

AQUATIC RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2021

Second Reading

Resumed from 15 June.

MR P. LILBURNE (Carine) [10.25 am]: I rise in the Legislative Assembly this morning to support the Aquatic Resources Management Amendment Bill 2021, which was introduced by the Minister for Fisheries, Mr Don Punch. ARMA, as it is known, seeks to do a number of things. Firstly, it seeks to amend the meaning of “aquatic resource”; secondly, it seeks to remove the requirement for the CEO to publish notice of a decision to grant, vary or transfer an agricultural licence; and thirdly, it seeks to introduce a requirement on the minister to review the operation and effectiveness of ARMA after five years from the repeal of the Pearling Act 1990.

There is no doubt that marine resources is a topic close to the heart of the Carine electorate and its surrounds. The protected areas that conserve the biodiversity of underwater life in Western Australian marine parks are very important and dear to me. It was within the electorate of Carine, which I represent, that Western Australia’s first marine sanctuary, Marmion Marine Park, was established on 13 March 1987. My family moved into the Carine area in 1977 and have enjoyed the natural beauty of the area. My father bought a recreational boat for our family in 1978 and we regularly cruised the waters of the Marmion Marine Park after launching our boat at the Ocean Reef Marina. When we approached the marina along the limestone road with our boat on its trailer, at what is now the westernmost section of Ocean Reef Road, we were surrounded by banksia woodland and scrub.

As a child, I watched the first marina become established and patrolled by the Whitfords Volunteer Sea Rescue Group. I am also very, very happy with the current development of the Ocean Reef Marina by the McGowan Labor government; to see it move into the next phase is truly fantastic. I used to snorkel along the Three Mile Reef section of Marmion Marine Park. I dived to around three metres’ depth in crystal clear waters to see the abundant fish life. Species that I swam with included schools of herring, snapper, garfish, dhufish and king prawns. I also watched in awe at the behaviour of western rock lobsters, or crayfish, walking in single file along the bottom of the ocean. Lastly, I would like to state that I watched the magnificent sea lions on numerous islands in this marine park.

This magnificent experience as a young man created my interest in protecting the incredible biodiversity of our waters in Western Australia. When I enrolled in my first university degree, I chose environmental management as my minor area of qualification. During this time I was lectured and mentored by Professor Pierre Horwitz at Edith Cowan University. Professor Horwitz taught me how to calculate biomass in ecosystems, food webs and food chains, and their analysis. During my courses I completed environmental impact assessments inside the said Marmion Marine Park. The aesthetic value of Marmion Marine Park is further demonstrated by the Marmion Angling and Aquatic Club, which resides in my electorate. I attended this fantastic organisation last month when I was the guest of honour of the Rotary Club of Karrinyup. The sunsets over Marmion Marine Park bring enjoyment and pleasure to all who witness this daily phenomenon.

The amendments to this bill by the Minister for Fisheries will assist the breeding data and the decision-making processes for balancing the ecological sustainability between recreational and commercial stakeholders in the fishing community. The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development office carries out the scientific resources work to monitor the balance that I have previously discussed between recreational and commercial users of this resource.

I recently posted on my social media page a visit my family, friends and I made to the AQWA tourist attraction at Sorrento Quay Hillarys Boat Harbour. The biodiversity of the local marine environment within the Carine district, which I represent, is clearly displayed with the underwater aquarium travelator.

The WA McGowan Labor government is funding a \$6.8 million project to upgrade the jetties in the area through the WA Recovery Plan. The Fisheries Research and Development Corporation released a report in 2019 stating that commercial fishing and aquaculture contributed \$989 million per annum to the Western Australian economy and supported over 6 000 jobs in Western Australia. The establishment of an artificial reef seven kilometres off the coastline is underway within this area to support the sustainable fishing project controlled by the state government. This development by the McGowan Labor government will further enhance effective breeding areas for the native species in Western Australian waters.

The Aquatic Resources Management Act will enable a structured approach to providing secure fishing access rights for all sectors, but with resource sustainability at its core. One location in my electorate where people can gauge the scale and splendour of Marmion Marine Park is the Mount Flora Regional Museum in North Beach. This repurposed water tank that supplied fresh water to the developing suburbs of Carine, North Beach and Marmion now houses over 160 years of the local area’s history. People who cannot access the water or tourist attractions like AQWA can appreciate the natural beauty with the view from the observation deck on top of the Mount Flora Regional Museum.

In conclusion, I thoroughly endorse the amendments proposed in this bill and will support its progress through this place. This bill will strengthen the sustainable management of WA’s recreational and commercial fishing zones

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through centralised data gathering and increased regular regional research. I commend the Aquatic Resources Management Amendment Bill 2021 introduced by the Minister for Fisheries.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms M.M. Quirk): Member for Mount Lawley—landlocked Mount Lawley, I might add!

MR S.A. MILLMAN (Mount Lawley — Parliamentary Secretary) [10.33 am]: No, not at all, Madam Acting Speaker! You see, the electorate of Mount Lawley takes in the entirety of the suburb of Mt Lawley and travels up Walcott Street and then up Wanneroo Road, then you hang a right into Morley Drive, then you come back down Wellington Road, down Walter Road and then down Central Avenue. But when you get to the banks of the beautiful Derbarl Yerrigan, the Swan River, you see that the electorate actually comes through East Perth and Bardon Park. That whole stretch between Bardon Park and the East Perth power station is located within the wonderful electorate of Mount Lawley.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member, I am sorry I asked!

Mr S.A. MILLMAN: Not at all! It is important for people to understand that the Mount Lawley electorate stretches from Yokine in the north, Mt Yokine as they call it up there sometimes, through Mt Lawley, all the way down to the beautiful banks of the Swan River.

Mr D.J. Kelly: Member, do you have a yacht club on that stretch of the river so you could launch a bid for the America's Cup?

Mr S.A. MILLMAN: Sadly, no, although if you stand in Bardon Park, you can see the Maylands Yacht Club just there in the distance.

Mr D.J. Kelly: Maybe try a joint application with the member for Maylands!

Mr S.A. MILLMAN: Absolutely, member! One of the great state assets we can see when we stand on the shores of the Swan River is the brilliant Optus Stadium. When it is lit up it, it just looks incredible.

I rise to speak in support of the Aquatic Resources Management Amendment Bill 2021. I thank the former Minister for Fisheries for his interjection. The reason I stand to speak in support of this legislation is that fundamentally it speaks to the values of the McGowan government that are so important and influence and drive the way in which we deal with legislation in this place.

I start by thanking the member for Carine for his contribution and I apologise to him. I was supposed to be speaking before him, but I am glad I did not, because I was illuminated by his contribution. I must say to the member for Carine that the ocean front his constituents enjoy is some of the best ocean front in Perth. It is one of those beautiful spots. I saw a social media post this morning referring to Tim Winton's quote that when he stands on the shore with the continent to his back looking out over the water watching the sun descend, he has his bearings; he knows where he is. I have butchered the quote, but it speaks to what it means to be a citizen of Western Australia and a resident of Perth. Enjoying the brilliant beach frontage that the member for Carine has in his electorate is one of the great joys of many people in the electorate of Mount Lawley. We can head straight down Scarborough Beach Road or head to the Peasholm Street dog beach in Scarborough to exercise our dogs, which is something I love doing. The former member for Mirrabooka was also a regular attendee at that beach. It is a great community asset that is shared and loved by all.

