

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Budget Estimates Feb 2006

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question no: F&F 01

Division/Agency: F&F

Topic: Illegal Indonesian fishing

Hansard page: 98

Senator Sterle asked:

Mr P. Murphy—In the last calendar year we have had 384 people charged. Penalties ranged from good behaviour bonds of \$750 to fines of up to \$130,000

Senator STERLE—That calendar year, I take it, is 2005-06?

Mr P. Murphy—From January to December 2005. In total, 384 persons were charged.

Senator STERLE—Could you provide a copy of that data to the committee?

Mr P. Murphy—I could do that on notice.

Answer:

From January to December 2005 the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) charged 384 people for fishing offences. Penalties ranged from good behaviour bonds of \$750 for offences under section 95 of the *Fisheries Management Act 1991* and section 137 of the Criminal Code to fines of up to \$130,000 for offences under sections 101 and 101A of the *Fisheries Management Act 1991*.

Question no: F&F 02

Division/Agency: F&F

Topic: Illegal Indonesian fishing

Hansard page: 98

Senator Sterle asked:

Have there been any large fines for any crews?

Answer:

From 1 January 2005 to 31 December 2005, fines ranging from \$750 to \$130,000 have been issued for fishing related offences in the Australian Fishing Zone (AFZ). The fine of \$130,000 was issued for offences under sections 101 and 101A of the *Fisheries Management Act 1991*.

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Question no: F&F 03

Division/Agency: F&F

Topic: Illegal Indonesian fishing

Hansard page: 106

Senator Sterle asked:

- a) Is it possible that, if a vessel was intercepted by an Australian patrol vessel and was subjected to automatic forfeiture—they would have all their fishing gear confiscated—they could simply return to their home port, take on new equipment and come straight back?
- b) Do we have any information on anyone who was caught reoffending doing that?
You can take that on notice.

Answer:

- a) Yes.
- b) No.

Question no: F&F 04

Division/Agency: F&F

Topic: Illegal Indonesian fishing

Hansard page: 106

Senator Siewert asked:

What species are involved? You talked about red snapper.

Mr McLoughlin—There are half a dozen species collectively titled ‘red snapper’, found largely in the Arafura Sea. They exist from the north of Darwin right through to Torres Strait, the top end of the Barrier Reef and up into Indonesian waters, so it is a very wide range. I would be happy to provide you with more details of the species and their range.

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Answer:

Red snapper fisheries exist off the coasts of Northern Territory, Queensland and Western Australia. There is recent evidence to suggest that the stocks fished by both Australia and Indonesia are shared stocks and consequently a bilateral management plan is being developed.

The term 'red snapper' often refers to 3 main species including:

- *Lutjanus malabaricus* - Indo-West Pacific: Gulf of Oman to southeast Asia, north to southern Japan, south to northern Australia.
- *Lutjanus erythropterus* - Indo-West Pacific: Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea to Fiji, north to southern Japan, south to Australia.
- *Lutjanus sebae* - Indo-West Pacific: southern Red Sea and East Africa to New Caledonia, north to southern Japan, south to Australia.

Three additional species that are also referred to as 'red snapper', but to a lesser extent include:

- *Pristipomoides multidens* - Indo-Pacific: Red Sea, Arabian Sea and East Africa to Samoa, north to southern Japan, south to Australia.
- *Pristipomoides typus* - Eastern Indian Ocean: Andaman Sea. Western Pacific: New Guinea to Sumatra, north to the Ryukyu Islands. Present in Australia from the North West Shelf to Tweed Heads in New South Wales.
- *Pristipomoides filamentous* - Indo-Pacific: East Africa to Hawaii and Tahiti, north to southern Japan, south to eastern Australia and Lord Howe Island.

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Question no: F&F 05

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Topic: Illegal Indonesian fishing

Hansard page: 107

Senator Siewert asked:

I have been looking at the Philippines, where significant rehabilitation work has been going on and where they have been putting in no-take areas and so on. I was looking at that to see if they can do a similar sort of thing in Indonesia, if Australia provided some help and expertise.

Mr Hurry—There has been a program under way, based on Timor, for quite a number of years—I think it is COREMAP—which has been involved in looking at the rehabilitation of coral reefs. I am not sure where that program is at. It is not run by our department; it is run by Environment Australia. We could get you some information on that.

There is some activity on coral reefs, I understand, in Indonesian waters through some of the NGOs. The other program that Australia has been involved in, but not at an official level so far, has been the Arafura-Timor Sea regional forum, which is a program that is looking for global environment funding to look at some initiatives to rebuild fisheries. Again, I could get you some additional information on that.

Answer:

The Coral Reef Rehabilitation and Management Program (COREMAP) was launched in May 1989 and was designed as a 15-year program aimed at developing decentralized community-based resource management systems with support from the national and regional governments, enforcement authorities, the private sector, and NGOs. COREMAP is funded by The World Bank, The Asian Development Bank, and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) and implemented by the Indonesian Institute of Sciences.

The primary objective of COREMAP is to improve the management of coral reef ecosystems and rehabilitate degraded coral reefs in Indonesia, for the protection of marine biodiversity and the sustainable use of marine resources.

