

MEDIA RELEASE

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Genuine recreational fishers deserve a fair go

Genuine recreational fishers must be protected against the imposition of over-restrictive fish possession limits says Shadow Fisheries Minister Adrian Pederick.

'As the only Australian state without a possession limit, South Australia is vulnerable to intensive fishing forays from interstate that accumulate large quantities of fish to take back across the border' Mr Pederick says.

The contentious subject of a possession limit on top of a bag limit has been the subject of strong debate for years.

'The current limits do leave SA fish stocks open to exploitation and fair-minded recreational fishers agree some overall limit has merit.

'What's vital here is that we recognise the right of genuine recreational fishers to enjoy the country's most popular recreational pastime.

'A flexible system will enable the occasional or once-a-year fishing holiday to be fully enjoyed, bringing economic benefit and regional tourism without threatening our precious and unique fish stocks.

'State Fisheries Minister Michael O'Brien is talking about setting a possession limit at three or four days bag limit. This treats all recreational fishermen like cheats.

'A flexible system such as that operating in Western Australia would curb the real cheats yet allow the traditional family fishing holiday that is so much a part of SA lifestyle.

'The WA possession limit of 20kg of fish fillets equates to about 170 King George Whiting, SA's most popular species.

'At current SA daily limits of 12 per person, this is a solid week's fishing for two people. (The weight limit covers all fish species combined.)

'Other flexible options such as labelling and special permits could also be considered to ensure the fisheries' sustainability and maximum possible benefit from recreational fishing.'