NEATFish
A Standard for National Environmental Assessment of Tournament Fishing
A Standard for National Environmental Assessment of Tournament Fishing

Version 6
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Front Cover photographs: A series of photographs from fishing competitions that have been assessed under the NEATFish standard.

Information in this publication is provided as general advice only. For application to specific circumstances, further advice should be sought.

Recfish Australia have taken all steps to ensure the information contained in this publication is accurate at the time of publication. Readers should ensure that they make the appropriate enquiries to determine whether new information is available on a particular subject matter.

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# Table of Contents

1. **INTRODUCTION** ................................................................. 3
   1.1 **TITLE OF THIS STANDARD** ........................................ 3
   1.2 **SCOPE** ................................................................. 3
   1.3 **PURPOSE OF THE STANDARD** .................................... 3
   1.4 **WHO SHOULD APPLY THE STANDARD?** ........................ 4
   1.5 **COMPATIBILITY WITH OTHER STANDARDS** ................. 4
   1.6 **DURATION OF CERTIFICATION** ................................ 5
   1.7 **COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS** .................................... 5
   1.8 **REVISION OF THE STANDARD** .................................... 5

2. **HOW TO USE THE STANDARD** ........................................... 5
   2.1 **NEATFish scoring system** .......................................... 6

3. **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT** ......................................... 8
   3.1 **IMPACTS ON FISH STOCKS** ...................................... 8
   3.2 **IMPACTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT** ............................... 10
   3.3 **CONTRIBUTION TO FISHERIES RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT** 12
   3.4 **CATCH AND RELEASE TOURNAMENTS** ........................ 15
       3.4.1 **Education** .................................................... 15
       3.4.2 **Gear regulations** ............................................. 15
       3.4.3 **Release at site of capture** ................................ 16
       3.4.4 **Use of live wells and weigh ins** .......................... 16
   3.5 **CATCH AND RETAIN TOURNAMENTS** .......................... 18
       3.5.1 **Education** .................................................... 18
       3.5.2 **Gear regulations** ............................................. 19
       3.5.3 **Reducing impacts on fish stocks** ........................ 20
       3.5.4 **Fish/Offal disposal** ........................................ 21
   3.6 **SPEARFISHING TOURNAMENTS** .................................. 22
       3.6.1 **Education** .................................................... 22
       3.6.2 **Gear regulations** ............................................. 23
       3.6.3 **Reducing impacts on fish stocks** ........................ 23
       3.6.4 **Fish/Offal disposal** ........................................ 25

4. **SOCIAL ASSESSMENT** ....................................................... 27
   4.1 **SOCIAL AMENITY OF THE TOURNAMENT** ..................... 27
   4.2 **SOCIAL INTERACTION PROMOTED BY THE TOURNAMENT** . 29

5. **ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT** .................................................. 31
   5.1 **ECONOMIC AMENITY OF THE TOURNAMENT** ............... 31

6. **RISK MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT** .................................... 34
   6.1 **ADDRESSING PUBLIC SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES** 34

7. **RECORD KEEPING** ............................................................ 37
   7.1 **FULFILLING THE EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD** 37

8. **SCORING AND DETERMINATION OF NEATFISH RATING** ........ 39

9. **OFFICIAL RECOGNITION OF NEATFISH RATINGS** ............... 40

**APPENDIX 1: DECLARATION OF CONFORMANCE** ......................... 41

**APPENDIX 2: INDEPENDENT CERTIFICATION BODIES COMPETENT TO CONDUCT AUDITING OF THE STANDARD** .......................... 46

**APPENDIX 3: THE PATHWAY FROM NEATFISH TO ISO 14001** .......... 47

**APPENDIX 4: AN EXAMPLE OF A GENERIC FORMAT FOR ECONOMIC SURVEYS** 50

**APPENDIX 5: EXAMPLE OF OFFICIAL NEATFISH CERTIFICATE** ....... 52

**APPENDIX 6: COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURES** ............... 53
1. Introduction

1.1 Title of this Standard

This is the Standard for National Environmental Assessment of Tournament Fishing (the Standard), otherwise known as NEATFish. The NEATFish system is based on a 1 to 5 star model which classifies fishing tournaments on their environmental, social and economic impacts. Participation in NEATFish is voluntary, however this Standard must be adhered to by organisers of all tournaments which claim certification under NEATFish. For more information visit the NEATFish website www.neatfish.com.

