



Speech by

Jarrold Bleijie

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

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FISHERIES AMENDMENT REGULATION (NO. 1) 2010: DISALLOWANCE OF STATUTORY INSTRUMENT

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (8.05 pm): May I premise my contribution to the debate tonight by welcoming the federal member for Longman, Wyatt Roy, to the public gallery and also Lisa France, the incoming member for Pumicestone. I rise in support of—

Mr Hopper: I second that!

Mr BLEIJIE: We have a seconder. I rise in support of the motion before the House, the disallowance of a statutory instrument relating to subordinate legislation No. 354, Fisheries Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2010 tabled in the House on 16 February 2011. I say thankyou to the shadow minister for sticking up for the fishing industry because if he did not do it and the LNP did not do it, no-one in this place would. The regulation as tabled amends the Fisheries Regulation 2008 to ban the fishing of snapper from all of Queensland's east coast waters from 15 February to 31 March this year. The ban also applies to the co-caught species of pearl perch. The ban is also extended to all recreational, charter and commercial fishers.

The ban on snapper during the six-week period is another blow to an industry which has suffered greatly through the recent turbulent weather events across Queensland and an industry that could least afford this ban. What is just as disappointing is the manner in which the ban was forced upon the industry. On 14 December 2010 the former minister for fisheries announced the ban while releasing the rocky reef finfish fishery regulatory impact statement for public consultation. There were no discussions and no open dialogue, just a ban for six weeks in the middle of a period when the Queensland fishing industry and businesses could least afford it.

In addition to the six-week ban on snapper fishing, further changes to the regulation will introduce a 400-tonne cap on the total annual catch. The data surrounding two Fisheries Queensland audits in 2006 and 2009 found that snapper levels were less than 35 per cent of the unfished levels. However, a range of fishing experts, fishing groups and independent scientists have questioned the data collated by the department. This data is the foundation for not only the six-week ban on snapper fishing but also a 400-tonne cap on the annual catch of snapper stocks over 10 years.

On the government's own data, Queensland has approximately 1,500 licensed commercial fishing boats which contribute more than 10 per cent of the nation's seafood production. The commercial fishing industry is vital to the economy of coastal towns, particularly in the remote areas of the state. I have to say that I am disappointed that the member for Pumicestone does not share that view and does not share the view of the local economy that the fishing industry holds in her electorate.

Mrs Sullivan: I don't share any view with you.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection that the member for Pumicestone and I disagree on many matters—

Mrs Sullivan: Everything!

Mr BLEIJIE: But there is none more fundamental than this because she is clearly wrong. It is about time that this government supported the commercial fishing industry. It is about time it supported the commercial fishing industry in Queensland rather than implementing measures that will destroy it. We on this side are smart enough to know what is happening here.

Ms Croft: What are you going to do?

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection and I will tell the member. They are clearly not smart enough to work it out on their own account, so I will tell the honourable member. We on this side know that this stems from a deal done with the Socialist Left Greens at the 2009 state election. It is a government desperate to hold on to office. It would do anything with the Greens and do anything to win an election, whenever that may be. The left-wing, loopy, socialist agenda will be to the detriment of this government. They only have to ask Prime Minister Gillard how much benefit the Greens deal has been to the federal government and ask what the Prime Minister's latest support rating is based on her radical green ideas.

This is another hit on the commercial fishing industry. It is a plan to slug boat owners \$90 to fish for snapper. It is hypocrisy. Those on the other side of the House argue against this disallowance motion, yet they are likely the ones who on Sunday drink their chardonnay, go down to the local shop and then whinge because there is no snapper for sale in the shop. Have they ever fished? Who knows? Do they know what a boat is or what a fishing rod is? Who knows?

The test is on this new minister, the member for Thuringowa—whether he is willing to debate this out of this chamber with the industry and in the public arena, whether he is willing to consult and listen to feedback from the industry stakeholders, whether he is willing to support the commercial fishing industry in Queensland. Feedback from commercial fishers in my own electorate has indicated that the government has not listened to the concerns they have raised in relation to many issues.

I can say to the shadow minister and to members of this parliament that I am not surprised. I am not surprised that the government forthwith hastily introduced a six-week ban on snapper fishing, because a lot of what this government does is not consult. I think I heard one of the government members interject that consultation is in their DNA or that they invented the word 'consultation'. It may have been the member for Pumicestone. Correct me if I am wrong. I think she said that the Labor Party invented the word 'consultation'. If I have heard any joke in my life, that would be the funniest I have ever heard: the Labor Party inventing consultation—what an absolute joke!

This government is more interested in political deals and agendas to ensure its survival than the interests of the commercial fishing industry in Queensland or indeed the long-term viability of the snapper stocks in our waters. I have a final word of caution or many words of wisdom to those opposite: Queenslanders fish and Queenslanders vote, and I look forward to the day they get the chance to place that vote in the member for Pumicestone's electorate.