FISHERIES — RESOURCE MANAGEMENT — DHUFISH

17. Hon COLIN de GRUSSA to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Fisheries:

I refer to the west coast demersal scalefish resource management arrangements currently being implemented by the McGowan government. Specific to the recreational fishing sector, can the minister please table the scientific data and calculation methodology used by government to determine —

(a) the new management measures set in place to ensure the sector will achieve its agreed 50 per cent reduction in benchmark recovery levels; and

(b) the per person and per boat bag limits for WA dhufish?

Hon KYLE McGINN replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided by the Minister for Fisheries.

(a) The methodology used to determine the new management measures for recreational fishing for demersal scalefish in the west coast bioregion to achieve a 50 per cent reduction in benchmark recovery levels was primarily based on catch and effort information derived from periodic surveys over the last 10 years of boat-based recreational fishing in Western Australia. The west coast demersal scalefish resource consultation paper released in August 2022 sets out the rationale behind the new management package. I table this document.

[See paper 2007.]

(b) WA dhufish and other demersal species are known to suffer from high levels of post-release mortality, with a high percentage of returned fish not surviving. Under the new management measures for the west coast bioregion, there will be a mixed bag limit of two for individual fishers, both of which can be dhufish. The boat limit, excluding charter, when there are two or more licensed fishers for this region is a mixed bag of four demersal scalefish, which can all be dhufish. These new measures are designed around fishers retaining the first demersal fish they capture up to these limits, which will reduce discarding of fish and the overall level of fishing mortality for these species.