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Currently, COREMAP works in nine of thirty-two provinces in Indonesia. In all areas, COREMAP's program elements include efforts to:

1. Heighten law enforcement to protect coral reefs;
2. Establish coral reef monitoring and information systems, in order to conduct research on the status of coral reefs and more effectively disseminate that information to stakeholder groups;
3. Develop community-based management systems and increase public participation in coral reef resource management;
4. Increase institutional capacity and strengthen inter-institutional coordination in planning and implementing policy that affects coral reef management, and;
5. Enhance public knowledge of the importance of coral reef and motivate people to actively participate in the management and sustainable use of coral reefs.

Question no: F&F 06

Division/Agency: F&F

Topic: Illegal Indonesian fishing

Hansard page: 107

Senator Webber asked:

Last time we met, and under the previous, less than helpful relationship between the two governments—and, as I say, I am prepared to accept that there is some fault on both sides—we used to have a disagreement about the size of the illegal fish take in our northern fisheries. Has anyone got any up-to-date accurate information on that?

Answer:

The impact of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in the northern and western waters on domestic fisheries is unknown.

The types of shark and finfish species taken by illegal fishers in Australia's northern waters by vessels not apprehended are unknown, and therefore estimates of total catches cannot be reliably made.

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Question no: F&F 07

Division/Agency: F&F

Topic: Illegal Indonesian fishing

Hansard page: 109

Senator Webber asked:

Have you received any reports about interference with pearl leasers having their operations being interfered with by illegal fishermen?

Answer:

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority is unaware of any reports about interference with pearl leasers by illegal fishers.

Question no: F&F 08

Division/Agency: F&F

Topic: Fishing Future Package

Hansard page: 111

Senator O'BRIEN asked:

An appropriate question for tonight, then. I want to take some time on the fisheries structural adjustment package. I refer to the \$220 million Securing our Fishing Future package announced late last year by the former minister, whose press release of 14 December said:

Since announcing the Securing our Fishing Future package three weeks ago, my department and I have been meeting industry and State representatives to further develop its implementation arrangements.

Can you provide details of these meetings?

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Answer:

Details of departmental meetings with industry and State representatives are as follows:

| Date | Association |
|------------------|--|
| 1 December 2005 | Commonwealth Fisheries Association (CFA) & South East Trawl Fishing Industry Association (SETFIA) |
| 2 December 2005 | Australian Seafood Industry Council (ASIC) |
| 4 December 2005 | Northern Prawn Fisheries Industry Organisation (NPFIO) |
| 6 December 2005 | Primary Industries & Resources Victoria (PIRVIC) |
| 7 December 2005 | Eastern Tuna & Billfish Fishery (ETBF) & Primary Industries & Resources New South Wales (PIRNSW) |
| 8 December 2005 | Commonwealth Fisheries Association (CFA) |
| 9 December 2005 | Primary Industries & Resources Tasmania (PIRTAS) |
| 12 December 2005 | Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) |
| 15 December 2005 | Northern Prawn Fisheries Industry Organisations (NPFIO) |
| 20 December 2005 | Primary Industries & Resources South Australia (PIRSA), Primary Industries & Resources New South Wales (PIRNSW) & Primary Industries & Resources Victoria (PIRVIC) |
| 21 December 2005 | Scallop Fishermen's Association (SFA) |
| 13 January 2006 | Australian Seafood Industry Council (ASIC) |
| 17 January 2006 | Commonwealth Fisheries Association (CFA) |
| 18 January 2006 | South East Trawl Fishing Industry Association (SETFIA) |
| 23 January 2006 | Australian Seafood Industry Council (ASIC) |
| 31 January 2006 | World Wide Fund for Nature Australia and TRAFFIC Oceania |
| 10 February 2006 | Primary Industries & Resources New South Wales (PIRNSW) |

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Question: F&F 09

Division/Agency: F&F

Topic: Domestic Shark Fisheries

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Siewert asked:

What is the value of the shark fishery in Commonwealth waters?

Answer:

There is only one fishery which targets shark in Commonwealth waters. This fishery is the Southern Shark Fishery, which now makes up the Gillnet, Hook and Trap Sector and Shark Hook Sector of the larger Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery. In 2003-04, the volume of total shark catch from this fishery was 3266 tonnes and was valued at approximately A\$14.5 million. The total value of shark catch retained as byproduct in other Commonwealth-managed fisheries was approximately A\$4.3 million in 2003-04.

In 1995, under the Offshore Constitutional Settlement, jurisdiction over the shark resources in northern Australian waters was transferred to Joint Authorities between the Australian Government and the governments of Western Australian, the Northern Territory (NT) and Queensland. These fisheries are all managed under state law. In general, the fisheries are low value fisheries.

- In 2004, the total reported shark catch in the NT Fisheries Joint Authority was 898 tonnes. The value of this catch was not reported.
- In 2003, Queensland reported a total shark catch of 478 tonnes for its Joint Authority shark fisheries.
- In 2003-04, Western Australia reported a shark catch of 591 tonnes for its northern shark fisheries. This figure includes both the Western Australian Joint Authority shark fishery and the Western Australian North Coast Shark Fishery.