1.2 Scope

This Standard was developed by Recfish Australia for organisers of business/public recreational fishing tournaments which seek certification under NEATFish. For the purposes of this standard, our definition of a business/public fishing tournament is as follows:

A fishing event organised specifically for recreational fishers, who by invitation or through payment of entry fees participate in competition against other recreational fishers for the purposes of obtaining prize money, prizes or other financial incentives awarded by the organisers to the winning competitors.

In practice, however, the Standard may be used by organisers of all forms of fishing events for recreational fishers where competition is the primary motivation for participating.

In the development of this Standard and the NEATFish system, Recfish Australia drew upon outcomes derived from two national initiatives, namely the National Code of Practice for Recreational and Sport Fishing, and the National Strategy for the Survival of Released Line Caught Fish. Recfish Australia also consulted widely with stakeholders in the recreational fishing industry, including State peak bodies, national fishing organisations, organisers of a number of Australia’s top fishing tournaments, sponsors, recreational fishers, insurance agencies and certification bodies. State and Federal Government fisheries authorities, other government and private environmental agencies, research organisations and consultants working in natural resource management were also included in the consultation process. Recfish Australia would like to take this opportunity to thank all these people and organisations for their input and support. Funding for this project was provided by the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) under projects 2005/235, 2006/057 and 2008/215.

1.3 Purpose of the Standard

Recfish Australia developed this Standard and the NEATFish system in recognition that recreational fishing tournaments are under increasing scrutiny by governments, environmental groups and the community. Much of this attention has been focused on their potential impact on fish stocks through concentrated fishing effort on particular species and locations. Other issues such as fish welfare in catch and release tournaments, and the need to measure social and economic impacts are also attracting increased attention.

Fishing tournaments are very important to the recreational fishing industry nationwide. In fact, high level tournament fishing is now well established televised entertainment, attracting many fishing enthusiasts as well as non-fishing viewers. Because of this high profile, fishing tournaments are important publicity, advertising and marketing tools for the industry. Hand in hand with this high profile is wide exposure to the general public, which necessitates a high level of responsibility and the need to ensure that tournaments are conducted in an environmentally sustainable and ethically sound manner.
The Standard has been designed to encourage organisers to develop tournament formats which:

- minimise detrimental impacts on fish stocks,
- are environmentally sustainable,
- encourage support from local communities,
- provide safe fishing experiences for competitors and spectators, and
- provide significant positive social and economic benefits to those communities in which they are held.

These objectives of the NEATFish Standard and certification system are based on outcomes derived from the National Code of Practice for Recreational and Sport Fishing, and the National Strategy for the Survival of Released Line Caught Fish. See www.recfish.com.au and www.info-fish.net/releasefish for more details on these initiatives.

1.4 Who should apply the Standard?

This Standard is designed to be self administered so that the process of participating in NEATFish is as simple as possible. However, tournament organisers are required to maintain supporting documentation to substantiate their declaration of conformity with the Standard. The requirements for this supporting documentation are described in Appendix 1, which is based on ISO/IEC standards 17050-1:2004 (Conformity assessment – Supplier’s declaration of conformity - part 1, General Requirements), and 17050-2:2004 (Conformity assessment – Supplier's declaration of conformity – part 2, Supporting Documentation). Formal third party auditing of the Standard can also be conducted on a voluntary basis, if so desired, by paying a fee to an independent certification body (Appendix 2). Recfish Australia also reserves the right to conduct a random audit of any participating tournament to ensure the self assessment process does ensure full compliance with this Standard.

