

# PUBLIC



MR P.Benson

Hon.Brian Ellis MLC  
Chairman  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Dear Sir,

RE:PETITION no 67

"Oppose the closure of all waters including Oyster Harbour"

Thankyou for your letter dated 14th May 2010 and the opportunity to provide a written submission.

This petition was gathered in a short period of time,mostly at retail fish outlets,in respose to one gathered opposing net fishing in Oyster Harbour,over a much longer period of time.

With the introduction of the South Coast Estuarine Fishery Management Plan in 2005,Professional fishers in the Albany and South Coast area lost vast amounts of time,gear length,and large areas of water.Any further loss of fishing areas would be detrimental to the viability of some fishermen,fresh fish outlets,restaurants and the fish buying public,including tourists.

The closure of Oyster Harbour would also impact on Albany Harbour and Wilsons Inlet in particular,as fishermen from Oyster Harbour would be forced to move into these areas alongside those already working these areas,thus putting more pressure on fish stocks in these systems.

Oyster Harbour already has closures to Professional fishers including the King and Kalgan Rivers which run into the Harbour, other areas that are closed for certain periods of the year, and there are several Oyster and mussel farms which take up large areas also resticting the area available to be fished. Most other estuaries that are fished Professionally including Wilson's Inlet in the West and Beaufort in the East,have large closed areas and/or time cloures,eg six months of the year closures.

Professional fishermen have many restrictions on the type of gear to be used,net lengths,seasonal closures etc,whereas amatuier fishermen do not have any area or time closures,they can fish any area,anytime.

A recent Government South Coast Review was held,looking into the Fishery from all aspects and did not recommend any further closures.This was an extensive Review with a lot of effort and no doubt at considerable cost,which would seem to be a waste of time and resources,all because someone outside of the Fisheries Department thinks netting should be banned in Oyster Harbour.

Albany has always been a major fishing centre and needs a consistant supply of fresh table fish and crabs for the population of locals and tourists who wish to eat fresh fish.80% of the people that eat fish in W.A. buy their fish as they cannot, or do not want to catch their own.

The Estuarine Fishery on the South Coast has operated sustainably in the Albany area for over 150 years.

Department of Fisheries Regional Manager, Phil Shaw said a recent assessment of the South Coast Estuarine Fishery did not indicate there were any problems with the sustainability of Black Bream stock in Oyster Harbour. (article Albany Advertiser 11-3-2010.)

The South Coast Estuarine Fishery in conjunction with the W.A Fishing Industry Council, Fisheries Research and Development Corporation and Ocean Watch Australia has developed a CODE OF PRACTICE FOR RESPONSIBLE FISHING (copy included).

As stated in the petition there is no evidence that any closures are necessary.

We have not taken our complaint to the Parliamentary Commissioner for administrative Investigations. (Ombudsman).

Yours sincerely,



G.M. SHARP

CO-PETITION PROMOTER  
WITH MR P. BENSON

31-5-2010