



“Conservation through sustainable use. Making people part of the solution”

“The voice of NSW recreational fishers”

Web site; www.ecofishers.com

PO Box 200
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8 . 6 . 07

**The Secretary
Senate Rural & Regional Affairs & Transport
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600**

Dear Secretary,

**I have read the SMEC “desk-top” review,
(Feasibility of Interstate of Water) commissioned by the National
Water Commission.**

**On behalf of recreational fishers of NSW, ECOfishers raises the
following objections and offers the following comments;**

- 1) We have one million recreational fishers in NSW.**
- 2) They fish offshore, inshore, estuarine and freshwater rivers
and creeks.**
- 3) 76% of all fishing activities take place on or in the
estuarine waters, while 24% occurs in the freshwater
reaches.**
- 4) Recreational fishers harvest more than 13 million finfish
(bream, whiting, flathead etc)**
- 5) Recreational fishers harvest greater quantities of 6 of the
major species than commercial fishers.**
- 6) Recreational fishers spend more than \$550 million
annually, on fishing activities. That equates to more than
\$550 per fisher per annum.**

**Since the Clarence is our largest river and estuary, a large
proportion of that fishing activity, takes place on the environs of
the Clarence River.**

The regional economy is Clarence River dependent.

**The ecosystems and the biodiversity of the rivers are entirely
dependent upon, the health and flow of the Clarence and its
tributaries.**



Eco-tourism is also a significant component of the Clarence River economy.

A similar situation also exists on the Richmond River.

Both systems are entirely dependent upon uninhibited and unmitigated annual ebbs and flows.

The Clarence and Richmond river systems are the only home of the endangered Eastern Freshwater Cod, which is currently the subject of a Commonwealth and State approved, Recovery Plan.

The iconic Eastern Freshwater Cod, (*Maccullochella ikei*) is the apex predator in these aquatic environments and is highly sensitive and susceptible to alterations to water quality and habitat degradation. ECOfishers have grave concerns, that any proposal to extract water from either the Clarence or Richmond systems will impact negatively upon the habitat and well being of this endangered species.

Similarly, any diversion or extraction of megalitres of water from either system will have serious negative and deleterious impacts, not only on the marine and aquatic biodiversity, but also upon the riverine economies, which are largely riverine dependant.

Therefore the social, economic and environmental issues far out weigh the justification of the proposal.

Mr Ron Clarke, mayor of Gold Coast City (Qld) is already on the public record saying, "The Gold Coast doesn't need or want water pumped from northern NSW."

The NSW Shires Association annual conference in Sydney too, rejected any such proposal.

ECOfishers NSW, therefore rejects any such proposal for the reasons outlined.

Yours faithfully,

Ken Thurlow CEO ECOfishers NSW.