1.5 Compatibility with other standards

This Standard for the National Environmental Assessment of Tournament Fishing forms the basis of the NEATFish 5 star rating system. The Standard must be adhered to by organisers of all tournaments which claim certification under the NEATFish system. Other Standards which may be applicable to the environmental performance of fishing tournaments include ISO (International Organisation for Standardisation) 14000 environmental management standards. These allow organisations to show they have taken steps to minimise harmful effects on the environment caused by their activities, and are striving to achieve continual improvement of their environmental performance. ISO 14001 is used worldwide as an environmental management system standard. However, the amount of paperwork and the costs involved for a tournament to comply with a standard like ISO 14001 were seen to be prohibitive for many of the smaller fishing tournaments which otherwise would benefit from compliance with an environmental standard. Therefore this Standard was developed independently by Recfish Australia to be consistent with Policy Number 2/99 of the Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ). Under JAS-ANZ Policy Number 2/99, a Standard is capable of being recognised as being appropriate for certification if:

1. It has been developed and reviewed with the participation of technically competent representatives of the recreational fishing industry;
2. It is possible to assess whether an applicant is in compliance;
3. It has credibility with the industry, appropriate regulatory authorities and relevant professional groups;
4. It will be periodically reviewed and updated with the involvement of representatives of all interested parties;
5. It is publicly available for implementation.
While formal recognition by JAS-ANZ has not been sought, its policy has been adopted as an appropriate benchmark. Further information about JAS-ANZ, and a copy of Policy Number 2/99 are available at [www.jas-anz.com.au](http://www.jas-anz.com.au).

However, in recognition that some tournaments may eventually wish to seek an even more robust certification under an internationally recognised environmental standard, such as ISO 14001, an illustration of the recommended pathway from this Standard to ISO 14001 has been included in Appendix 3.

### 1.6 Duration of Certification

Declaration of conformity with the Standard can be achieved if tournament organisers adhere to the requirements (including provision of supporting documentation) described in Appendix 1. There is no need to go through a formal annual audit process through an independent third party certification body to maintain certification to the Standard, though as described above, this can be done voluntarily, if so desired. The process of obtaining official recognition of the NEATFish rating of your tournament is explained in section 9, or simply visit [www.neatfish.com](http://www.neatfish.com) for details of how this can be done online.

Any fishing tournament certified under this version of the Standard will maintain that certification for one year if the conduct of the tournament remains unchanged. Where there is a material change in the rules applying to the tournament, the location of the tournament and/or the persons or entities responsible for organising the tournament, then it must be reassessed and receive a new assessment rating.

### 1.7 Complaints and Appeals

If a tournament competitor, a member of the public, or any other interested party wishes to make a complaint about a Fishing Tournament that has been granted a NEATFish star rating, the complainant should first raise the issue with the tournament organiser. If unsatisfied with the response, the matter can be raised with Recfish in accordance with its Complaints and Appeals Procedure, which is available in Appendix 6.

### 1.8 Revision of the Standard

This standard will be reviewed by Recfish Australia and representatives from the recreational fishing industry, government and environmental groups at intervals of no longer than 5 years to ensure it is up to date and reflects current concerns and practices relating to fishing tournaments.

### 2. How to use the Standard

The Standard for National Environmental Assessment of Tournament Fishing (NEATFish) was developed to quantify the environmental and socio-economic performance of fishing tournaments, and provide guidelines and incentives for continual improvement of this performance. Completion of the various questions contained in sections 3 to 7 of this document (the Standard) allows tournament organisers to obtain a score which is translated into a 1 to 5 star rating in the NEATFish system in section 8. Details on how to obtain official recognition of your NEATFish rating are included in section 9. See [www.neatfish.com](http://www.neatfish.com) for details of how this entire process can now be done online.
The scoring system used to determine the NEATFish rating is summarised below in section 2.1. Provision is made for tournaments to score over 100% if their organisers come up with innovative new concepts to improve their environmental and socio-economic performance.

2.1 NEATFish scoring system

Tournament organisers are asked to enter the scores obtained from sections 3 to 7 of the Standard into the scoring table in section 8 to determine their final score (which is out of a possible 100 points) and NEATFish Rating. The weighting of each scoring section used is as follows:

Environment: Section 3 measures the impact of your fishing tournament on fish stocks and the environment. This section is worth 50% of the total score and a maximum of 2.5 stars. This section also contains detailed tournament specific questions related to catch and release tournaments (Sect. 3.4), catch and retain tournaments (Sect. 3.5) and spearfishing tournaments (Sect. 3.6).

