

Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Rural and Regional Queensland
The Honourable Tim Mulherin
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Fishers to have say in new East Coast research - RE-ISSUE WITH NEW EMBARGO

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A new research project funded through the Fisheries Research Development Corporation (FRDC) kicks off this month to look at regional management of Queensland's fisheries.

The project has been initiated by the Queensland Government to address concerns over how to fairly allocate our fisheries resources.

Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Rural and Regional Queensland Tim Mulherin said the research is the second phase of the East Coast Inshore Fin Fish Fishery review conducted last year.

"Given the vast number of issues raised during the review relating to resource allocation, the government decided to address the management of the East Coast Inshore Fin Fish Fishery in two stages," Mr Mulherin said.

"Stage one, which is now completed, dealt with holistic East Coast issues such as fish size limits and bag limits, sustainability measures and how commercial fishers should operate.

"The second stage of the review will now look at regional concerns including fair access to fisheries resources for both commercial and recreational fishers.

"A good proportion of the community support commercial fishing, however some recreational fishers are concerned net fishing reduces their available catch.

"We therefore need to deal with these issues through consultation with local communities to work out how commercial and recreational fishing can coexist in Queensland.

"There will be three pilot studies in Port Douglas, Hinchinbrook and the Burdekin, including local meetings starting around September this year.

"Concerns raised in these areas include commercial netting of grey mackerel in Port Douglas, barramundi fishing in Hinchinbrook and commercial net fishing access within the Burdekin River."

FRDC principal investigator Dr Daryl McPhee will lead the project team, which will include staff from James Cook University.

"This project is a great opportunity to demonstrate how all stakeholders can work together

to solve local issues at a local level," Dr McPhee said.

"The community knows best how to look after its own patch, so with the pilot projects we'll look at what support and flexible tools our communities need to responsibly share fisheries management."

Mr Mulherin said following the outcome of the pilots, other Queensland stakeholders including recreational fishers and residents would have an opportunity to apply for regional management within their areas.

"This review will ensure a practical, balanced approach to fisheries resource allocation for both public enjoyment and economic viability," Mr Mulherin said.

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