

# Australian Recreational Fishing Foundation 2022 election platform on behalf of 5 million Australians



**AUSTRALIAN  
RECREATIONAL  
FISHING  
FOUNDATION**



## #GoFish

Generating Outstanding  
Fishing Infrastructure Stewardship & Habitats

ARFF Members



# Fishers want a government that understands, supports and invests in recreational fishing

Recreational fishers are the largest aquatic user stakeholder group in Australia. Every year more than **5 million** Australians spend more than **\$10 billion** going fishing. This makes recreational fishing one of the largest outdoor leisure/ sporting activities and **in COVID times fishing is more important than ever**. The significant economic, social and environmental value recreational fishing brings the nation is greater than that for many other sectors of the economy.

Australians expect their aquatic environments to be well managed resulting in healthy aquatic environments, abundant fish stocks and fantastic fishing experiences. This requires genuine recognition of recreational fishing by the federal government and a shift in the way we think about and manage our natural aquatic resources. **Fishers are looking for a government that supports, invests in, understands and celebrates recreational fishing.**

The Australian Recreational Fishing Foundation (ARFF) and its members are proposing a number of initiatives. Implementing these initiatives will significantly increase the social, environmental and economic benefits provided by fishing to all Australians for years to come. These initiatives will also enhance and protect our aquatic environments and with recreational fishers leading on initiatives that ensure good fishing for future generations. ARFF proposes that these initiatives be implemented through a true partnership between the next Federal Government and the recreational fishing community.

**Recreational fishers want a recognised seat at the table and a genuine say when key decisions are made that impact access to and management of key recreational fisheries or key aquatic habitats.**



# A Government that understands and supports recreational fishing

<p>A Government that understands and supports recreational fishing will develop and implement policy and regulations that enable;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An equitable share of Southern Blue Fin Tuna stocks for recreational fishers</li> <li>• Recognition of the social, economic and environmental value provided by forage fish</li> <li>• Protection of recreational fishing access through mechanisms such as the Offshore Energy Infrastructure Bill</li> <li>• Streamline planning, approval, deployment and monitoring of habitat enhancement structure and FADs in all commonwealth waters</li> </ul>	<p>Helping fishers help Australia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding of ARFF as the recognised national peak body for recreational fishing in Australia.</li> <li>• Capacity building within the Recreational sector to ensure meaningful input into Commonwealth fisheries management processes.</li> <li>• Support for a bi-annual national recreational fishing conference bringing together leaders from across the country</li> <li>• Establishing a \$5m community grants program targeted at recreational fishing clubs and organisations to boost their ability to hold community events and activities to create benefits at the grassroots.</li> <li>• Establishing a \$10m National Recreational Fishing Safety Program</li> <li>• Highly successful 'Tuna Champions' program model expansion to other appropriate fisheries.</li> </ul>	<p>Making fishing better Infrastructure Fund</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing a \$20m land-based fishing access fund to leverage into state-based processes to create new fishing locations and refurbish existing locations</li> <li>• Investing \$35m in designing, installing and monitoring 20 artificial reefs around Australia</li> <li>• Investing \$5m in a National FADs program in Commonwealth waters providing maximum opportunity and creating new fishing experiences.</li> </ul>	<p>Landcare for the Waterways - Fisher Driven Fish Habitat Restoration Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build capacity of fishers to undertake habitat improvement projects, including active citizen science initiatives</li> <li>• Establish a national network to guide and support fishers deliver projects and activities that improve their local fish habitats.</li> <li>• Develop and deliver a grant program, administered by ARFF that will fund fish habitat improvement projects, with active involvement of recreational fishers and strong citizen science</li> <li>• Tell our habitat restoration stories to the Australian public</li> <li>• Develop and deliver a range of stewardship events, activities and online campaigns that increase uptake of latest sustainable fishing practices</li> </ul>
<p>ZERO COST</p>	<p>\$20m</p>	<p>\$60m</p>	<p>\$20m</p>
<p>\$100m national package to support Australia's 5,000,000 recreational fishers</p>			

# A Government that understands and supports recreational fishing

As Australia's largest aquatic stakeholder group, the 5 million Australians who go fishing every year are significantly affected by Government policy. The needs of recreational fishing are currently not well recognised in policy or in management of Australia's public owned fish resources. We would like commitment that recreational fishers are actively sought to participate in decision making in any changes of policy impacting fisheries, for example the Murray Darling Basin, Marine Parks and other relevant decisions.

