Barra Bonanza Revealed in Fishery Status Reports 2003

Kon Vatskalis MLA
Minister for Fisheries

A 300% increase in farmed barramundi production and the highest level of accreditation for two of the Top End’s fisheries are just a couple of the key highlights revealed in the Fishery Status Reports 2003.

Fisheries Minister, Kon Vatskalis, launched the annual publication today, saying the Fishery Status Reports provides Territorians with a comprehensive overview of our important aquatic resources. Furthermore, the report highlights the diverse range of projects and activities successfully undertaken by the Department of Business, Industry and Resource Development’s Fisheries Group in the 2003 calendar year.

“This document covers essential aspects such as wild harvest fisheries, the developing aquaculture industry, aquatic pest management, recreational and fishing tourism activities and indigenous fishing sectors,” said Mr Vatskalis.

“Fishing is the lure of the Territory. The harvesting and sustainable management of our aquatic environment in a responsible and professional manner contributes to our social and economic growth, and keeps the Territory moving ahead.”

Mr Vatskalis said some of the selected highlights of the Fishery Status Reports 2003 include:

- The gross value production from Northern Territory wild harvest fisheries and aquaculture activities was $32m and $25m respectively;
- The three highest value Territory wild harvest fisheries were shark ($10.3m), barramundi ($4.4m) and mud crab ($4.3m);
- The highest value aquaculture activities were pearlimg ($19m) and barramundi farming ($5.9m);
- In 2003, farmed barramundi production increased by 300% compared to 2002 figures;
- The Territory’s Spanish mackerel and Timor reef fisheries received the highest level of accreditation against the Australian’s Government’s Guidelines for Ecologically Sustainable Management of Fisheries.

“I’m proud to say we have some of the best fisheries in Australia - the Northern Territory is recognised for its considerable expertise in tropical fisheries, and is leading the world in pioneering innovative technology such as the Genetag Spanish Mackerel Tagging Project,” said Mr Vatskalis.

The Minister said the report will be sent to all key fishery stakeholders including representative bodies and Aboriginal land councils.