That brings me back to the point I was going to make. This legislation again speaks to the sorts of things that this government does. Ever since we were elected in 2017, we have been assiduous in modernising our statutes—making sure they are fit for purpose and up to date. We have also been dedicated to cutting red tape, making sure that the necessary regulations are in place and that they are clear, precise and well understood. We are also interested in promoting sustainability. As a community and government, we are looking at ways in which we can strike the right balance to make sure that the regulatory regime that we have in place serves all aspects of the community for the foreseeable future. In striking the right balance, we have to make sure that the resources we have at our disposal can help diversify the economy and drive the growth in jobs.

I want to speak to the incredible asset that Western Australia has. I already touched on that point when I addressed the member for Carine's comments. This point has been made by many members in their contributions to this debate. I remember the extensive contribution from the member for Cockburn. Members would be aware, without taking account of the islands in the measurement, that Western Australia has over 10 000 kilometres of coastline from the Kimberley coast, the Pilbara coral coast, what is known as the Canning coastal region, the Batavia coast, the turquoise coast and the sunset coast—as we come down into the areas represented by the member for Moore, who is present in the chamber—to the south west coast and all the metropolitan coastline, which is enjoyed by thousands of people living in Perth. Then there are the south west capes, the Leeuwin coast to Albany along the south coast and then that south-east stretch of the south coast from Albany to the state border.

Even just today, I noticed that the way we manage our coastline is of intimate concern to people in the community. The member for Roe raised a grievance with the Minister for Fisheries. I was not in the chamber, but I was listening

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to that grievance and I could hear that there were many factors in play. Such a delicate balancing act needs to be maintained for us to deliver those important McGowan government objectives of modernising our statutes, cutting red tape, promoting sustainability and setting the right balance. When we think about all the areas that make up the Western Australian coastline, we can see why that is also important, because we are the beneficiaries of an incredible diversity that we get to enjoy. That is in stark contrast to many other jurisdictions. Two things sit side by side when it comes to enjoying that diversity. Firstly, there is the question of sustainability and, secondly, the exploitation of the resources in a sensible way. Although it is a beautiful coastline that provides tourism opportunities and a wonderful aesthetic, it also provides and supports jobs. Making sure that we get the balance right is incredibly important.

I was looking at some of the aquaculture that exists in the Kimberley. One of my constituents, Randall Wells, spoke to me the other day. He is a terrific chap who is on the Mount Lawley Senior High School Parents and Citizens Association. Randall is often in my office to talk about the need for a performing arts centre at Mount Lawley Senior High School. He has been lobbying me about that for quite a while. He was very pleased with the announcement that when Edith Cowan University relocates its facilities to the CBD, the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts facilities will be transferred to the high school. We agreed that the subcommittee of the P&C that dealt with whether or not the school would get a performing arts centre is probably *functus officio* now, as you would understand, Acting Speaker (Ms M.M. Quirk), having achieved its objective.

Randall is a business consultant and he talked to me about one of his clients who operates an aquaculture business off the Kimberley coast. This business demonstrates the way in which a sustainable, comprehensive and thoughtful management of the resources can work in concert—no pun intended when I have been talking about the performing arts centre—to deliver fantastic results for the community and also maintain a great environmental balance. He talked to me about two of the endeavours that his client is engaged in, which are farming the beautiful and prolific barramundi in the Kimberley and tying that in with farming tropical rock lobster. Obviously, there are important markets for those products in Australia and overseas. Trading these delicious commodities is really important. I cannot do his description justice, but because of the tidal flows in the north Kimberley, this is an incredibly environmentally sustainable endeavour that combines the aquaculture of the barramundi and the tropical rock lobster. They actually work in concert to promote the growth of both species in a commercially viable way.

Obviously, this bill will amend the Pearling Act. Pearling is an important part of the history, tradition and culture of the Kimberley. I listened to Michael Loney as he was taking a group of school students through the Parliament foyer reference the mother-of-pearl inlay in the black swan. That has been incorporated because of the important part pearling plays in the history and tradition of Western Australia. Randall also spoke to me about pearl meat. I had never heard of pearl meat, so forgive my ignorance.

The ACTING SPEAKER: It is delicious.

Mr S.A. MILLMAN: That is what everyone says.

Paspaley Pearls produces pearl meat. I will quote from its website. I will read it slowly because I will have to email the link to Hansard, but I will do that as well. It states —

Sourced from the pristine waters of Northern Australia, Pearl Meat is the adductor muscle of the *Pinctada maxima* oyster—the same species that produces Paspaley’s rare Australian South Sea pearls.

Pearl Meat is MSC certified, recognising the delicacy as a wild caught, sustainable seafood which can be traced to an environmentally sustainable source.

At the end of the oyster’s pearl producing lives, the edible part of the oyster—Pearl Meat—is simply rinsed in saltwater and frozen. In recent years, Pearl Meat has been adopted by some of the world’s leading western chefs as an exclusive, rare ingredient, with a mere six tons sourced annually.

Mr M.J. Folkard: With a little butter and garlic, my friend, it’s spectacular.

Mr S.A. MILLMAN: I am sure the member for Burns Beach would give it a fair crack. The website also states —
... Pearl Meat is sweet and firm—yet tender. Described as a cross between calamari and lobster in taste —

That is a great combination —

the flavour profile varies significantly depending on preparation.

Prized as a delicacy in Asia for centuries and highly regarded for its medicinal properties, Pearl Meat is an excellent source of Omega 3. It is low in salt, high in protein and contains no trans-fats.

Mr M.J. Folkard: It is an aphrodisiac, I believe.

Mr S.A. MILLMAN: Happily, it does not say that on the Paspaley Pearls website, so I cannot speak to that, member for Burns Beach!

The ACTING SPEAKER: I think giving out a strand of pearls would be more successful, member!

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Mr S.A. MILLMAN: What it does say, member, is —

An additional nutritional benefit is the presence of the trace element iodine which boosts metabolism and energy and increases thyroid function.

This is something of which I had no previous knowledge, yet in researching my very brief contribution for this legislation, I was minded to look at the diverse ways in which our aquaculture industries can work in concert to deliver such a variety of outcomes. Pearls, rock lobster, barramundi and pearl meat are all being produced in an environmentally sustainable way, supported by a government regulatory regime that also makes sure that the use of those resources will be valuable for future generations. This does not happen by accident; this is the result of focus, attention and hard work by the Minister for Fisheries and his predecessor. It speaks volumes to the calibre and capability of the McGowan government that these are the sorts of pieces of legislation that we bring to this chamber for debate and discussion.