Social: Section 4 measures the social impacts of your tournament on local communities. This section is worth 20% of the total score and a maximum of 1 star.

Economic: Section 5 measures the economic impact of your tournament on local communities. This section is worth 20% of the total score and a maximum of 1 star.

Risk management: Section 6 measures the extent which your tournament has addressed public safety issues and managed risk. This section is worth 10% of the total score and a maximum of 0.5 stars.

Record keeping: Section 7 outlines the need to maintain accurate records to fulfill the evidence requirements for declaration of conformity with the Standard (Appendix 1). Failure to meet these requirements can result in loss of up to 20 points, which is subtracted from the final score which determines the overall NEATFish rating. Additional penalties may be incurred if more serious compliance issues are detected (see section 9 for more details).
Organisers of all tournaments are required to fill in sections 3 to 8. However sections 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6 contain detailed questions which relate only to specific tournament formats. Which of the detailed sections 3.4 to 3.6 you need to fill out can be determined by answering the following questions:

Question 1:  Can fish be released alive and still count towards the results?   Yes / No

   **If you answered yes to question 1, please fill out section 3.4.**

Question 2:  Can dead fish qualify as a catch in this tournament?   Yes / No

   **If you answered yes to question 2, please fill out section 3.5.**

If you answered yes to both questions, please fill out both sections 3.4 and 3.5.

Organisers of spear fishing tournaments should fill out section 3.6 only.

If you are in doubt regarding which sections of the standard apply to your tournament, we strongly recommend you complete the process online at [www.neatfish.com](http://www.neatfish.com), as the online format utilises a user friendly format which makes the process of obtaining accreditation as simple as possible.
3. Environmental Assessment
This section scores a maximum of 50 points and 2.5 stars

3.1 Impacts on fish stocks

3.1.1 Required outcome: There are no adverse impacts on the sustainability of fish stocks

3.1.1.1 Guidance

Tournaments need to take steps to minimise potential adverse impacts on the sustainability of fish stocks. Negative impacts can arise from over-concentration of fishing effort in a particular area at a particular point in time, overemphasis on retaining fish, particularly large fish, as part of the tournament, targeting fish which are leading up to or during spawning aggregations, or catching of vulnerable, endangered or protected species. On the other hand, tournaments targeting fish populations sustained or enhanced by restocking for recreational fishing purposes are potentially completely sustainable, especially if sufficient funds from the tournament are used to contribute to restocking.

Possible steps to achieve this outcome include:

- Limiting the number of participants allowed.
- Implementing more stringent minimum size limits and bag limits than fishing regulations require.
- Reducing the number of fish that can be weighed in by each participant.
- Promoting catch and release fishing.
- Avoiding fish spawning areas or pre spawning aggregations
- Avoiding the targeting of vulnerable, endangered or protected species or nursery areas which hold undersized fish.
- Preferentially targeting fish populations sustained artificially by restocking.
- And for tournaments which target fish populations containing stocked fish, providing sufficient funds for restocking to cover for any fishing related mortality which may occur during the event.

One notable exception to this general need to reduce impacts on fish stocks is for tournaments which specifically target noxious or unwanted fish species (e.g., European Carp, Tilapia). For environmental reasons, the catch of noxious species should be maximized where possible, provided organizers make appropriate considerations regarding dispatch and disposal of the noxious fish in accordance with the relevant Fisheries legislation (see Sect. 3.2).

3.1.3 Evidence requirements

- Documented information listing the fish species targeted, at risk/vulnerable/protected species and noxious species present in the tournament area, and whether any of the targeted fish species are likely to be from stocked...
populations, spawning or taking part in pre spawning aggregations during the
tournament.

- Calculations of allowable participant numbers based on factors such as the
  availability of boat ramps, accommodation, the area of fishable water in the
tournament area, and so on.
- Records of any tournament rules which show participants have to adhere to more
  stringent minimum size limits and/or bag limits, and/or a reduced number of fish
  that can be weighed in by each participant.
- Evidence of promotion of catch and release fishing, and minimisation of both
  bycatch and interactions with vulnerable, threatened, protected and/or endangered
  species.
- Evidence of financial and/or other support for stocking/restocking initiatives (where
  relevant).

