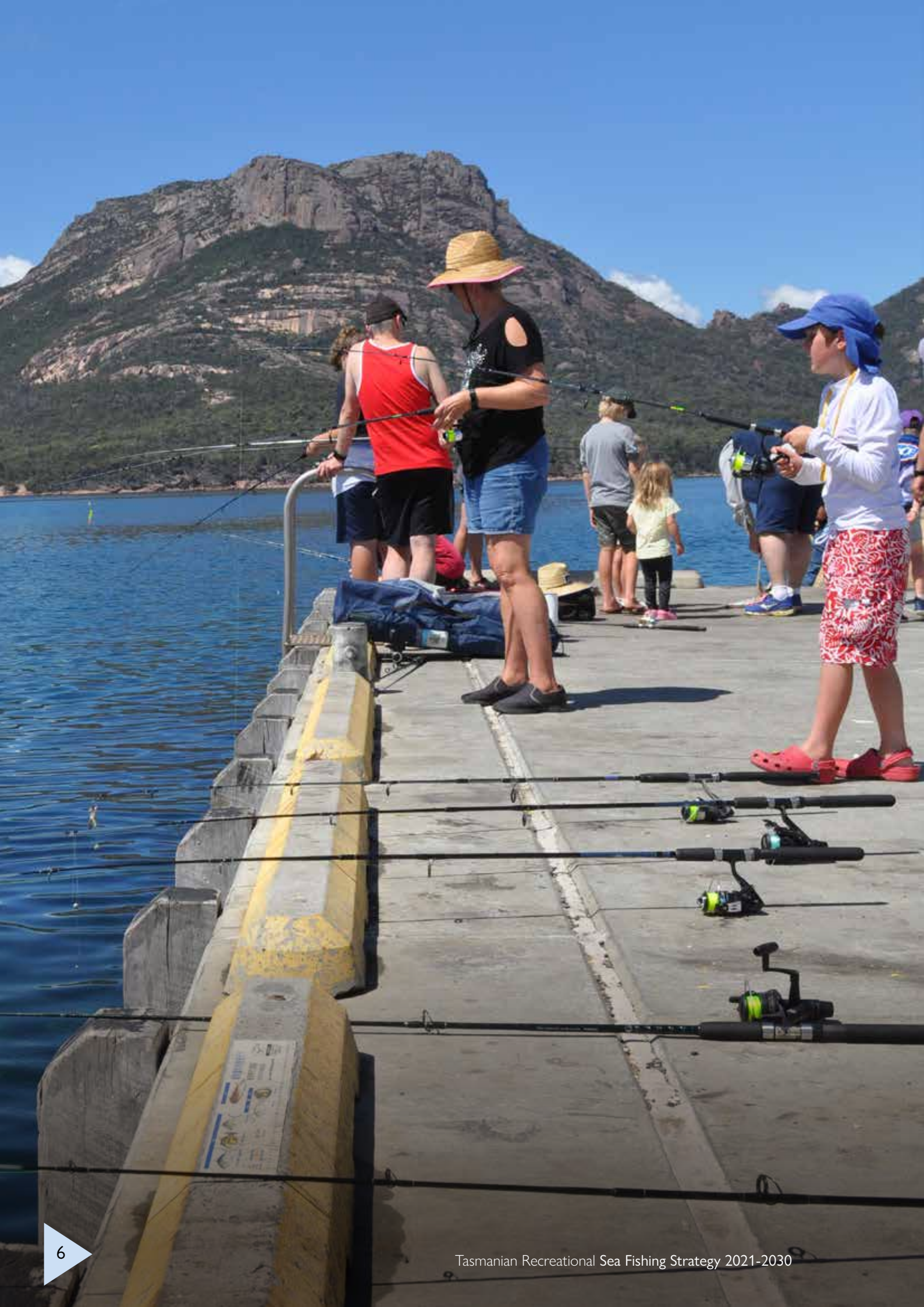
While these commitments are an important starting point for a new era in managing recreational fisheries, there are others with a strong stake in how our fisheries are managed. These include commercial fishers, Aboriginal people and the broader community who wants to know our marine environment is being managed responsibly. These different interests present opportunities and challenges in delivering a long-term fisheries management agenda.

I congratulate NRET and the Strategy Steering Committee in delivering a plan for a more forward-thinking, inclusive and coherent approach to recreational sea fisheries management. I look forward to working with our stakeholders to progress the actions in the Strategy and deliver opportunities for recreational fishers and sustainable fisheries.