I am very glad that the member for Bassendean is in the chamber because he has held a number of portfolios that relate to an excellent book by Tim Flannery called *Sunlight and Seaweed: An Argument for How to Feed, Power and Clean Up the World*. It deals with innovation, climate change and reducing the amount of carbon in the atmosphere. I recommend it to members who have not read it. The copy that I have is from the Parliamentary Library. I am about the return it shortly, so it will be there for anyone who wants to borrow it; feel free to grab it. One of the things it talks about is the commercial and industrial-scale farming of kelp as a source of high-quality protein, whether it be for livestock feed or other reasons. We have thousands of miles of ocean and kelp growing naturally in that ecosystem, which attracts carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and converts it into a high-quality protein that can be farmed on a commercial or industrial scale, all of which delivers incredible benefits for the environment and industry. Tapping into these new industries as they arise, mindful of the challenges that society faces from climate change, seems to me to provide an excellent opportunity for us to diversify our economy and take advantage of the strategic benefits that we have. As I said at the start, we have over 10 000 kilometres of coastline. We are uniquely placed to take advantage of these sorts of things.

One of the other industries that we are still wrestling with but is an ancient endeavour is tidal power. People will be aware that back in Roman times, tide mills—as a Millman I am particularly interested in this; thanks, member for Cottesloe—would take advantage of the shifting tides. As the tide flowed through, the one-way sluice gates would wait for the tide to drop and then the water would be at a higher level. Using the force of gravity, the water would flow back out through the gates and drive a water mill, a wheel, which would generate power to mill grain or whatever was necessary. This is an ancient technology. I do not think we have yet reached the point at which it can be applied on a wideranging commercial and industrial scale.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr S.A. MILLMAN: However, when we consider the extremely wide range of tides in Western Australia, if this is a technology that we can take advantage of, we will be well placed to exploit that as a resource because we are looking for innovative ways to generate electricity. These are the things that will allow us to maintain the lifestyle to which we have grown accustomed.

One of the other arguments Mr Flannery makes in his book relates to the good use of solar power, particularly when located close to saltwater sources. The salt water is converted to fresh water and the salts necessary to drive large-scale production. The example he uses is a hydroponics source in South Australia. With abundant sunlight and an abundant coastline, as we have in Western Australia, that is another terrific idea that I would love us to explore further when discussing how to properly manage our aquatic resources.

Another point I want to make before I conclude my contribution to this debate concerns the emphasis the McGowan government has put on environmental conservation. Although the majority of my contribution to this debate has relied on the ocean as a resource for generating jobs and economic development—this brings me back to the point the member for Carine made at the start—it is a wonderful place for us to go with families, friends and loved ones. It is a fantastic asset to enjoy, maintain and preserve for future generations. That has been an incredible focus of the McGowan government since 2017. In 2019 the McGowan government announced that it would expand the conservation estate by over five million hectares and that there would be a massive expansion in marine and aquatic reserves and also national parks onshore. The Minister for Environment is here now. Just last month she made an announcement about community consultation on the Houtman Abrolhos Islands as part of the preservation of that wonderful community asset for future generations. I want to reiterate that point and emphasise that now is the time to get involved in that community consultation. One of the great attributes of the members of the McGowan government is that we love listening to what the community has to say and to the contribution the community makes. These are evocative locations within Western Australia to which many people have a connection and have experienced and enjoyed. The way we strike the right balance for preserving these community assets for future generations is incredibly important and how we strike that balance is by listening to the community through the community consultation process that the Minister for Environment is now driving. It is about those four things that

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I said at the start. It is about modernising the statutes by bringing forward this sort of legislation, cutting red tape, and promoting sustainability—all of those things combine in this legislation. By doing that we are sending an unambiguous message to the community that we want to ensure they are with us as we continue the journey of making the most out of the wonderful environment we enjoy.

Finally, it is about making sure that we strike the right balance. When we look at this legislation and the way it balances all of those cooperative and competing interests, and the work the Minister for Environment is doing with the Houtman Abrolhos Islands, we can see that time and again this government is not driven by fringe ideology or a philosophical bias; it is driven by attentiveness to the concerns of the overwhelming majority of Western Australians and is making sure that when it comes to introducing legislation and policies so we can take advantage of the wonderful environment that we are the custodians of, we do it in a way that strikes the right balance. If members look at all the legislation we have introduced, the way we have done it and the plans we have for the future, they will see that striking the right balance is a key feature of our endeavour.

I congratulate both the former Minister for Fisheries and the current minister for bringing this bill before the chamber. Others have more eloquently described the effect of its statutory provisions, so I do not need to add anything to that. However, hopefully, my contribution has illuminated the philosophy that underpins it, from my perspective. I commend the bill to the house.

DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe — Leader of the Liberal Party) [10.55 am]: As a follow-up to the member for Mount Lawley's contribution, my Liberal Party colleague and former federal parliamentarian and federal minister, Hon Wilson Tuckey, is a keen proponent of tidal power. If the member wants to engage in some vigorous correspondence, I will pass on his details to the member! He is certainly a very keen supporter of it.

Mr D.J. Kelly: Tell him he should write to the paper about it.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I think he does, minister.

Mr D.J. Kelly: On many topics.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Yes. As was indicated by our lead speaker on this debate, I, too, support the Aquatic Resources Management Amendment Bill 2021. As I understand this bill as it is presented now, the only change from the same bill presented in this place last year is the inclusion of a review provision in clause 16 to require the insertion of new section 266A in the Aquatic Resources Management Act 2016, which is around having a prescribed period for review. That was an agreed amendment last time this bill was presented to Parliament.

For the record, and for when people look at this legislation, it is worthwhile recognising the genesis of this bill. This legislation finalises some good work that was started under the previous Liberal government to improve the management of important fisheries and aquaculture in Western Australia. The original act was a response to a nationally agreed approach to the sustainable resource-based management of fisheries. However, shortcomings in the bill prevented implementation of the provisions of the act due to a number of factors, including the way the fishing zones were set up, different catch limits and periods of catch in different zones. Those factors especially affected the pearl and rock lobster industries. This amended bill will rectify those shortcomings so that the act can be fully implemented. I understand that the previous minister engaged in thorough consultation with the fishing industry and that the industry is supportive of the changes in this bill.

The fishing and aquaculture industry is a very important part of our local economy, particularly in regional communities. When I was researching for the original bill, I was surprised that 85 per cent of commercial fishing activity in the state was conducted in remote coastal areas. That has a significant impact on those regional communities. It is important that this area is managed well. I was looking at some statistics collected by the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council in December 2019. In 2017–18 fishing and aquaculture contributed almost one billion dollars. The estimate was \$989 million. That is an enormous contribution, especially as it is focused in the regions. COVID-19 and the subsequent travel and trade restrictions around the world have, obviously, significantly reduced the value of the sector in the short-term; however, we can expect that trade to return to historic levels in the next 12 to 24 months.

The sector is also a major employer, which is important. We see the big dollars coming out of the mining industry, but if we look at the number of employees per dollar, it is perhaps not so much. But in this industry, for that income, there were 6 300 full-time equivalent employees prior to COVID-19 and, as I say, we would expect that to recover. The industry is a substantial contributor to the economic and employment wellbeing of the state. The sector income is dominated by the western rock lobster catch, which is obviously topical right now. As members would know, that fishery is under enormous stress because of the problems associated with the COVID-19 crisis and China's decision to impose trade restrictions on certain Australian commodities. When I visited rock lobster fishers a couple of years ago, they told me that something like 98 per cent of their produce went to China. I am not an economist and I do not pretend to be one, but I did suggest to them that I thought they were putting all their eggs in one basket and that that was a considerable risk. Of course, that certainly turned out to be the case when China embarked on trade restrictions. In 2017–18, the rock lobster fishery reported the gross value of its products as being \$392 million.

