



# Media Release

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## Anglers urged to share tales of longtail tuna

Coastal anglers are being encouraged to help ensure the long-term sustainability of Australia's newest 'recreational only' species, the longtail tuna, by reporting catches using a new online system.

The information is being sought by a consortium of recreational fishing groups and scientists led by the CSIRO Wealth from Oceans Flagship. It will contribute to scientific assessments of the condition of the longtail tuna population.

Longtail tuna (often incorrectly called northern bluefin tuna) are commonly caught by anglers fishing in tropical and temperate coastal waters around Australia, and even from the shore.

In recognition of the species' popularity among recreational anglers, longtail tuna was declared a 'recreational-only' species by the federal government in December 2006. A small commercial bycatch of 70 tonnes a year is allowed for Australia's Commonwealth fisheries.

"Longtail tuna may be susceptible to population decline even under seemingly modest fishing pressure given its very narrow coastal distribution," Dr Shane Griffiths of CSIRO says.

"We recently discovered that the species is also slow-growing and lives for at least 18 years.

"Fortunately, longtail tuna have not been heavily fished in Australia, so we can put the right measures in place now to ensure the population remains healthy for future generations of recreational fishers to enjoy."

The Chief Executive Officer of Australia's recreational fishing peak body Recfish Australia, Len Olyott, says that while commercial fisheries are obliged to report their catches, recreational fishers are not required to report their catches of most fish species.

"Without knowing the recreational catch, scientists are unable to assess the condition of Australia's longtail tuna population," Mr Olyott says.

"We are sure that recreational fishers who have had the enjoyment of catching this magnificent species will realise the benefits of this project and will help scientists by recording details of their fishing expeditions."

The website ([www.longtailtuna.com.au](http://www.longtailtuna.com.au)) features an online logbook that allows recreational anglers to submit fishing trips anonymously. They can also register for free to use the site as a personal fishing diary to store and view details of their fishing trips. Registered users submitting catch data will enter a monthly draw for longtail tuna t-shirts.

The longtail tuna project is funded by CSIRO and the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation, Recfish Australia, the Australian Fishing Trade Association, Sunfish, the NSW Recreational Fishing Trust, Recfishing Research and the Australian National Sportfishing Association.

*CSIRO initiated the National Research Flagships to provide science-based solutions to Australia's major research challenges and opportunities. The 10 Flagships form multidisciplinary teams with industry and the research community.*

**Image available at:** *(Link to be provided to Corporate Comms by Science Image Online)*

### Further information

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