Guy Barnett  
Minister for Primary Industries and Water







# INTRODUCTION

Recreational sea fishing plays a prominent role in Tasmania's lifestyle and economy.

We have some of the highest rates of fishing participation in the world with more than 100,000 Tasmanians going recreational fishing each year.

Spending by recreational sea fishers makes a significant contribution to Tasmania's economy with an estimated \$160 million a year spent on accommodation, fuel, bait, tackle and other equipment. This is particularly important to regional communities.

The greatest benefits associated with recreational fishing relate to well-being and lifestyle. Catching fish for food is important but other motivations like enjoying the outdoors and spending time with friends and family are often central to a rewarding fishing experience.

Developing this Strategy was inspired by the need to support recreational sea fishing into the future. A long-term approach is necessary to deal with emerging issues, maximise opportunities to manage fisheries, engage fishers and strengthen partnerships, while making sure our fisheries are managed sustainably for future generations.

Issues were identified in this Strategy through extensive stakeholder engagement. This included a survey of recreational fishing issues, public feedback on a discussion paper and the draft Strategy. This feedback helped to strengthen the focus on valuing recreational fishers, making fishing easier and encouraging greater fisher stewardship.

By offering clear principles and a schedule for action over the next ten years, the Strategy lays a foundation to protect and improve Tasmania's recreational sea fisheries. The right blend of proactive management and fisher stewardship will enhance fishing opportunities while making sure our fisheries will be enjoyed by future generations.

## VISION

*The diverse recreational fishing aspirations of Tasmanians are met by promoting shared stewardship and making sure our fish stocks and habitats are sustainable and healthy.*







# DELIVERING THE VISION

The Vision will be delivered through six interrelated outcomes that capture broad goals for the next 10 years.

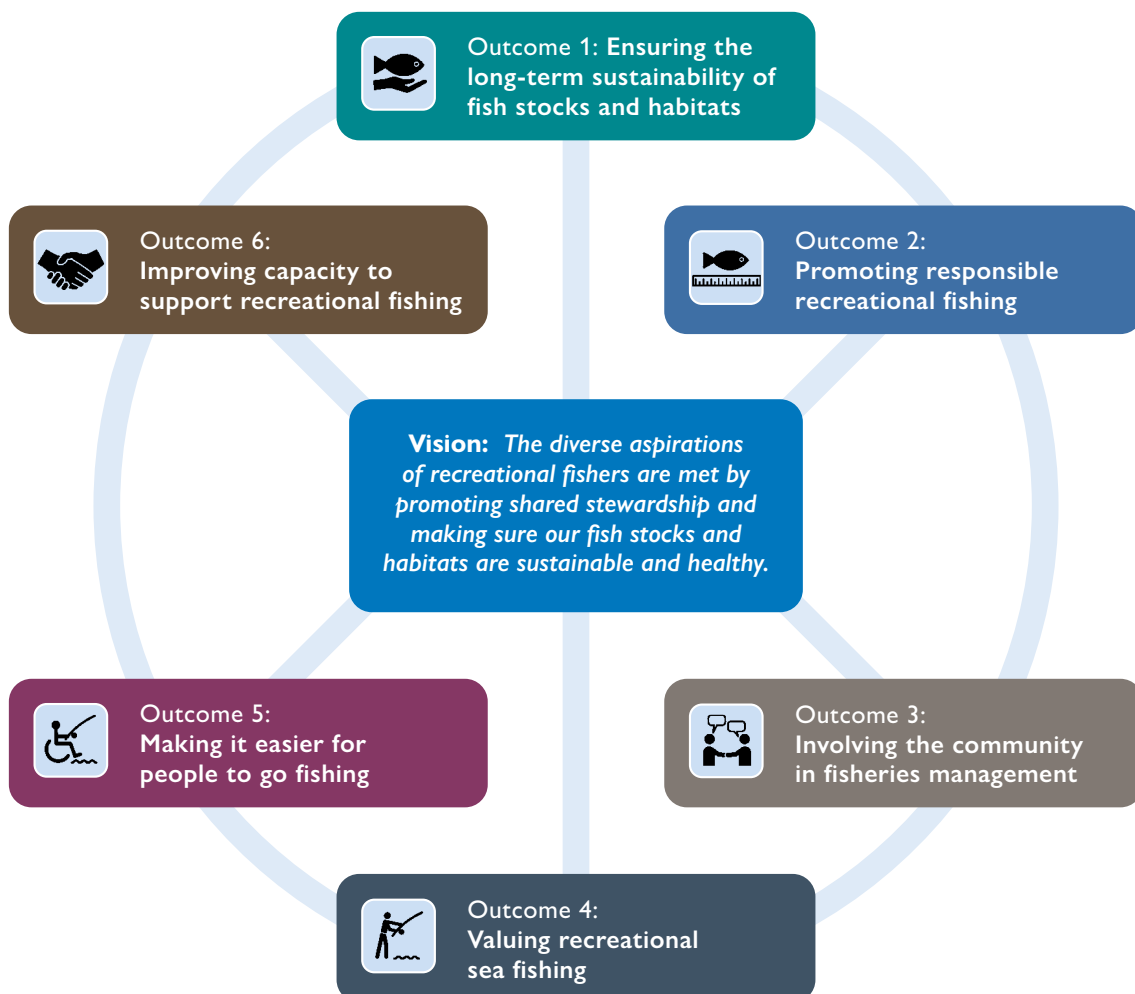
Each outcome is accompanied by a set of performance measures, principles and actions.

