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WILL SOUTH AUSTRALIAN TOURISM GET CAUGHT IN THE NET?

Continued consultation and communication is the key to ensure **tourism** is fully considered within the issue of marine parks, as their impact on South Australian tourism is **two-fold**.

South Australian Tourism Industry Council Chief Executive Ward Tilbrook says coastal and marine tourism is a significant part of South Australia's nature-based tourism identity.

"Marine parks can portray a strong ecotourism marketing message; some of the world's most outstanding and highly demanded tourism experiences are associated with marine parks," Mr Tilbrook says.

"South Australia boasts many world-class marine tourism experiences. Swimming and diving with or viewing dolphins, seals, whales, sharks, cuttlefish and tuna are all magnificent South Australian experiences, which take place in quite defined locations.

"**However**, fishing for pleasure is also vitally important to South Australian tourism, with many regions attributing over 20% of their tourism to fishing."

Relative to the rest of Australia, South Australia has an above average participation by visitors in fishing. 11% of interstate tourists to our State go fishing and 15% of all South Australians who holiday in our own great State go fishing as part of their trip.

"Recreational fishing is already acknowledged by Government to be well managed through strict boat and bag limits. In addition, charter tourism fishing operators are controlled through licensing," Mr Tilbrook says.

"Scientific evidence should have to demonstrate why **additional** restrictions and prohibitions need to be introduced on these activities as part of marine parks."

"Recreational fishers & their families are tourists who collectively spend millions of dollars in local shops and businesses along our 5,000kms of coastline."

Research also shows that tourists who enjoy fishing are also more likely to participate in other nature based tourism activities like visiting beaches, national parks and bushwalking.

"The SA Tourism Industry Council acknowledges that parts of our coastline face increasing pressure and marine parks are not solely aimed at recreational fishing but are intended to

protect areas against the impacts of a range of development activities, including mining, commercial fishing, dredging and discharge,” Mr Tilbrook says.

“It is important that Government has a focus on the health of our marine environment but it does need to provide definitive science on how recreational & charter fishing is threatening marine plant and animal life in South Australian waters, to justify any further restrictions or prohibitions on recreational and charter fishing in South Australia.

“The SA Tourism Industry Council is consulting with both its members in the tourism industry and the Government to ensure that the impacts on tourism are fully understood and considered within the Marine Parks issue and there is a sensible outcome.”

As South Australia’s peak tourism body, the South Australian Tourism Industry Council represents over 550 members and its’ role is to engage in all of the processes that shape our State’s tourism future.