

## DRAFT FOR COMMENT

### Summary advice to Sunfish members/ reps attending the Snapper meetings, 2011

1. **Snapper – an important recreational fishery.** Snapper is primarily a recreational fishery in Qld with anglers taking about 66% of the total catch. The commercial and charter sectors are relatively small, but not opposed by Sunfish. Consequently Sunfish will confine its comments primarily to issues relevant to management of the recreational fishing sector and not engage in any discussions about how the two minor sectors should be managed. From a purely economic view, the recreational fishing sector for Snapper generates many millions of dollars annually into local economies, and is MUCH more important than the other two sectors economically.

2. **Snapper stock assessment and quota.** Sunfish has consistently disagreed with the Fisheries Queensland Snapper stock assessment. The most recent independent scientific review determined that the status of Snapper stocks is uncertain due to the limited amount of data available and its quality. It is misleading for Fisheries Queensland to continue to say that Snapper stocks are severely depleted. The total quota determination of 400 tonnes annually used by Fisheries Queensland in the discussion paper (RIS) is highly speculative and not supported by Sunfish due to the data limitations.

#### 3. **Comments by Sunfish on the Fisheries Queensland proposed management options:**

**Option 1.** Sunfish opposes the Snapper permit and fee (\$90), and the seasonal closure for 6 weeks.

**Option 2.** Sunfish opposes the Snapper permit and fee (\$70), and the seasonal closure for 6 weeks.

**Option 3.** Sunfish opposes the bag limit of 2 for Snapper and a 2 month seasonal closure.

**Option 4.** Sunfish opposes the 4 month seasonal closure.

**Other options/issues.** Sunfish has investigated the possibility of compulsory tags to keep Snapper. This is not supported due to possible problems with the fair allocation/distribution of tags.

Sunfish strongly supports that the Snapper fishery should be **handline or rod and line only** for all three sectors. Commercial net fishing or a commercial net fishing bycatch limit for Snapper are strongly opposed.

The Snapper fishery can be adequately monitored by existing methods – annual State-wide surveys of recreational fishing, the long-term monitoring programme, and the logbooks for commercial and charter fishers. Additional monitoring via compulsory angler logbooks for rocky reef fish is not supported.

4. **Sunfish management proposal.** The Sunfish submission for management of the recreational fishing sector is simple, responsible and appropriate given the uncertainties about Snapper stocks. The Sunfish submission is based on the management changes introduced in 2003 with the support of Sunfish:

-possession bag limit of 5 Snapper per person

-minimum size of 35cm which enables all Snapper to spawn for two years.

-plus the possibility of a limit on the number of large Snapper south of Noosa (eg 2 Snapper over 60cm within the overall bag limit of 5. This addresses concerns over growth overfishing in the most popular areas.

5. **Responses by recreational fishers.** Recreational fishers are requested to respond to the Snapper discussion paper, the current e-petition (See website:[www.sunfishqld.com.au](http://www.sunfishqld.com.au)), and use the letter to the Premier.