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Typically, for that sort of industry, the impact on the overall community would be a multiplier of up to four or five times. It is very valuable by itself.

Since the initial cataclysmic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the unofficial Chinese ban on Australian rock lobster imports last November, there has been an improvement in sales. Lower prices have certainly driven greater domestic consumption. I noticed that my supermarket aisles have freezers full of quite reasonably priced crayfish as domestic consumption has grown. Over the last few months, we have seen the dramatic emergence of a so-called grey market, whereby the product is finding its way into China via third countries, which has driven improvement. It has diminished some of the profit from that industry, but at least we are seeing significant growth, particularly in the rock lobster trade.

As a historic aside, the Western Australian rock lobster fishery has had its fair share of controversy with legislation. Some members in this chamber and in other parts may remember that in 2009, Hon Norman Moore, who was then the Minister for Fisheries, banned commercial crayfishing in the Big Bank fishery in Kalbarri not far out from the start of the season, which caused considerable controversy. I was reflecting on this with another member in the members' bar when we were having a cup of tea. In fact, it was a very willing time. The minister had reached the point of frustration with the industry because it could not reach consensus on how to properly manage the rock lobster fishery. He had grave concerns about the sustainability of that industry. He did not implement the ban because he was trying to be cruel or exercise his power arbitrarily; he did it because he believed that the fishery was on the verge of collapse. In fact, there are overseas examples of that happening in the rock lobster industry from substantial overfishing.

Early in my term, when I was getting about the state as new members do, I visited Geraldton to talk to the fishers about their industry. I met one character, Mr Bert Boschetti. I know that the previous two fisheries ministers know him. I am not sure whether the new Minister for Fisheries has had correspondence from Bert.

Mr D.T. Punch: It's a pleasure that awaits.

Dr D.J. HONEY: It is a pleasure. He is a really interesting guy. He is very genuine and passionate, but he is a vigorous correspondent, which is the term that I used during the debate on the previous bill. He has been a passionate advocate for many decades and he was certainly passionate back then. Leading into the 2009 ban, Mr Boschetti, who is a significant cray fisher, alerted Minister Moore to the fact that technology improvements and longer range crayfishing boats meant that the catch was being maintained. Of course, the catch for each year was based on the catch of the previous year, so if the catch was maintained, they would maintain the catch at that level. Even though the catch had been maintained, Bert, a keen mathematician in his spare time, showed the minister that the size of the annual catch was not the best way of looking at it. On the wall in his office, Bert proudly hangs the graph that he produced for the minister. The graph plots the distance travelled by the boats each year to get their catch, with a straight line heading to the stars. The fishers were maintaining their catch by travelling further and further out every year. In fact, what they were doing was fishing out the near-shore fisheries and going to greater depths. Because of technological improvements in GPS and the size of boats, the fishers could go further out. It was very clear that that fishery was under enormous threat. Bert was especially proud that he could educate the minister more than some departmental advisers had educated him. I will give Bert some praise; he is genuinely passionate about his industry. He is the archetypal commercial fisher. He is hardworking and very passionate—we see a lot of this in regional industries—intelligent and deeply concerned about the sustainability of the industry. That is a hallmark of the industry now, and the same could be said for agricultural producers. If we talk to fishers in particular, the people who are most concerned about the long-term sustainability of the industry are the fishers themselves. There has been a transition, because at once stage it was just, "Catch what you can and don't worry about anyone else." Since then, we have progressively seen greater refinement of the management practices. The two former fisheries ministers and the current minister would know that there is an enormous amount of science around all stages of the rock lobster's life cycle and making sure that it is sustained. It is a well-managed industry.

I remember talking to Norman Moore about this matter at the time. The member with whom I was talking about this matter earlier today explained that the fishing industry was a bit like the Wild West—it was everyone for themselves. The most aggressive and hardworking people got the biggest catch and there was enormous competition. Many of the fishers also had guns, and I understand that Minister Moore was concerned for his personal safety during that time. In any case, he persevered. I recognise Hon Norman Moore for the work that he did, which heralded a new way of looking at the sustainability of our fishing industry. That good work has been carried on by other ministers. It is easy to do the nice things, such as open new things and spend more money on things, but what he did took an enormous amount of personal and political courage. He copped a large amount of political damage for doing that, but he did it because he knew that it was the right thing for the state. He initiated the study into improvement of the act and that manifested in the Aquatic Resources Management Act 2016, which is now being amended to make it more workable. The Aquatic Resources Management Act 2016 replaced the Fish Resources Management 1994. The aim of the 2016 act was to provide for more flexible and efficient management of fisheries. I am sure that everyone in this place supports the core objectives of that act, which have been outlined before. They include the

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ecological sustainability of the state's aquatic resources and ecosystems for the benefit of present and future generations and ensuring that the state's aquatic resources are managed, developed and used, factoring in economic, social and other benefits that they may provide. The important part of the new act was that it also legally recognised fishing access rights for each sector, which had not existed before. It was an important change and it was well received by the industry. The Aquatic Resources Management Amendment Bill 2021 has three intended consequences; that is, to expand the definition of an "aquatic resource" to provide greater flexibility when determining which existing fisheries are covered by a declaration of a managed aquatic resource; to provide for different classes of resource shares under aquatic resource management strategies and aquatic resource use plans, by zone or gear type; and to streamline processes around grant variation and the transfer of aquatic licences. It was pointed out in that summary that that would particularly assist the pearling industry in its seeding rights and the like, and that is certainly an important improvement in this bill.

As I mentioned at the outset, we support the outcomes and as a consequence we support the bill. I went through a couple of issues when the previous bill was debated, but it would be nice to confirm them again with the minister. The first issue is with the meaning of "aquatic resource". I did have a suggestion from industry that when we are looking at plans that cover an area, there could be a plan for multiple species in an area, rather than an individual species. Section 4 of the Aquatic Resources Management Act refers to the plan. In section 16, "Content of ARMS", reference is made to broodstock for aquaculture, and that broodstock has to come out of the total allowable catch for the commercial fishery. The issue raised by the industry is that there may be no commercial fishery for some stocks, and that is for collectable fish. There is a niche market for particular fish that are raised for people who have collections of fish. We want to be confident that the legislation covers that particular use of fisheries.

The other reference was to section 16(1)(g), which addresses harvest strategies. There was concern with the limit of five years for a harvest strategy. I think this was mostly in terms of capital investment by the industry. The view was that if there was a principle or philosophy behind that, perhaps a 10-year horizon for a particular part of it may make sense. That was simply because of the investment that businesses are having to make in the industry and having some longer term certainty around it.

I have not said this before, but I am not seeking to move amendments to the bill. If some of this is covered in the legislation, that is good, but if not, perhaps it could be flagged for future changes when the act is reviewed in five years.

Another issue is with section 148, which provides for the chief executive officer to notify persons of certain decisions. That is one of those provisions that will hopefully speed things up, because we will not have to go through an official advertising process and the like. That seems like a sensible change. The industry's question was: what is a person? It was keen that an industry association also be included as a relevant person. My understanding from the last debate is that a person would be more broadly defined to include an association like the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council, but it would be good if the minister could confirm that. Obviously, quite often industry associations are the most efficient way of getting decisions made.

