

Chairperson's Introduction

J.G. Pepperell

Pepperell Research & Consulting Pty Ltd
PO Box 818
Caringbah NSW 2229

The history of recreational fishing is long. Bone fish hooks have been found in Europe which are at least 6 000 years old, and it is highly likely that wooden gorges were used for thousands of years before that. Of course, it can be argued that these methods of fishing were primarily for subsistence, but in those halcyon days of plenty, I would imagine that fishing was good and that recreation was an important component of a fishing trip.

In contrast, the history of quantifying the catch and other parameters of recreational fishing is very short; in fact, only of the order of forty years or so. Recreational fishing is a universal pursuit, and in most western countries, is widely regarded as a right rather than a privilege. In the face of increasing competition for resources, the need to quantify and monitor all aspects of recreational fishing has never been greater. The question is, how?

Fisheries managers would wish to know the answer to the question: What is the total recreational fishing effort and catch in a given fishery? Sociologists, politicians, economists, town planners and business people would also want to know: How many people fish recreationally? How often do they fish? How much do they

spend on fishing? How much would they be willing to spend? Who are they (what are their demographics)? What are their dynamics? What do they want? What do they perceive about recreational fishing? What are the projections for all of these variables? and finally, How will they vote?

Attempts to answer many, if not all of these questions are quite recent, and approaches to answering them have varied from country to country. We are fortunate at this Workshop to have the opportunity to hear about these approaches on a broad scale in the four countries which have, I believe, gone farthest down the track towards those goals.

In this Session, we will attempt to discern similarities and differences in approaches to these problems in South Africa, the United States, New Zealand and Australia. Rudy van der Elst outlines his country's unique and ongoing 'Marine Linefish System' by which recreational catch and effort are routinely monitored on a broad scale. Stephen Malvestuto emphasises the utility of creel surveys in not only measuring catch and effort, but also in providing biological and human data on recreational fisheries. Laurel Teirney gives a review of a major national survey on recreational fishing in New

Zealand and importantly, shows how these data have already been applied to management problems; and finally, David McGlennon provides a comprehensive review of surveys and studies of recreational catch and effort in Australia. Interestingly, David's review does not support the oft-heard claim that recreational fishing effort has been and is increasing dramatically and inexorably.

We don't all have the same problems and solutions to recreational issues, but we can certainly gain by listening to the advice of those who are at the coalface in different countries.