

eA194962

Mr Michael Wilson  
Chair  
RecFish SA  
PO Box 3349  
NORWOOD SA 5067

Email: [ed@recfishsa.org.au](mailto:ed@recfishsa.org.au)



Government  
of South Australia

**Hon David Basham MP**  
Minister for Primary Industries  
and Regional Development  
GPO Box 1671 Adelaide SA 5001  
Tel 08 8226 2931  
[Minister.Basham@sa.gov.au](mailto:Minister.Basham@sa.gov.au)

Dear Mr Wilson

Thank you for your further letter, dated 15 June 2021, regarding the allocation of South Australian snapper resources between the commercial and recreational fishing sectors.

The Government appreciates snapper is an important and highly prized species for recreational fishers. The Government also understands the current closure of the snapper fishery in the gulfs and west coast, and restricted snapper fishing in south-east coastal waters, is of significant concern to recreational fishers.

Restrictions on the catch of snapper exist for all fishing sectors and are the result of depleted stocks following a decade or more of failed management by the former Labor government – including severe cutbacks in snapper science. Focusing on allocation shares between the commercial and recreational fishing sectors does not change these facts and only perpetuates tired old arguments between sectors.

It is past time for the ‘fishing wars’ between recreational and commercial fishers to end as both sectors have so much in common. The solution to improve recreational fishers’ access to snapper is to allow the species’ population to rebuild. All fishing sectors should work together collaboratively, with government, in the interests of rebuilding stocks.

South Australia’s system of fisheries management is lauded across the nation for the way resources are shared between sectors via regulated allocations. These allocations underpin the responsible and sustainable management of fish stocks and have given all sectors the required security to invest and plan for future years.

While this government was not involved in setting the allocations, we respect a formal process was undertaken and sector shares for snapper (and other species) determined. The Government has no intention of reviewing these allocations between sectors.

As a result of reforms to the marine scalefish fishery, annual limits have been placed on the commercial catch of snapper and as a result, commercial fishers have been allocated tradeable snapper quota. Any reduction in the commercial sectors’ share of snapper would require commercial fishers to be compensated. There now exists a trading market for commercial snapper quota. RecFish SA is invited to engage with the Marine Fishers Association in the first instance, should your members wish to pursue a market-based approach to increasing the share of snapper for the recreational fishing sector.

Thank you for writing to me on this important matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Basham'.

Hon David Basham MP  
**MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

19 / 7 / 2021

cc: Ms Sharon Starick, Minister’s Recreational Fishing Advisory Council

