FISH DEATH REPORTS HELP PROTECT WATERWAYS

Acting Fisheries Minister Elliot McAdam has thanked members of the public who reported a fish death at Corroboree Billabong earlier this week.

Local fishermen reported about 60 dead fish at the northern end of Corroboree Billabong on Monday.

Mr McAdam said Fisheries officers were able to investigate the incident immediately.

“Fisheries officers found a further 150 dead fish downstream, including about 100 catfish and about 50 barramundi.

“Corroboree Billabong is just starting to break its banks at the moment, causing water to pool on the floodplain, where it becomes deoxygenated.

“The investigation found the fish deaths were caused by intense localised showers that washed the deoxygenated water off the floodplains into the billabong.

“This is a natural event that we see each year and the situation returns to normal after prolonged rains.

“It is important that members of the public report any sightings as soon as possible so thorough investigations can take place to ensure the safety of our waterways.

“Most fish deaths are a natural occurrence. However, in the past we have received reports and investigations found dead fish had been dumped in Darwin Harbour by an illegal foreign fishing vessel.

“Recently a number of dead fish were reported between Charles Point and Fish Reef, but unfortunately it was not reported until a few days later.

“We are reminding anglers to report any sightings of fish deaths, particularly at this time of the year when natural deaths are common on the Mary River,” Mr McAdam said.

At least 23 incidents of fish deaths have been reported on the Mary River in the past 10 years. The species range from barramundi, catfish, bony bream, saratoga and rainbow fish, as well as freshwater shrimps and crayfish.

Anglers can report any fish deaths by calling the Fisheries Response Hotline on 1800 891 136.

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