**Performance measures** assess progress in achieving outcomes.

**Principles** are used to plan and implement activities under each outcome.

**Actions** will be undertaken over the next 10 years. All actions in this document will commence within the first 5 years and many will continue beyond this time.

**Reporting** will be annual and major reviews undertaken in 2024/25 and 2028/29. New actions will be added as the need arises.





## Outcome 1: Ensuring the long-term sustainability of fish stocks and habitats

**By 2030, we will see measurable improvements in:**

- Community confidence in research and monitoring of fisheries and habitats.
- The collection of data to address emerging management needs.
- Opportunities for fishers to contribute data.
- The use of recreational fishing gear and methods that minimise damage to species and habitats.
- Collaborations with partners to promote habitat rehabilitation that support healthy fisheries.
- Compliance with rules and adoption of responsible fishing behaviours.



*Sustainability means maintaining fish stocks at healthy levels for future generations while carefully managing how much fishing is allowed. It is the shared responsibility of all fishing sectors and Government.*



## PRINCIPLES

- Research and monitoring is accurate, timely and at an appropriate scale.
- Fishers and the community have confidence in data and information used for management.
- Fisheries are managed conservatively according to the best information to promote sustainable stocks and minimise impacts on non-target species and marine habitats.
- Information considered in making fisheries management decisions will be publicly available.
- In the absence of adequate information, a precautionary approach will be used.
- Resources should be made available to develop harvest strategies for key species, important emerging species and depleting or depleted fisheries.
- Fishing gears and methods should minimise damage to habitats and non-target species including wildlife interactions.
- Where stocks are depleting, fishing pressure should be reduced or diverted to less sensitive areas or species.
- Stewardship and citizen science have a role in collecting data, managing fisheries and protecting habitats.

## ACTIONS

1. Launch a *Flathead for the Future* program to rebuild sand flathead populations. Key activities:
  - Develop a recovery plan to rebuild stocks in key fishing areas. Set stock rebuilding targets, implement more effective catch and stock monitoring systems, evaluate bag and size limits, seasons and restocking options.
  - Run a responsible fishing campaign to promote greater stewardship.
  - Provide information about commercial fishing areas and evaluate commercial flathead fishing practices including bycatch, habitat impacts and fishing pressure in popular recreational areas.
  - Introduce vessel monitoring systems for Danish seine vessels in State waters.
2. Develop harvest strategies with biological performance measures and incorporate recreational fishing goals. Priority species include abalone, rock lobster, calamari and flathead and emerging species such as King George whiting, snapper and yellowtail kingfish.
3. Establish a Working Group to identify pathways to transition away from the use of recreational gill nets over the next ten years. The Group will engage with the Tasmanian community and recreational fishers over the first 12 months of this Strategy and make recommendations on options and processes, including education campaigns for transitioning to other gear types.
4. Review the use of recreational gears and methods including beach seine nets and set-lines and their impacts on target and non-target species and habitats.
5. Upgrade recreational fisheries data collection, emphasising increased survey frequency, accuracy and complementary technologies such as apps and web cams.
6. Develop a research project with IMAS and CMS on climate change implications for Tasmania's recreational fisheries and develop adaptation strategies.
7. Establish a code of practice for wildlife interactions and a reporting mechanism for threatened and endangered species interactions.
8. Work with IMAS to identify key marine habitats requiring additional protection or rehabilitation.



