

# Let's Talk Fish

Let's Talk Fish: Assisting industry to understand and inform conversations about the sustainability of wild-catch fishing, 2012-2014

## Funding

Fisheries research and Development Corporation,  
\$195,000

## Investigators/ Researchers

Dr Nicki Mazur, Professor Allan Curtis and  
Andy Bodsworth

## Description

The wild-catch sector of Australia's commercial fishing industry operates in a challenging environment that is characterised by dynamic global economic forces, diverse environmental conditions, and complex and competing interests of diverse stakeholders. Like any primary industry, the wild-catch sector's sustainability ultimately depends what is ecologically possible, how well that industry generates benefits in excess of costs, and how consistent the industry's practices are with prevailing social customs and norms – that is, its *social acceptability*.

Despite some important fisheries management improvements, recent public debates and research suggests that parts of society still believe that the wild-catch sector of the fishing industry falls short of being 'sustainable'. Public debates like these can have important negative effects on an industry's viability – affecting product demand or prices, the regulatory environment, and levels of community support. Strong future performance of wild catch fisheries depends on productive three-way communications between the fishing industry, their stakeholders, and the wider public. In order to achieve those conversations, however, we need greater understanding of what drives social acceptability and how it influences decision-making.

This research will investigate the basis of people's attitudes towards the sustainability of the wild-catch sector of the commercial fishing industry. A mail survey and stakeholder interviews and workshops will be used to gather information about the attitudes of three audience groups (key stakeholders, decision makers and the general public.)



## Objectives

This project aims to:

- obtain comprehensive and reliable knowledge about why people believe what they do about the wild-catch sector;
- how and to what extent those views influence various fisheries management decisions; so that we are in a better position to
- identify ways to improve the fishing industry's contribution to public debate, including ways to improve negative attitudes towards them and/or further refine their practices



*Fishing Trawlers, Port Lincoln South Australia*

## Outputs

There will be an Engagement Strategy that will identify how industry can most effectively interact with different non-industry audiences on key sustainability issues affecting the wild-catch sector.

For more information, please contact:

**Dr Nicki Mazur, Project Manager**  
Institute for Land, Water and Society  
Charles Sturt University  
Ph 0409 032 284

[nicki.mazur@grapevine.net.au](mailto:nicki.mazur@grapevine.net.au)  
[www.csu.edu.au/research/ilws](http://www.csu.edu.au/research/ilws)

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