[Member's time extended.]

Dr D.J. HONEY: I thank the minister for bringing the bill before the house and for completing the job started by Hon Norman Moore all the way back in 2010 when he initiated the review that led to the introduction of the bill that was passed by the previous government in 2016. I also recognise the role that the previous two fisheries ministers have played in that. I commend the bill to the house.

MR M.J. FOLKARD (Burns Beach) [11.13 am]: I rise to speak to the Aquatic Resources Management Amendment Bill 2021. This bill will have quite an impact on my humble electorate in the northern corridor. For those who do not know the electorate of Burns Beach, the western side of the electorate is the coastline, marked off by the high-water mark. My constituents use that side of the electorate 24/7, whether it is seniors walking on the beach at six o'clock in the morning, those who go swimming at that time of the morning down by the surf club at Quinns Rocks or those who own boats at Marina Mindarie. Some very beautiful machines dock at that part of the coast.

The McGowan government has a significant history in protecting the environment that is very much close to my heart. I have quite vocal coastal care groups in the electorate. Members may be aware that on the weekend, I was reconstituting and revegetating some of the dunes to the south of the surf club at Quinns. I have constituents who are very vocal about the preservation of the environment, particularly the coastal environment in the electorate, and, to me, that is fantastic.

I see that the artificial reef that was part of our commitment at the last election has been put in place, and I believe from speaking to a couple of people from the Quinns Rock Fishing Club that they are already catching demersal fish off that artificial reef. I hope that in time that will take some of the pressures off the natural reefs that abound alongside the electorate. It is very interesting that the fourth site that was considered for an artificial reef was about 10 kilometres due west of Burns Beach. If I were to draw a line out from Hillarys Boat Harbour and Marina Mindarie, the reef would be almost smack in the middle of those two points and directly west. I thought the place that was chosen

Extract from Hansard

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for it was quite interesting; it was quite a bare patch of ocean floor. A bit of thought has gone into that. They have not just produced the actual concrete blocks; they have thought about where it was going to be. They considered where it was going to be, the fish catches in the area and the impacts on the reef areas around it. It is my understanding that it will enhance the amount of fish caught out there.

Two fishing charters work out of Marina Mindarie. They are two fantastic little businesses. Each business employs at least three people on the boat—the skipper and two deckhands—and I believe they normally have a fourth person who organises the charters and the bookings, so there are two good little businesses in that space. They are forever commenting on the success of their charters and the punters who use these charters are always talking about the successful catches while having a coffee at the marina. That can take place only because of a good management plan for those fisheries.

The McGowan government has definitely set some standards for looking after the aquatic environment for other governments after ours—hopefully a long time after ours—to follow.

The removal of one-off use plastic containers has had an immediate impact in my electorate. For those who do not know, I have been a surf lifesaver for a long time. Lifesavers have a passion for the protection of our waters and the environment. There would not be a clubbie out there who would not be passionate about taking away glass from the beach. In the short time that Western Australia has had the container deposit scheme, the amount of glass that we used to see on the beach has disappeared. At my club, Quinns Mindarie Surf Life Saving Club, we basically rake the sand on the beach every Sunday so that the nippers will have soft, clean sand to run on. In the past, we found the biggest problem was glass in amongst the sand. If members have never seen what a shard of glass can do to a child's foot, ask a lifesaver. Glass is the biggest no-no on our beaches. This government introduced the 10¢ container deposit scheme. That has had a huge impact on the removal of glass from our beaches. It has been a phenomenal success.

Another thing that has happened since we introduced that scheme is a reduction in the amount of plastics and plastic bottles found floating in the water. The majority of it has gone. I commend our government for its success in that space. Keeping the beach clean so that we could all use it was a chore for us in the past, but now that every empty bottle is worth 10¢, they are gone; we do not see them. As I said, glass in the aquatic environment is something that I abhor. Although I would not want to introduce a law in that space, it is the biggest no-no to regular users of the beach. No matter which beach, glass should never be taken onto the beach.

If I were to look further, that scheme has also helped remove plastics and microplastics from the water column. That can only be good. I notice that there is a significant amount of research and commentary, no matter where we look, whether it be the local papers through *The West* or at a national level, about the reduction of microplastics in the water column. The little bit that we are doing here with our container deposit scheme is very good. The removal of one-use plastics will enhance the reduction in the amount of microplastics in the water column, which will lead to a healthier environment. That has to be positive for us. As I said, I swim in the water as often as I can.

Our government has the Ocean Reef boat marina under construction. Although that is just south of my electorate, that will have a big impact on the electorate of Burns Beach. It will mean more jobs and more activity in the northern corridor, which will be very positive. We went through the process of opening up a small enclave that was in the marine park, but I think we have done that in such a responsible way that when the project is finished, it will be an absolute icon for Australia and probably also South-East Asia. That has been brilliant.

Just to the northern edge of the new marina is a small abalone bed. The commentary that I heard from local professional abalone divers was very interesting. I listened to all sides of the argument. I think the way we have managed that has been exemplary. Members may not be aware that a couple of years back—I am trying to put this in language that people will understand—a water temperature hotspot came down the coast, which decimated the roei abalone fishery from up around Kalbarri right down to the metropolitan area. It was basically a bubble of really hot oceanic water that drifted down the coast. It destroyed some of the fisheries.

I was the police officer in charge up at Kalbarri and in my downtime I used to take the kids down to Lucky Bay. I would get our abalone licences—one for me, one for my wife and one for my daughter. Three families would go fishing for abs at Lucky Bay. We would have our little abalone measuring tool, and off we would go onto the reef—my wife and I, daughter and son, as a family group, and we would pick abs. We would pick them up and show the kids and say either “No, that one is too big” or “No, that one is too small”. We would all get our bag limits. It was such a great time. We would then go back to a friend's house and spend the next three or four hours preparing our abalone. We would put them on the barbecue. One of the tragedies in this space is never let kids develop a taste for abalone! I can tell members that as fast as we would cook them on the barbecue, the kids would knock them off! The best way to prepare them was to take them out of the shell, bash them with a mallet, roll them in butter, eggs and breadcrumbs, with a bit of garlic, and cook them until the breadcrumbs were golden. As I said, never teach kids to enjoy abalone, because you will never get to eat them! We would then sit back and enjoy the afternoon and remember those great times with the kids. Even now when I talk to my daughter and my son, they remember the times we would go abalone fishing at Lucky Bay, just south of Kalbarri.

When that hotspot came down the coast, that fishery was destroyed. A couple of roei abalone divers were working out of Kalbarri, and their income was almost destroyed. I think even now they are battling to get their bag limits of roei abalone. That really saddens me. That hotspot came down into the metropolitan area. There were spots in the metropolitan area where the roei was completely wiped out. For some reason, an abalone bed to the north of the marina was not affected by the hotspot. With our management plans in that space, we have been able to remove those abalone beds and start new populations where that hotspot has destroyed the roei fishery in the metropolitan area. I am hoping we will see a positive—I am sure we will—because I am certain that the quality of our scientists who have backed this relocation of the abalone beds in the metropolitan area will ensure that that fishery will continue in the long term.

