

MACKEREL FISHERIES, SEASON CLOSURE

180. Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE to the Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries:

Will the minister explain the basis upon which the Department of Fisheries is implementing the season closures of the mackerel fisheries in the Pilbara from 1 April to 30 September 2004 and the Kimberley from 1 May to 31 October 2004?

Hon KIM CHANCE replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question. There is no proposal to close either the Pilbara or the Kimberley to mackerel fishing during those times specified. A comprehensive management package for the commercial mackerel fishery is to be introduced during the coming months, which will include a number of measures to ensure ongoing resource sustainability. These will include closures to commercial mackerel fishing in the Kimberley between 1 December and 31 May, the Pilbara between 1 October and 31 March, and the Gascoyne and west coast between 1 October and 28/29 February. These closures are being introduced to ensure the delivery of effective and efficient compliance services to the fishery, a factor that is essential for maintaining the overall integrity of the management package.