

## **Australian Government Resource Sharing Principles for Commonwealth Fisheries**

In developing a Resource Sharing arrangement between sectors, a number of general principles should be taken into account. Following consultation with stakeholders, these principles have been revised from those developed under the Coolangatta Communiqué.

- a) Fisheries resources are a common property resource managed by government for the equal benefit to present and future generations.
- b) Access to the resources requires the ongoing sustainability of those resources and the ecosystems on which they depend.
- c) Access to the fisheries resources will be based on the application of ecologically sustainable development (ESD) principles, as outlined in Section 3A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.
- d) The Australian Government shall determine a sustainable biological impact level for all Commonwealth-managed fisheries.
- e) The Australian Government shall consult relevant stakeholders to establish specific resource sharing arrangements for each Commonwealth fishery as the need arises.
- f) Management measures for each user group shall ensure that its impact on resources is constrained within the resource sharing arrangement set for that group, including bycatch and mortality of released fish.
- g) Management measures must provide users with the opportunity to access their share in a meaningful way.
- h) Decisions on resource sharing arrangements should be taken only after considering the best available information, accepting that some decisions will need to be made on the basis of uncertain information.
- i) Government should provide the opportunity for adequate consultation with, and feedback to, interested and affected stakeholders prior to the implementation of any resource sharing decision.
- j) Where re-allocation of fisheries resources from one user group to another results in erosion of existing rights, there will be a need for consideration of compensation and adjustment issues.
- k) With allocation of rights comes a responsibility on all sectors to ensure that the resource sharing process is adequately resourced, and that costs are equitably shared.