As I said, I am a surf lifesaver. Quinns is the first surf club that I have volunteered at over the years. It is also the first surf club to have done an abalone patrol. I did my first one a couple of years back. In the second one we did, we rescued a poor diver who had taken a belly full of water during his hour dash for this mad crustacean. It is really interesting to see how passionate our community is about abalone and that sort of stuff. Our abalone season in the metropolitan area or the greater areas outside that area of an hour for four Sundays is a definite positive move. We see the dedication of the whole community when it comes together in that aquatic environment. There are those passionate amateur abalone fishermen who come down for their hour and the lifesavers. As they all walk past, they are so grateful that someone is keeping an eye on them to make sure that they enjoy their hour fishing in the morning. As we wait for the fishers, the clock starts at seven and away they go. They madly rush into the water. The lifesavers and people on rescue boards are out there, with young kids and their rescue tubes amongst them. I do not know what it is, but someone always takes a belly full of water. The lifesavers reach down and drag them out, asking whether they are all right. They bring them back to the beach. I will never forget the last person I helped. This bloke had a belly full of water; he nearly drowned. A young lifesaver stood up in that space and dragged him to the shore. He shook himself off, took a belly full of fresh water, ran across to the next reef and out he went again, such was his love for that fish.

I will finish on that and just say that I think this is a good piece of legislation. It shows how committed the McGowan government is to proper aquatic resource management. I know that we attempted to get this legislation through the last Parliament. With minimal amendments, we should get it through this Parliament.

MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury — Minister for Fisheries) [11.31 am] — in reply: This amendment bill has been a long time coming. I thank all members for their contribution to the Aquatic Resources Management Amendment Bill 2021. The fact that so many members in this place have spoken about the amendment bill highlights the passion, depth of feeling and connection that people in Western Australia have to the ocean, to fishing and to the broader aquatic resource. It goes to the heart of their relationship with something that is very special along our 12 000 miles of Western Australian coastline. I thank all members. The variety of commentary that we have received on the amendment bill highlights the diversity of views, values and what is important when we think about aquatic resources. I also thank the opposition for expressing its early support for the passage of the amendment bill. I hope that that will be reflected in deliberations in the other place when the bill goes there.

As members opposite have mentioned, the bill amends an act that was initially proposed and passed in 2016. It reflects a continuing history of fisheries—the industry, the recreational sector and fishing ministers, sequentially going back in time, as the member for Cockburn mentioned, to Hon Jon Ford, but also the pivotal work of Hon Norman Moore and subsequent fisheries ministers. I acknowledge all that. As I said, I hope that the support of this house is reflected in the upper house and that it reflects the significance of this amendment bill in allowing the Aquatic Resources Management Act 2016 to be fully enacted.

As the member for Cottesloe said, the role of a fisheries minister is quite interesting. It is interesting from the point of view of having to balance all the different views and competing interests and the nature of the aquatic resource and the environmental considerations that underpin how we relate to that resource today and how future generations relate to it.

I also want to acknowledge the role of the peak bodies, the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council and Recfishwest. They have been part of this journey since the bill was first thought about, prior to 2016. They have undertaken considerable discussions with their own stakeholders and members and worked through the meaning of what is a complex and transformational bill in putting forward the notion of sustainability and the health of the ecology of the aquatic environment as a primary objective, and I thank them for that. Fishing itself is fundamental to the community of Western Australia. The fact that both recreational and commercial fishers have a sustainable fishery that will provide certainty for the future is incredible.

I want to note that the work to date throughout the last 15 to 20 years has meant that nearly 95 per cent of our fish stocks have been determined as sustainable or recovering in the latest national status of Australian fish stocks report. That is a very important outcome. Marine Stewardship Council certification applies to Shark Bay prawns; Exmouth Gulf prawns; western rock lobster; abalone; deep-sea crustaceans; Peel–Harvey sea mullet; Peel–Harvey blue swimmer crabs; pearl oysters, as the member for Burns Beach mentioned; sea cucumber and octopus. That report assessed 370 stocks carrying 148 species across Australia as a whole. That is a very good record for Western Australian

fisheries management. By fisheries management, I mean the whole context of the sector: the role of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, the role of the peak bodies and the role of stakeholders within the sector as a whole. Sustainable management of fish stocks will always be a primary focus of the fisheries management programs in WA. It reflects that motivation to finally bring this amendment bill to the house.

I want to go back to some of the comments that I made in the initial second reading speech that highlight the importance of this legislation. The first was that it is about the ecologically sustainable development of Western Australia's living aquatic biological resources and ecosystems. It is not just about fish with fins; it is about the total aquatic resource —

Ms A. Sanderson: The system.

Mr D.T. PUNCH: As the Minister for Environment just said, it is also about the system that exists, the ecological system that is in the marine environment. It is a very important piece of legislation because it puts that principle first. Collectively in this house, we have supported that principle to go through how we manage this environment for future generations. That is a very important principle.

We also know that there are multiple interests in fisheries. A key feature of the act itself is the inclusion of a structured approach to the provision of secure fishing access rights for all sectors within the context of ecological sustainability. That is something that has come home to me in my contact with fishers across Western Australia. I have received correspondence from and met with fishers. That notion of having certainty for the future that can guide their business-related decisions is crucial. Perhaps even more importantly, many of the fishers come from a fishing family background; it is part of their whole lifestyle. We cannot underestimate both the social and economic implications of how we provide certainty into the future.

The framework sets out how the resource will be managed, the level of exploitation that can be allowed, the level of the resource that must be maintained for sustainability purposes and the setting of total allowable catches and access rights to the resource—this notion of what the sustainable resource is and, within that, how much can be provided for customary fishing and for research purposes, how much is there for recreational purposes and how much is there for commercial fishing purposes—and allocates a notion of shares within the commercial fishery. It provides for the continuity of existing management arrangements. That is an important part of maintaining resource access rights within the commercial fishing industries until each sector is migrated successfully into the new legislative framework.

The implementation of this bill, once it has passed through the parliamentary process and has been enacted, will be a huge piece of work, and I am very confident about it. The department has been planning for it and will follow through on a very smooth implementation to minimise disruption to the fisheries sector.

As part of preparing for the initial ARMA—it was very well founded, and I totally applaud the work of the Minister for Fisheries at that time—it was found that there was not the flexibility in the initial legislation to allow different types of resource shares to be provided for in the strategy and planning documents for a managed aquatic resource. As a result, it was impossible to address many of the issues that the member for Cottesloe raised with regard to multi-zone, multi-species or multi-gear fisheries. This amending legislation is really about bringing flexibility into the original legislation without losing its objective or purpose.

The Aquatic Resources Management Amendment Bill 2021 provides for three additional key amendments: firstly, defining the meaning of “aquatic resource” to allow the resource to be further defined by the gear, type or method used to take the resource; secondly, removing the requirement for the CEO to publish a notice of decision to grant, vary or transfer an aquaculture licence, which is a very important measure with regard to efficiency and the removal of red tape; and, thirdly, introducing a requirement on the minister to review the operation and effectiveness of the legislation after five years. I think that is a matter that the member for Cottesloe spoke about in the previous Parliament, so I am very pleased that it is included here. Given the complexity of the legislation and the implementation task, it is a very good amendment to have. I am also very pleased that the previous minister was able to make that plain.

