



INDUSTRY CALLS ON GOVERNMENT TO ADDRESS 'UNFINISHED BUSINESS' OF FISHERIES REFORM

The peak body of the State's iconic marine scalefish fishery today called on both major political parties to support the 'unfinished business' of the long-running commercial fisheries reform.

Executive Officer of the Marine Fisher's Association, Barbara Venn, said "While the reform objectives to ensure that commercial fish stocks continue to remain sustainable and improve the economic performance of operators are laudable, the package's implementation has resulted in a number of unintended consequences which urgently need addressing".

She added that that the most important of these were:

- The reform has made many commercial fishers less profitable, not more, with many facing dramatic increases in debt levels just to remain in the fishery
- The fishery's record high Government licence fees, which are the highest in Australia, at over 14% of revenues
- Ownership of SA's iconic fish resources such as whiting, gar, snapper and squid is rapidly being accumulated by out of state investors. The majority of snapper quota is already owned by these investors.

"Unless these issues are addressed urgently" she said, "our fish stocks will be owned by 'absentee investors' and this will threaten local fish supplies in the State". She added, "It is imperative that the Government acts to address these issues so we protect this 186-year-old industry which contributes so much to regional areas of South Australia and which supplies local fish for all South Australians".

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