



Senator the Hon. Joe Ludwig

MEDIA RELEASE

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Senator for Queensland

21 MARCH 2013

Australia's fisheries management boosted by root and branch review

The Gillard Government has today released the first root and branch review into Australia's fisheries in two decades, the *Review of Commonwealth Fisheries: Legislation Policy and Management*, also known as the Borthwick Review.

How best to implement the review findings will be put to industry, recreational fishers, supply chain participants, environmental organisations, consumers and the general public.

In releasing the review and the Government's response, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Senator Joe Ludwig, said the findings highlighted current management strengths and identified potential improvements to make Commonwealth fisheries more sustainable, and meet industry and community expectations, into the future.

"The Borthwick Review concluded that greater transparency, a broader policy framework, and the clarification of objectives and roles could build on what is already a very effective system," Minister Ludwig said.

"I agree, and that is why the Government's response to this report is to accept the direction of all 15 recommendations.

"The Government has a strong record when it comes to supporting our fisheries and making them healthier and more resilient. Under the Labor Government, the number of sustainably-fished stocks has increased from 45 to 77.

"Australia's fisheries are a valuable natural resource and we all have a role in ensuring the future of an industry that contributes more than \$2 billion to our economy each year."

The Borthwick Review was commissioned following attention placed on Commonwealth fisheries, particularly the Small Pelagic Fishery, throughout August and September 2012.

"It was evident that although our fisheries management system was world class and had served us well, we could not reasonably expect it to remain world leading without updating it and preparing it for the future," Minister Ludwig said.

"The review found that our current fisheries management system is good and effectively managed by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA), but there is always room for improvement.

"The review has recommended that AFMA be retained, but that it be required to better consult with the community and to bring more transparency to fisheries decisions. These would be sensible reforms for the long term benefit of our fisheries industry."

The Borthwick Review presents recommendations for improving and strengthening fisheries management, with another key recommendation being the development of a Fisheries Ecosystems policy to complement the existing Harvest Strategy and Bycatch policies.

The Government will announce details of consultation on implementation options for the Borthwick Review findings following the release of the Harvest Strategy and Bycatch Policy reviews.

The review is available on the DAFF website at daff.gov.au/fisheriesreview