To improve this requires;

- A government that puts greater emphasis on balanced resource sharing between recreational, commercial and indigenous fishing, for example an equitable share of Southern Blue Fin Tuna stocks for recreational fishers
- Recognising the social, economic and cultural value of recreational fishing if fisheries including but not limited to; legislation, policies rules, management plans, and decision making and advisory forums.
- Protection of recreational fishing access through mechanisms such as the Offshore Energy Infrastructure Bill
- No changes to marine parks that will negatively impact fishing access
- Streamline planning, approval, deployment and monitoring of habitat enhancement structure and FADs in all commonwealth waters

**While these initiatives represent zero cost commitments, they demonstrate the government understands and supports recreational fishing and they would provide a significant benefit to millions of Australians**



# Helping fishers help Australia

ARFF (Australia's peak recreational fishing body) is committed to leadership in modern recreational fishing practices and management. The millions of Australians who fish want to help, however, many of them don't know what to do or how they can get involved. As a result, recreational Fisher's collective voice is easily lost or disjointed. Fisheries management is a complex balance of scientific and public policy and most fishers are not equipped to provide the level of input required to inform better management.

Recent legislative amendments to the *Fisheries Administration Act 1991* and the *Fisheries Management Act 1991* provide for explicit recognition of recreational and Indigenous fishers and require the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) to take the interests of both these fishers and commercial fishers into account in all decisions. A key finding of the Productivity Commission inquiry into Marine Fisheries and Aquaculture was the need for greater recognition of recreational fishing in fisheries management. There remains an urgent and pressing need to support the recreational fishing sector to fully engage and contribute in a meaningful and collective way to the fisheries management systems that are in place.

- Funding of ARFF as the recognised national peak body for recreational fishing in Australia.
- Capacity building within the Recreational sector to ensure meaningful input into Commonwealth fisheries management processes.
- Support for a bi-annual national recreational fishing conference bringing together leaders from across the country
- Establishing a \$5m community grants program targeted at recreational fishing clubs and organisations to boost their ability to hold community events and activities to create benefits at the grassroots.
- Establishing a \$10m National Recreational Fishing Safety Program
- Highly successful 'Tuna Champions' program model expansion to other appropriate fisheries, for example Kingfish or Mackerel fisheries.

**FISHERS HELP AUST PACKAGE:** \$20 million



# Making fishing better Infrastructure fund

Australians love to fish and one of the best ways to make fishing better is by creating more places to fish and improving existing fishing locations. This can be done by building more jetties and platforms, refurbishing existing infrastructure, installing artificial reefs and FADs. Investment to creating more accessible fishing is always well received. Noting many of these investments require approvals under state-based processes, there is a great opportunity for the federal government to directly leverage into these processes to ensure any Australian wanting to fish get a great experience.

When properly planned, developed, and executed, jetties, platforms, artificial reefs and FADs provide positive environmental, economic, and social benefits.

Jetties and platforms improve accessibility, make fishing more inclusive and connect people to the aquatic environment. Jetties and platforms often require significant funds providing a great opportunity for co-funding with states who are likely to ultimately take responsibility for these structures.

Purpose built reefs can enhance fisheries production, biodiversity and recreational fishing experiences.

- Establishing a \$20m land-based fishing access fund to leverage into state-based processes to create new fishing locations and refurbish existing locations
- Investing \$35m in designing, installing and monitoring 20 artificial reefs around Australia
- Investing \$5m in a National FADs program in Commonwealth waters providing maximum opportunity and creating new fishing experiences.

**BETTER FISHING INFRASTRUCTURE PACKAGE: \$60 million**



# Landcare for the Waterways - Fisher Driven Fish Habitat Restoration Program

ARFF believes Australia's 5 million recreational fishers have a major role to play in protecting and restoring our marine, estuary and freshwater environments. Fishers have a vested interest in healthy environments as these environments underpin the fishing experiences that are so important to recreational fishers.

The scale of change required to restore quality fish habitats across Australia is huge and will require recreational fishers (as the largest group of aquatic stakeholders) to be directly involved in habitat projects. Given the right support, guidance and science to determine solutions to local fish habitat impact, fishers can make a considerable difference to the health of the environment. Investing in improving habitats through actively engaging recreational fishers will result in achieving change at a scale that makes a lasting difference to our waterways and fish stocks into the future.

Investment to restore our waterways and generate opportunities for the millions of recreational fishers to be stewards of their local waterways and fisheries resources, including active facilitation of recreational fishers to specifically designed habitat restoration projects, events, activities and online campaigns will require;

- Build capacity of fishers to undertake habitat improvement projects, including active citizen science initiatives
- Establish a national network to guide and support fishers deliver projects and activities that improve their local fish habitats.
- Develop and deliver a grant program, administered by ARFF that will fund fish habitat improvement projects, with active involvement of recreational fishers and strong citizen science
- Tell our habitat restoration stories to the Australian public
- Develop and deliver a range of stewardship events, activities and online campaigns that increase uptake of latest sustainable fishing practices

**FISHER DRIVEN FISH HABITAT PACKAGE: \$20 million**

