



Friday 5 October 2018

IMAS to conduct national survey of recreational bluefin tuna catch

On behalf of the Australian Government, IMAS is to conduct a national survey of recreational tuna fishers aimed at gaining an understanding of the recreational harvest of Southern Bluefin Tuna (SBT).

The [survey was launched this week](#) by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources.

IMAS lead investigator Dr Sean Tracey said this is the first comprehensive survey of recreational SBT fishers and covers four of the States where the species is caught: South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and Tasmania.

"SBT are an iconic pelagic fish found in the open seas of the southern hemisphere," Dr Tracey said.

"Managed internationally as a single stock, they are currently recovering from critically low levels."

Dr Tracey said that while compulsory catch reporting is required for the commercial sector, the recreational harvest of SBT has not been estimated at a national level.

"Recreational fishing for SBT in Australia has a long history, but in recent years we've seen a growing interest from the recreational sector as the fish have become more available inshore.

"The fishery is recognised as providing significant socio-economic benefits to many regional communities.

"This survey provides an opportunity to estimate the recreational harvest, and to better understand the nature and scale of this important recreational fishery," Dr Tracey said.

The national survey will run from December this year through to the end of November 2019, and will use a suite of proven survey methods to provide scientifically robust catch estimates.

Media contact: Andrew Rhodes (03) 6226 6683, email: ajrhodes@utas.edu.au

Information released by:

Communications and Media Office

University of Tasmania

+61 3 6226 2124

Media.Office@utas.edu.au

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