The ARMA legislation will be able to trigger a new conversation with industry and recreational fishers about the future, particularly within the industry. Again, as the member for Cottesloe mentioned, there have been a number of impacts on the rock lobster industry, with changes in market conditions and some of the geopolitical changes with regard to the export industry. It is so important for the industry to build a new vision around sustainability and to look at the opportunities that might come out of innovative practice and managing the social licence and the relationship with the broader community—because it is a resource that is very close to people's hearts—and managing that impact into the future. It is also important to look at the diversification of new markets and value-adding opportunities. I sincerely hope that the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council and the Western Rock Lobster Council can embrace that and maximise the opportunities for a very precious resource. It is a resource that has been well managed to date, but we need to continue to make sure that it is well managed into the future and that we get the best outcomes from it.

I listened to the member for Churchlands' contribution, in which she talked about the opportunity to look at innovative new products from the aquatic resource and the potential for research to identify more and more value-based opportunities that could support livelihoods and support the industry, maintain sustainability, and make a continuing contribution to our lives.

In covering off on those issues, one of the critical messages from all members is the notion of a commitment to ecological sustainability and the fundamental importance of maintaining the aquatic resource environment and managing it for future generations. That is a singular message that this Parliament, in passing this bill, can put out there firmly for all sectors to understand, and for the broader Western Australian community to understand. It is a pivotal point in the thinking of this house.

I will turn to the contributions from various members. I thought they were very well thought out and detailed contributions that really brought different dimensions to the whole debate. The fact that so many of those contributions were from new members again highlights that this Parliament will benefit from a wide variety of very well-articulated and well-researched views. If we go forward collectively as a house on that basis, we can anticipate an outstanding series of outcomes for the forty-first Parliament.

The member for Cockburn provided something that many other members commented on—a detailed overview of the value of the fishing sector to Western Australia, particularly the importance of the wild catch industry, but also noting the emerging aquaculture industry and the great potential contribution aquaculture will make into the future. Yesterday I spoke to a group of researchers from Tasmania who reminded me, in respect of some of the debates around aquaculture, that the total sea area currently covered by aquaculture in Tasmania is one square kilometre. When we think of the footprint of aquaculture on our broader ocean resource, it could, if well managed, provide an excellent opportunity into the future. The critical issues will be how we manage multiple-user interests at specific sites. Again, that goes to the heart of something I think the department does very, very well—negotiating stakeholder arrangements.

The member quoted the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation as having valued the industry in October 2009 at just under \$1 billion; I think the member for Cottesloe made the same observation. There are an estimated 6 281 direct and indirect full-time jobs in the direct fishing, processing and consumption sectors. We have some very, very fine fish restaurants at one of the tail-ends of the value chain. What they do with Shark Bay scallops, Rankin cod and some of the other species that end up on dinner plates is absolutely outstanding.

COVID-19 had a big impact, particularly on the rock lobster industry. That industry was again impacted by changes in the world's geopolitical trading nature, so it sustained a double whammy. I am very pleased that the government has been able to provide specific support to the rock lobster industry to help it manage what has been a pretty impactful change, and provide time for the industry to regroup. It is very unfortunate that there is a grey market into China, but I think it has every confidence that the Western Rock Lobster Council and the talent that exists within the industry are very capable of finding new opportunities for value-adding and new market opportunities.

Some of the safeguards include the opportunity for back-of-boat sales, and I acknowledge the work of my predecessor in that regard; the waiving of fees and charges; two extensions of seasons of up to 18-month periods; and an overall \$6 million package to support the recreational fishing sector. Many members spoke about that sector in their contributions with regard to the commitment of that funding for expansion of the artificial reefs program and the grow-out and expansion of finfish opportunities.

I was recently very pleased to join the member for Cockburn in his electorate to see 5 000 yellowtail kingfish start a new life. I am sure that as they emerged from the tank, swimming desperately upstream against the pipe that was pumping them into Cockburn Sound, they thought they were being borne into another universe! They had spent all their lives swimming round and round in a circular tank, and suddenly there was a whole new world to explore. I am sure that more than a few of them, as they came out of the pipe swimming backwards, shouted out, "The answer is 42!"

The member for Moore echoed a bipartisan approach—I thank him for that—and indicated the opposition's support for the legislation. The member also raised questions about the environmental assessment issues at Cockburn Sound in respect of future developments. I undertook to respond to that, and I will do so. This government recognises the importance of the value of that fishery and the aquatic resource in Cockburn Sound. The government is certainly aware of the potential environmental impacts of port development in Cockburn Sound, and that it requires further investigation. An allocation of \$21.4 million has been made to fund the Westport environment and social program, which will provide a detailed analysis of the potential environmental and social impacts. Key fishery resources to be examined include pink snapper, blue swimmer crabs and baitfish. There is \$4.3 million dedicated to this piece of research to be undertaken by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. I have to say that I have enormous confidence in the research and scientific capability of research divisions within that department. The Western Australian Marine Science Institution and partner agencies are currently developing

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a science plan, and we expect work will start in July 2021. Outcomes from this research will inform the environmental impact process.

Member for Moore, as fisheries minister it is certainly my intention to understand the concerns of recreational and commercial fishers who operate in Cockburn Sound, and I look forward to monitoring the ongoing work of the WA Marine Science Institution and DPIRD over the forthcoming term. Factors such as coastal development, population growth and environmental change will continue to pose challenges for all our aquatic resources and how we manage them, so we should always be prepared to provide good science and good evidence and really base decision-making on that, as we always have done in the past. As in so many aspects of the work of the government, we have invested in science, research and building our knowledge up to make informed decisions, rather than making them subjectively without necessarily having validation. I wanted to respond to the questions that the member for Moore raised and note that the work is underway, and I am very pleased that it is occurring.

The member for Hillarys spoke to the ecological sustainability of fisheries management, as well as the importance of conserving aquatic systems, ensuring sustainable productivity and the development of an aquatic resource-based industry. She spoke about the importance of that to her electorate and the enjoyment of the ocean environment by her constituents. Many contributors to the debate on this amendment bill have spoken in similar terms. I thank her, as I do all the new members, for her contribution. She really highlighted the importance of Marmion Marine Park and acknowledged the protection of this area by a Labor government in 1987, so this notion of marine stewardship is not new.

The member highlighted the importance of healthy reef systems and acknowledged the work of the Marmion Angling and Aquatic Club. I think that mirrors the experience of many other members in how they have used that opportunity to take advantage and build experiences for people, and in this case it is a diving and snorkelling trail. I think that is very important. She also spoke about the flow-on benefits to cafes and restaurants in the Hillarys area. In a very succinct but insightful way, she highlighted the importance of the aquatic resource to her community.

We then had a very entertaining contribution from the member for Wanneroo. She threw the line out and reeled us in with a whole series of what can only be termed dad jokes! I think she referred to the Minister for Fisheries as “fintastic”! I thought that was very entertaining. She also highlighted the importance of fisheries to my electorate. We have different kinds of fisheries. We have not only the traditional commercial fishers, but also the incredible Dolphin Discovery Centre, which is a tourism attraction with a marine research component to it. It has really been doing a lot of work on local fish species and understanding the reef systems in the Bunbury area. It was a really entertaining contribution and I thank the member for Wanneroo for that. She certainly did not flounder! I was a bit concerned she was going to flounder, but she did not flounder! She mentioned that the member for Landsdale would be very impressed with her puns. They are duly noted in *Hansard*. I also thank her for her contributions on a more serious note, again, about the importance of the aquatic resource to her community and the implications it has if we get things wrong. I thought that was very, very important.