## Outcome 2: Promoting responsible recreational fishing

**By 2030, we will see measurable improvements in:**

- Public understanding of, and compliance with, fishing rules.
- Public understanding of fisheries management and science including the impact of fishing activities on target and non-target species and habitats.
- The number of fishers who undertake active fisher stewardship through responsible fishing behaviour.
- The use of technologies and other initiatives that support responsible recreational fishing.



*Recreational fishers are embracing the Fish for the Future message and want more information about sustainable fishing, management and research. As fishers understand more about their own impact on a changing environment, they will continue to adopt responsible fishing ethics and behaviours.*



## PRINCIPLES

- Fisheries sustainability depends on careful management and people fishing responsibly.
- Responsible fishing messages and ways to promote them are tailored to diverse audiences.
- Fishing rules are clear, easily understood and accessed.
- By promoting a better understanding of fishing impacts, people fish more responsibly.
- Responsible fishing motivated by resource stewardship is preferable to that motivated by compliance deterrents.
- Fishers should encourage responsible fishing behavior among other fishers.

## ACTIONS

1. Build a new sea fishing website for recreational and commercial fishing, with links to inland fishing (IFS) and recreational boating (MAST).
2. Streamline the printed *Recreational Sea Fishing Guide*.
3. Upgrade the *Tasmanian Sea Fishing Guide App*.
4. Work with IMAS to communicate information on the biology and ecology of key species, the science of fisheries management and how fisheries can reduce fishing impacts.
5. Produce podcasts and videos on responsible fishing, fisheries management and fisheries science.
6. Refresh the Fishcare program to better engage priority audiences including young fishers, CaLD fishers, mobility impaired and female fishers.
7. Engage fishing identities, tackle shops, charter fishers, marine tourism and other businesses to share key messages with the fishing public.
8. Develop partnerships with organisations that represent or employ CaLD fishers to promote responsible fishing behaviours.
9. Work with TARFish to update and promote the Recreational Marine Fishing Tasmanian Code of Conduct.
10. Report on fisher compliance with the rules and the effectiveness of current education and enforcement activities.
11. Initiate partnerships with IMAS, CMS, FRDC and leading science communicators to consider new ways to engage recreational fishers.
12. Publish the objectives of proposed management changes and predicted impacts on recreational catches and stock health.
13. Promote recreational fisher awareness of reducing fishing debris and opportunities to clean up coastal and marine habitats.



## Outcome 3: Involving the community in fisheries management

**By 2030, we will see measurable improvements in:**

- The representation of diverse recreational fishers in decision-making processes.
- Participation by recreational fishers in citizen science programs.
- Opportunities for active resource stewardship involving recreational fishers.
- Collaboration between fishers, TARFish, recreational fishing organisations, fishing businesses, research organisations and the government in facilitating co-management and stewardship.



*Involving recreational fishers and the community in managing fisheries, identifying research priorities and planning facilities will improve outcomes and enhance fishing opportunities. Every fisher can be an active steward for the future of recreational sea fishing while, at the same time, enjoying its rewards.*



## PRINCIPLES

- Recreational fishers are proactively engaged, consulted and represented in fisheries decision making.
- Ways to continuously enhance the engagement, consultation and representation of fishers are actively considered.
- Recreational fishers are encouraged to adopt and promote fisheries stewardship practices.
- The capacity for recreational fishing involvement in stewardship programs run by non-government organisations should increase over time.
- Opportunities for recreational fisher involvement in citizen science activities should increase over time.
- Opportunities for citizen science involvement should be considered when developing fisheries research, monitoring and habitat rehabilitation programs.
- Information collected through fisher surveys, citizen science and stewardship programs is communicated back to recreational fishers.

