



*Fishing for the Future*

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## **Submission by Sunfish Queensland on the Queensland Fin Fish (Stout Whiting) Trawl Fishery May 2011**

### **Background**

This submission has been prepared by Sunfish Queensland on behalf of its membership and recreational fishers generally. The Regional Branches and Members of Sunfish have also sought the views of their associated recreational fishers. Prior to submission, a draft of this paper was sent to all Sunfish contacts for comment and input. This submission therefore has strong support from many recreational fishers in Queensland.

It should be noted that the membership of Sunfish includes all the main recreational fishing organizations, their associations and clubs as well as a network of regional branches and large fishing clubs. The total of people who are registered and financial members of these organizations is approximately 45,000. However, many other non-aligned recreational fishers have provided their ideas to Sunfish on this submission.

### **Reference**

Fisheries Queensland are in the process of considering the future management direction of the T4 fishery, focusing on providing incentive for industry to invest in more efficient and environmentally friendly Danish seine gear through improved confidence in the management arrangements in the fishery including regulating for:

1. The stout whiting fishery area to be extended south of the current area to the NSW border (deeper than 20 fathoms) to reduce competition for space with other T4, T1 and T2 operators and to spread the take of stout whiting throughout the distribution of the species (currently allowed under permit),
2. Danish Seine be regulated as a permitted apparatus in the fishery to promote the efficiency and environmental benefits of this apparatus over otter trawl gear for this species (currently allowed under permit),
3. Relaxation of maximum boat restrictions from 20 m to 25 m to allow for the investment in boats better suited and equipped to fish stout whiting with Danish seine, and
4. Potentially aligning quota recording, reporting, trading and compliance with the systems established for other quota managed fisheries in Queensland.

### **Recommendations**

1. No extension to the current trawl area except for operators using Danish seine apparatus. Danish purse seine, from initial test results would seem to have the potential to take only the more bottom dwelling species and fish that can move upward in the water column can escape the slow moving net e.g. Snapper, bait species etc.

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2. All standard trawl gear to be phased out over the next 2 years in favour of Danish seine. Standard trawl gear takes everything as there are no requirements for BRD's (by catch reduction devices) in this fishery. TED's (turtle excluder devices) do minimize the take of the bigger species but the smaller fish are vulnerable e.g. reef species etc.
3. Bycatch reporting should be mandatory.
4. Considering the lack of effort by most operators their permits should be either
  - a. Cancelled or
  - b. Only 10% of their quota allocation allowed to be transferred.

*This submission is valid until 31 December 2011. Sunfish Queensland also reserves the right to amend any statements in this document should circumstances change or new information be forthcoming.*

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