I have one eye on the time, but so many contributions were made that I would like to acknowledge as many of them as I can. The member for Geraldton—which, again, is a very, very important fishing area—made an excellent contribution and highlighted the importance of fishing as the lifeblood, in a sense, of the Geraldton community. It is a community that is built around the fishing industry and major changes or impacts on the fishing industry often lead to a sense of not only the economic impacts, but also what it means for the community as a whole. That was a great contribution and I thank the member for that.

Then there was the member for Scarborough, who is a keen surfer. He spoke about the social impact and benefit of healthy aquatic resource systems—the fact that we can go down to a beautiful beach at Scarborough and enjoy a pristine environment. We know that whatever we do within the marine environment, there is an impact somewhere else. The member for Scarborough’s contribution highlighted that his observations of the health of the beach and ocean front in his electorate really mirror all the comprehensive work going into sustaining our near-shore and offshore environment along the Western Australian coastline. I thank the member very much. I think it was his first contribution to a second reading debate. It was a very, very good contribution, and I look forward to hearing more contributions from him in future.

We have had a few breaks in this second reading debate, but I mentioned earlier that the member for Churchlands acknowledged the work of the Marine Stewardship Council. She made some interesting observations about the potential innovative uses of the aquatic resource, and I will certainly draw the attention of the department to that, because another part of my portfolios is innovation, and innovation applies to every aspect of the portfolio responsibilities I have.

The member for Joondalup similarly made a very strong contribution about the role that this bill will play in not only securing future fishing access rights, but also maintaining and contributing to an environment that I know is shared by multiple users in the member’s electorate. There is not only the recreational and commercial fishing point of view, but also other uses of the marine environment, such that wherever we make a change to one aspect,

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there can be flow-on changes in another. That highlights the complexity of the work in this area. I thank the member very much for her contribution.

The member for Mandurah made a very good speech in which there was a sense of the history of Mandurah and its relationship with the blue swimmer crab and the important relationship it has to the social fabric of the Mandurah community. Again, it highlights that in this bill we are talking about not only the implications for an economic system, but also the very fabric of the community.

We had some more contributions today. The member for Mount Lawley gave a very interesting analysis of the pearl meat industry and the highly prized nature of a very limited resource, at six tonnes annually. He highlighted the importance of the ecology of the system, and I will certainly look at Tim Flannery's book *Sunlight and Seaweed*, which goes to some of the points that the member for Churchlands raised.

I thank the member for Cottesloe very much for his contribution and his contribution on this bill in the last Parliament. He raised a number of questions and I hope I can reaffirm some of them now. He referred to the aquatic resource and species. In the act, there is a reference to an aquatic resource. Amended section 4 of ARMA will define the meaning of "aquatic resource" and section 4(1) will state —

In this Act, a reference to an aquatic resource is a reference to —

- (a) a population of one or more identifiable groups of aquatic organisms; or
- (b) one or more identifiable groups of aquatic organisms in a bioregion, area, habitat or ecosystem.

I think that addresses the concern about multiple species.

Broodstock are not explicitly recognised as a commercial catch, but under section 3 of ARMA, "commercial fishing" is defined to mean "fishing for a commercial purpose" and includes taking aquatic organisms for broodstock or other aquaculture purposes, so that is addressed.

I think the final concern was about the definition of "person". "Person" is not specifically defined in ARMA because interpretation of this term is used throughout the legislation. "Person" is defined in the Interpretation Act 1984 as —

person or any word or expression descriptive of a person includes a public body, company, or association or body of persons, corporate or unincorporate;

An industry association is a person, but the body would need to be the holder of an aquaculture or aquatic licence likely to be significantly affected by the decision in order to qualify as an affected person. The person has to be directly impacted by the decisions to participate. I again thank the member for Cottesloe for his contribution. I note and acknowledge his reference to the history of this bill.

With that, I would like to thank all members for their contributions on the second reading debate. I think it has been a very fruitful debate that has highlighted the importance that all members hold —

Mr C.J. Tallentire: I don't think you commented on my contribution!

Mr D.T. PUNCH: I did not, member for Thornlie. I had better not leave out his contribution. I have undertaken some research into it.

Mr C.J. Tallentire: Can I remind you of what my contribution was, because it may not be in your notes? It was about the need for non-extracting, non-polluting users of the marine environment to be engaged in that whole DSD process.

Mr D.T. PUNCH: I think the member also made reference to lines, debris and tackle.

Mr C.J. Tallentire: Indeed—the pollution that comes from recreational fishers in particular, and sometimes commercial fishers.

Mr D.T. PUNCH: When I was in Albany I popped in and saw Jim, the tackle man. Jim, apparently, is a very famous tackle man throughout the industry and his shop is a wonderland for those who engage in tackle-based fishing. We had a long chat about biodegradable lines and tackle. There have been various attempts at the industry level to look into and produce biodegradable tackle. Jim reminded me that biodegradable tackle is important, but that it cannot let the fish get away; it will not be used if the line snaps and the fish go. The biodegradable tackle was based on materials that degrade over a 12-month period, although some products degraded over a faster period. The problem is the take-up and an understanding by the sector of what that material might be.

I do not have a specific answer to the member's issues, but I have taken them on board and I want to look at that from the point of view of the references that I made to innovation, because I think that is part of the social licence. The member highlighted that that is a critical aspect of the future. I think Recfishwest and the industry bodies recognise that as an important issue. Although there are no immediate solutions to it, I think it clearly has a line of sight and I certainly want to follow through on those opportunities. I highly recommend a visit to Jim, the tackle man, in Albany because he has a wealth of knowledge and information. I thank the member for his contribution.

On that note, I conclude my contribution on the second reading debate and thank all members.

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Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

[Leave granted to proceed forthwith to third reading.]

Third Reading

MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury — Minister for Fisheries) [12.03 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a third time.

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [12.03 pm]: To recap and finalise the opposition's position, I reiterate that we support the Aquatic Resources Management Amendment Bill 2021. It is identical to the bill that went through this house in 2020. We supported it then and we support it now. I thank the Minister for Fisheries for his consideration of the issues we raised and for coming back with answers during his reply to the second reading debate to the issues brought to the fore by the member for Cottesloe and me. I thank other members for their contributions to the discussion. I enjoyed some of the insights that members brought to the fore about the fishing industry and to the value of fishing to their communities and to their lives in Western Australia. In conclusion, I pay tribute to the organisations that manage our fisheries and the hardworking Western Australians who are involved in the commercial fishing industries. I acknowledge also the value of recreational fishing to the Western Australian economy. Thanks very much.

MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury — Minister for Fisheries) [12.05 pm] — in reply: I would like to thank the opposition members for their consideration of this amending bill and for their support. I again thank all members and I specifically thank the staff of the former Department of Fisheries and now Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. They have worked incredibly hard and diligently on bringing the Aquatic Resources Management Amendment Bill 2021 before the house and I knowledge that in this place.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.