## ACTIONS

1. Conduct annual Fishing Forums to discuss regional fisheries issues.
2. Promote public engagement in recreational fisheries management at major events including Agfest and fishing and boat shows.
3. Review RecFAC structures and processes to improve the way advice is provided, fishers are represented, and outputs are reported.
4. Work with TARFish, local fishing clubs, IMAS and CMS to review and improve the processes by which the community provides fisheries management advice to Government.
5. Work with organisations with scientific or technical capacity (e.g. IMAS, CMS, NRMs, OzFish, CSIRO) to involve recreational fishers in collecting data, restoring habitats and managing pest species.
6. Work with NGOs to make it easier for people to participate in marine stewardship projects, including overcoming current barriers.
7. Promote citizen science and stewardship projects by listing priority projects and working with partner organisations to engage volunteers.
8. Assess the feasibility of fishers nominating part of their licence fee for specific activities, such as research, infrastructure, and learn to fish programs.



## Outcome 4: Valuing recreational sea fishing

**By 2030, we will see measurable improvements in:**

- The recognition of recreational fishing values in fisheries legislation, policy, harvest strategies and other management instruments and processes.
- Resource sharing agreements for key species.
- Research and understanding of the economic, social and cultural values of recreational fisheries to the Tasmanian community.
- Management that is responsive to the changing needs of recreational fishers.



*A priority of this Strategy is to understand and better recognise the substantial social, economic and cultural value of recreational fishing to Tasmania. Sharing the finite catch fairly between user groups and improving how recreational fishing is included in rule-making is central to this.*



## PRINCIPLES

- Recreational fishing values are considered when developing catch share arrangements, harvest strategies, management plans and other instruments.
- The economic, social and cultural values of recreational fisheries to the Tasmanian community will be promoted.
- Fisheries resource sharing arrangements between users are clear and explicit.
- The diverse aspirations and management needs of all users, including commercial, Aboriginal and non-extractive, are recognised.
- Recreational fishing and community benefits can be enhanced by specific area and species management including preferential access for recreational fishing in some areas.
- Decision making should be transparent, participatory and based on the best available information.

## ACTIONS

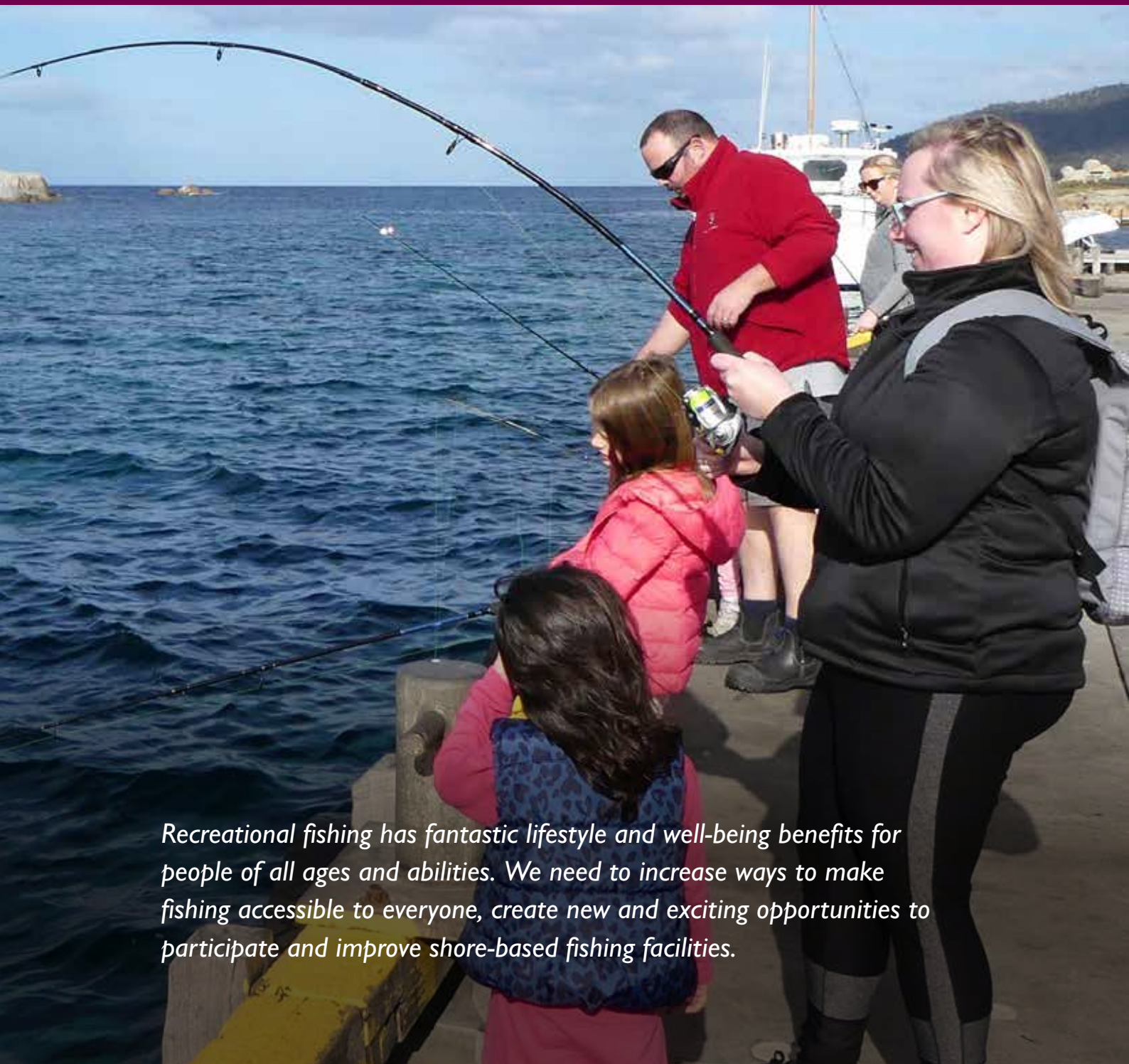
1. Develop an overarching fisheries resource sharing policy framework to guide harvest strategies and other management instruments. The policy framework will apply to all resource users and contain criteria to guide allocation assessments.
2. Guided by the resource sharing framework, develop resource sharing arrangements that include (a) recreational only fishing areas and (b) allocation arrangements for priority shared recreational fishing species. Initially these will include abalone, rock lobster, sand flathead, calamari, scallop, King George whiting, snapper and yellowtail kingfish.
3. Include recreational fishing performance measures in fishery harvest strategies such as stock health and fisher satisfaction.
4. In partnership with IMAS and CMS, conduct a statewide socioeconomic assessment to understand the importance of recreational fishing including economic contributions, social and cultural values and well-being and mental health.
5. When reviewing the LMRMA, emphasise the importance of recreational fishing and update recreational fisheries management to reflect the principles of this Strategy.
6. Work with TARFish, IMAS, IFS and national recreational fishing organisations to monitor national and global developments shaping the future of recreational fishing.
7. Promote the importance and benefits of recreational fishing through NRET communication activities, Fishcare, TARFish and other non-government organisations.



