



*FRDC acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land, and pay our respects to their elders past and present. We acknowledge the special relationship that Indigenous Australians have with their traditional lands and waters.*

## **Recreational Fishing Southern Bluefin Tuna Briefing notes September 2019**



### **Species overview**

Southern Bluefin Tuna (SBT) is a highly migratory biological species that spawns in the north-east Indian Ocean and migrates throughout the temperate Southern Ocean around Australia. SBT constitutes a single, highly migratory biological stock that spawns in the north-east Indian Ocean and migrates throughout the temperate southern oceans, supporting a number of international fisheries. This global stock is classified as recovering on the Status of Australian Fish Stock Reports (2018) <https://www.fish.gov.au/report/251-Southern-Bluefin-Tuna-2018>

The biological stock of SBT is fished by Australian fishers endorsed to fish in the Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery (Commonwealth) —and members of the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT). Fishers in the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (Commonwealth) and the Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery (Commonwealth) who have quota for SBT can retain catches of the species. The species is also caught by recreational fishers in the waters off southern Australia, and there are other sources of unaccounted mortalities, including catches by fleets that are not members of CCSBT.

### **Overview of Recreational Fishing SBT projects**

FRDC has invested in five recent projects that relate to SBT recreational fishing. These projects have been developed in consultation with the Australian Fisheries Management Association (AFMA), the Australian Commonwealth Government's Department of Agriculture, FRDC's Recfishing Research Subprogram, and in one instance the Commonwealth Research Advisory Committee. The five projects address the following information needs:

- Assessing the survival of SBT post release
- Determining the options for measuring the recreational fishing catch of SBT
- Assessing the non-market value of SBT as it relates to recreational fishing
- Improving the stewardship and communication of SBT recreational fishing

The Commonwealth Department of Agriculture has used the results of projects 2012-022.20 and 2012-022.40 '*Development of methods for obtaining national estimates of the recreational catch of Southern Bluefin Tuna*', to invest in a national SBT recreational fishing survey.

## List of projects Stakeholder Planning Workshop outcomes

The summary details of the following active and completed projects can be found on the FRDC website ([www.frdc.com.au](http://www.frdc.com.au)).

Title	<a href="#">2017-123 The role of the recreational fisher in the stewardship of the SBT fishery</a>
Research provider	University of Tasmania
Principal investigator	Sean Tracey
Project Status	Active
Project description	<p>The primary goal of the education program is to reduce unnecessary mortality of SBT by the recreational sector. This will be achieved by focusing on activities related to both the harvest and release components of the fishery (<a href="http://www.tunachampions.com.au/">http://www.tunachampions.com.au/</a>). Education related to best practice handling and processing of catch to maximise meat quality and consideration of the amount of meat retained will be promoted to reduce unutilised harvest. An increase in post-release survival will be facilitated through education on best practice catch-and-release-and-tagging techniques (developed via FRDC Project 2013-025- Capture-induced physiological stress and post-release survival of recreationally caught Southern Bluefin Tuna). These components is expected to increase resource stewardship by the recreational sector, along with education in relation to the need to better quantify and understand the recreational harvest of SBT.</p> <p>Promotion of the education program will be multi-faceted and pervasive to ensure the broadest engagement of recreational fishers targeting SBT. The evaluation process of the communications strategy will facilitate the development of effective and evidence-based engagement strategies for the recreational sector into the future.</p> <p>This project has close links with the AFMA-led FRDC funded project which will produce a documentary titled 'Changing the Trajectory'. This documentary will serve as a key source of background information to this education program on all aspects, current and historical, of the SBT fishery.</p>
Title	<a href="#">2017-115 An assessment of the non-market value of landed fish from the Southern Bluefin Tuna (SBT) recreational fishery</a>
Research provider	Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES)

Principal investigator	Robert Curtotti
Project Status	Active
Project description	<p>The Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences is currently undertaking a project that seeks to understand the value that recreational fishers of Southern Bluefin Tuna (SBT) place on retaining fish caught, versus the value of catch and release of SBT. For the recreational angler of SBT the total value placed on the experience is the composite of their value for fishing for the catch and release experience and the option to retain fish for food use or other purposes. A choice-modelling non-market valuation technique is used to elicit anglers' value for catch and release and retaining the fish. Given the global concern about the biological status of tuna stocks, and a high propensity for tuna to survive post release, it is important for policy makers to understand both the quantum of these values, and if they differ, so that appropriate policies can be put in place that allow this activity to sustainably continue into the future. While Australia is allocated a share of the global SBT stock through its engagement with the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT), Australia's recreational and commercial SBT fisheries do not have a formal resource sharing arrangement in place. It is expected that the output from this project will assist in informing and/or fine-tuning any resource sharing arrangements that may be put in place in future.</p>
Title	<a href="#">2017-098 Southern Bluefin Tuna: Changing The Trajectory</a>
Research provider	Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA)
Principal investigator	Matt Daniel
Project Status	Active
Project description	<p>As part of a broader, multifaceted strategy to educate both recreational fishers and the general public about Southern Bluefin Tuna (SBT), a sixty minute documentary, titled Changing the Trajectory, led by well-known and influential recreational fishing identity Al McGlashan is being produced. The aim of the documentary and social media campaign is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• educate and inform recreational fishers and the general public about the current status of the SBT stock, its history and how it can be used sustainably into the future.</li> <li>• Demonstrate practices and techniques that can be used by the recreational fishing sector to support the continued recovery of SBT.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To distribute and promote the documentary across key media channels including mainstream TV, social media (Facebook, YouTube etc), print and radio</li> <li>• To use the documentary as a public introduction to other extension and education elements regarding SBT that will follow in related projects.</li> </ul> <p>It is expected that the documentary will be screened on an Australian commercial television network. To complement the documentary a number of short educational clips will also be produced.</p> <p>Recent Relevant Completed FRDC Projects:</p>
Title	<a href="#">2013-025 Assessing post-release survival of Southern Bluefin Tuna from recreational fishing</a>
Research provider	University of Tasmania
Principal investigator	Sean Tracey
Project Status	Completed
Title	<a href="#">2012-022.20 Development of methods for obtaining national estimates of the recreational catch of southern bluefin tuna; and 2012-022.40 Onsite survey sub-project</a>
Research provider	Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, VFA
Principal investigator	Andy Moore, James Andrews
Project Status	Both completed