

SOUTH SYDNEY AMATEUR FISHING ASSOCIATION INC

PO BOX 328, MATRAVILLE NSW 2036



PRESS RELEASE – 16th June 2007

Stop the NCC from Locking Up Your Backyard.

Proceedings initiated by the Nature Conservation Council (NCC) before the Administrative Appeals Tribunal have been adjourned until July 2007 as the Tribunal could not rule on the evidence presented to date.

Via a back door process, the NCC is trying to force the Government to increase the number of recognised grey nurse shark sanctuary sites from 12 to 18 and to expand the no fishing zones from 200 metres to 1500 metres. This obviously includes "Magic Point" off South Maroubra. Your backyard. This would mean a **TOTAL FISHING BAN** at all eighteen sites. That's right, no more fishing on, in or around Maroubra or Malabar.

RECFISH, which is our National Peak Recreational Fishing Body, has successfully joined in the Tribunal proceedings against the NCC with the intention of disproving claims that grey nurse shark numbers are in decline and facing extinction along the Australian east coast.

South Sydney Amateur Fishing Association (SSAFA), along with ANSA National, ANSA NSW, ANSA Qld, the Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW and a host of other Associations and local clubs have pledged financial support for RECFISH to assist in covering the legal costs of the proceedings which will be substantial.

The reality is that the grey nurse shark population appears to be co-existing well with the benefit of existing sanctuary restrictions. Anecdotally it seems that their numbers have grown since the 2003 study undertaken by the NSW Department of Primary Industries – Fisheries (NSW DPI).

President of SSAFA Stan Konstantaras commented "that we have altered our fishing methods so as not to interact with the GNS at Magic Point and are reasonably happy with the current NSW DPI regulations. We cannot see the logic of banning fishing for an additional 1500 m, including fishing off the rocks and beaches. Imagine being told that you cannot fish off Maroubra Beach or Malabar Beach because the NCC thinks that you will catch a GNS. The whole argument defies logic. I have personally fished in the area for 20 years and have not seen or hooked a GNS. I am aware that incidental hooking of GNS occurs, but is it's a big ocean and there are no fences underwater. No one can tell us, not even the NCC where these incidental hookings happen. Is it 1000m, 2km, 10km, 100km or 500km away? These sharks travel up to 800 km in all directions. A GNS tagged by NSW DPI in NSW has been recorded off Gladstone, QLD".

Mr Konstantaras then goes on to say that the people responsible for instigating this court action should be held personally accountable for wasting taxpayers money and states that " if the NCC is to have any credibility in this matter then they should start with a level playing field, and not challenge some obscure export license in court. To hold at ransom the ocean trap and line fishery which exports only 5% of its produce - mainly spanner crabs, is an abuse of process and a waste of the Tribunal's time"

The NCC is being represented at the Tribunal by the Environmental Defenders Office (EDO) which is indirectly funded out of the public purse. Recfish and its legal counsel on the other hand is being bankrolled entirely by the broad recreational fishing community via donations and pledges.

This is why SSAFA has pledged its support to RECFISH with a donation of \$1000.

If your Association, Club, Corporation or you as an individual feel compelled to render your support via a donation please contact the RECFISH Administration Manager via telephone or fax (07) 3356 1111 or PO BOX 187 GRANGE QLD 4051 or via email admin@recfish.com.au .

You can also log into a new website that is hosting all the recent evidence presented to the AAT, www.greynurseshark.com.au and also make a direct donation to the legal costs incurred by the recreational anglers at www.greynurseshark.com.au/donation.pdf

Make a difference and support the cause and stop the NCC making a part of your backyard theirs.

For more information on the GNS courtcase contact;

greynurseshark@greynurseshark.com.au