## Outcome 5: Making it easier for people to go fishing

**By 2030, we will see measurable improvements in:**

- Accessibility of recreational fishing opportunities through education and enabling activities.
- Facilities and infrastructure, particularly for shore-based fishers.
- Fisher satisfaction.



*Recreational fishing has fantastic lifestyle and well-being benefits for people of all ages and abilities. We need to increase ways to make fishing accessible to everyone, create new and exciting opportunities to participate and improve shore-based fishing facilities.*



## PRINCIPLES

- Barriers to fishing participation are identified and addressed.
- Fishing infrastructure should be accessible for young people, women and girls, families, and people living with disability or who have limited mobility.
- A user-centric approach will guide the design and siting of fishing infrastructure.
- Initiatives with the potential to increase fisher participation should also take into account potential resource impacts.

## ACTIONS

1. Co-convene a public workshop with TARFish, IMAS, CMS and other key stakeholders to identify participation barriers and fishing access needs.
2. Draft a 'No Barriers' policy to enable recreational fishing participation and guide programs that facilitate participation by priority groups.
3. Establish a women's fishing network to share information for female fishers and those interested in starting fishing.
4. Sponsor a 'buddy-style' fishing program to support people living with disability or who have limited mobility.
5. Complete a statewide audit of recreational shore-based fishing infrastructure including facilities that could be modified to enable fishing access.
6. Establish a recreational sea fishing facilities and access improvement fund and maintenance program with an emphasis on shore-based fishing.
7. Work with IMAS to conduct a study on artificial reefs and FADs to better understand their impacts on key species and their value to Tasmanian recreational fishers.
8. Develop a code of practice for recreational fishing around FADs and artificial reefs and a policy on fishing access.
9. Review rock lobster and scallop fishing rules to enable licensed recreational rock lobster pot fishers and scallop fishers to share their catch when fishing as a group on the same boat.
10. Develop new Fishcare programs that target young people, women and girls, people living with disability or who have limited mobility.



