




Speech by

Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE

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

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—LNP) (8.37 pm): In speaking to the snapper disallowance motion, the introduction of the six-week ban on snapper fishing is another nail in the coffin of Queensland's once thriving fishing industry. This ban is without consultation or debate and comes at a time when fishing and tourism operators are struggling to get back on their feet after disastrous events. It is a kick in the guts to impose another ban that will force operators and tackle shops to lay off staff. Australia is a massive island surrounded by water with an abundance of fish and fishing is a fundamental part of our history and economy, and Queensland has a reputation as being one of the most popular recreational fishing destinations. The bans are a futile exercise that are nothing but a self-serving political stunt to shore up support from the conservation movement while implementing a dodgy plan to slug boat owners \$90 to fish for snapper—a tax on fishing. The fishing industry has become so overregulated and underfunded that many fishers are questioning why they pay boat and trailer registration other than financing the government's bureaucratic policing of the industry.

People are saying that the industry is besieged by regulations and that many recreational fishers are gripped with fear when they see approaching marine park or DPI fishing vessels, simply because it has reached the point that you need to have a Master of Laws to know about the invisible zones, regulations and bans. Fishers from my electorate are telling me that it is hard enough for someone on the coast who fishes regularly to keep up with these new regulations. However, for westerners who may come to the coast occasionally, fishing with family has become all too confusing.

Fishers do not need any more regulations; they are asking for a proactive approach to the industry by responsibly utilising boat and trailer fees and putting aside this money for funding and the implementation of the already successfully proven artificial reefs or value-added fish-stocking programs. Fishers are crying out for more tidal access points with quality boat ramps, toilets, wash-down areas, security cameras and better parking facilities, all shrouded in a more common-sense approach to the whole industry. It is not worth the risk of destabilising the recovering fishing industry in Queensland with a ban that will not have an effect on fish stocks.

Typically, this snapper ban was imposed by this state Labor government without consultation with fishing bodies and with no scientific evidence to justify such a ban and contradiction. There is no conclusive data to justify how this ban will ultimately improve the environment. This ban must be lifted in order to allow proper consultation, research and debate to identify whether current fishing practices are, in fact, depleting fish stocks. It is only through proper research and consultation that efficient regulatory principles can be put in place, not draconian prohibition and unjustified fees all in the name of paying off debt and appeasing a non-productive minority group.

I call on the government to commit to a democratic process rather than the blatantly heavy-handed authoritarian tactics of a ban that has massive economic and social impacts. I proudly support this disallowance motion moved by the shadow minister for primary industries and fisheries.