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MEDIA RELEASE

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Understanding the impact of recreational fishing

A new survey launched today will help build a better understanding of the demographics, attitudes and social and economic contribution of Australian recreational fishers.

Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources Senator Richard Colbeck said the survey would provide a clearer picture of one of Australia's most loved past times.

"Recreational fishing ranges from families taking their kids fishing once a year on the family holiday, to avid fishers who fish hundreds of days using equipment worth tens of thousands of dollars," Minister Colbeck said.

"The 12 month survey launched today will provide us with a better understanding of rec fishers across Australia including where they fish, how often they fish, what motivates them and what is important to their experience.

"This will be an important tool in continuing to adapt Australia's world-class fisheries management practices to the needs and impact of our rec fishers.

"This data-driven approach stands in stark contrast to the anti-science, anti-rec fishing marine parks lock-ups proposed by Tony Burke and Labor.

"The last national recreational fishing survey was undertaken in 2001—18 years ago and much has changed in that time.

"This study will make use of new online techniques to survey the Australian population, and aims to address many of the shortcomings of typical online survey methods.

"The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources is working with the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC), the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics (ABARES) and the University of Canberra to implement the survey.

"ABARES and the University of Canberra have developed a methodology which reduces the cost of running these surveys, while maintaining the robustness required by the Australian Government.

"We must continue to balance the social and economic considerations of recreational fishing with the need to ensure the sustainable management of Australia's fisheries for the benefit of all Australians."