## Outcome 6: Improving capacity to support recreational fishing

**By 2030, we will see measurable improvements in:**

- Collaborative partnerships with the peak body and other organisations including commercial, community, academic, non- government, philanthropic, volunteer, and government agencies to deliver recreational fisheries priorities.
- Closer working relationships between government agencies providing services to Tasmanian recreational fishers.
- The security and predictability of funding for recreational sea fisheries management.
- A better understanding of all aspects of recreational and Aboriginal fishing and their linkages and co-management needs.



*Supporting recreational fisheries requires significant resources for research, management, education and compliance. To continue delivering the actions in this Strategy in the long term, we will identify wider funding and co-investment opportunities.*



## PRINCIPLES

- Management activities are adequately planned and resourced.
- Agency partnerships and collaborations with non-government organisations and commercial operators will emphasise efficient service delivery to recreational fishers.
- Government will support the delivery of recreational fishing activities and community stewardship initiatives directly and through the peak body and non-government organisations.
- Recreational fishers contribute to management costs through sea fishing licences.
- Licence fees used for managing and improving recreational sea fishing will be publicly reported on.
- Government will continue to assist in funding recreational fishing programs and seek to leverage further funding by industry, philanthropy, research and community organisations.

## ACTIONS

1. Consult with recreational sea fishers on options to improve recreational fisheries management in Tasmania during the review of the *Living Marine Resources Management Act 1995*.
2. Improve service delivery to inland and marine recreational fishers through collaborative activities with IFS, MAST and Tasmania Police.
3. Conduct regular meetings with the IFS and MAST to develop educational partnerships.
4. Partner with TARFish and IMAS to deliver some actions under this Strategy.
5. Establish a recreational fishing committee with IFS, MAST, Tasmania Police, the Parks and Wildlife Service and NRET.
6. Identify co-investment opportunities with TARFish, IMAS, Department of State Growth, IFS, MAST, NRMs, OzFish, Brand Tasmania and other Tasmanian industry partners and pursue opportunities through programs relating to Covid-19 recovery, habitat restoration, citizen science and philanthropy.
7. Develop partnerships with sea fishing sponsors and philanthropic organisations.
8. Increase staff capacity for policy and communications to progress Strategy priorities and respond to emerging management issues.

# ACRONYMS

**ARFF** – Australian Recreational Fishing Foundation

**CaLD Fishers** – Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Fishers

**CMS** – Centre for Marine Socioecology, University of Tasmania

**CSIRO** – Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation

**FAD** – Fish Aggregation Device

**FRDC** Fisheries Research and Development Corporation

**IFS** – Inland Fisheries Service

**IMAS** – Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies

**LMRMA** – *Living Marine Resources Management Act 1995*

**MAST** – Marine and Safety Tasmania

**NRET** – Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania

**NRM** – Natural Resource Management (North, South and Cradle Coast)

**Ozfish** – OzFish Unlimited

**PWS** – Parks and Wildlife Service

**RecFAC** – Recreational Fisheries Advisory Committee

**RedMap** – Range Extension Database and Mapping Project

**Research Angler Logbook Program** – An IMAS recreational diary-based survey for marine fishers.

**SMRCA** – Sustainable Marine Research Collaboration Agreement

**TARFish** – Tasmanian Association for Recreational Fishing Inc

**Tuna Champions** – A collaboration between ARFF and IMAS.

# GLOSSARY

## Citizen Science

The practice of public participation and collaboration in scientific research to increase scientific knowledge

## Harvest Strategy

A management framework for a fishery that includes information needs and decision rules how to adjust fishing levels to achieve the agreed ecological, economic and/or social management objectives.

\*An earlier version of this document referred to Harvest Plans.

## Tasmanian Marine State Waters

State waters extend from the seaward limits of rivers to 200 nautical miles offshore for the purposes of recreational fisheries management and the application of the Tasmanian Recreational Sea Fishing Strategy.

## Resource Sharing

Policy rules that guide decisions about access to, and allocation of fisheries resources (e.g. fish stocks and fishing areas) between different fishing sectors or associated beneficiaries.

## Sustainable

Stocks that have enough biomass to ensure that future levels of recruitment are not impaired and fishing pressure is adequately controlled to avoid this.

## Stewardship

An ethic or practice involving the responsible management and use of resources that considers the needs and interests of other users and future generations.







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