AND/OR

- Documented evidence of additional or alternative strategies used to achieve the
  required outcome.

### 3.1.4 Scoring

Do tournament organisers restrict the number of participants in recognition of
the size of the geographic area being fished?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes: 1 point</th>
<th>No: 0 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Are participants required to adhere to more stringent minimum size limits than
required by the applicable fisheries legislation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes: 1 point</th>
<th>No: 0 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Are participants required to adhere to more stringent bag limits than required
by the applicable fisheries legislation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes: 1 point</th>
<th>No: 0 points</th>
<th>Not applicable: 1 point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Are participants limited in the number of fish they can weigh in over the course
of the tournament?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes: 1 point</th>
<th>No: 0 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Is provision made to promote catch and release fishing through use of catch
and release categories as part of the tournament format?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes: 1 point</th>
<th>No: 0 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Have the tournament organisers in choosing the timing and location of the
tournament attempted to avoid competitors targeting fish in spawning areas,
fish nursery areas or pre spawning aggregations?

| Yes: 1 point, skip next question |
| No: minus 5 points and go to next question |

If the fish being targeted are part of a pre spawning or spawning aggregation,
please indicate the number of fish which are taken during the course of the
tournament and adjust your score accordingly:

| 0 fish taken (catch and release tournament) = 0 points |
1-100 fish taken = minus 5 points  
101-1000 fish taken = minus 10 points  
over 1000 fish taken = minus 15 points

Have the tournament organisers in choosing the timing and location of the tournament attempted to avoid competitors targeting vulnerable, threatened, endangered, or protected fish species?

| Yes: 1 point | No: minus 5 points | Not applicable: 1 point |

Do some or all of the fish caught come from fish populations which are artificially sustained by restocking?

| Yes: 1 point | No: 0 points |

If some or all of the fish caught come from fish populations which are artificially sustained by restocking, does the tournament make any financial or in-kind contributions to the relevant restocking programs?

| Yes: 1 point | No: 0 points | Not applicable: 1 point |

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### Section 3.1

| Maximum of 9 points | Total score ( ) |

### 3.2 Impacts on the environment

### 3.2.1 Required outcome: Minimise detrimental impacts on the environment

### 3.2.2 Guidance

Tournament organisers should strive to minimise detrimental impacts tournament activities could have on the environment. This section is not referring to direct impacts on fisheries resources, which are covered in Section 3.1. It is, however, referring to other impacts which can occur when large numbers of people and equipment are concentrated in one area during a fishing tournament. Non-fishing related activities can still have detrimental collateral impacts on local wildlife, and other non fisheries related habitats, particularly in fragile ecosystems or remote areas. Accumulation of rubbish, fish offal, inappropriate use of boats and vehicles damaging roads, riparian habitat or terrestrial and/or aquatic ecosystems, refueling of boats on the water without adequate safeguards to prevent or contain fuel spills, and inadequate sanitation facilities in remote areas are some examples of detrimental environmental impacts which may occur during fishing tournaments. Transfer of nuisance plants, toxic algae or fish disease agents from one water body to another can also occur as a byproduct of movements of fishing boats, equipment and fish between water bodies. Identification of potential trouble areas, and implementing controls to mitigate negative impacts should be an integral part of planning and management of fishing tournaments.

Possible steps to achieve this outcome include:

- Identification and avoidance of ecologically sensitive areas in the tournament area (Fish sanctuaries, marine protected areas etc.).
- Provision of sufficient waste bins, recycling bins, cleanup crews and sanitation facilities (eg portable toilets) to cater for the expected number of participants.
- Ensure that participants are made aware of all relevant regulations pertaining to use of boats and vehicles in the tournament area, including speed limits, no wake zones, etc.
If they are present, have competitors target noxious species (eg European Carp, Tilapia) to remove them and help protect aquatic ecosystems.

Encourage participants to remove rubbish from aquatic areas, maintain clean camping sites, reduce their carbon footprint etc.

3.2.3 Evidence requirements

- Implementation of an environmental plan to prevent, minimise and review the environmental impacts due to tournament activities. The plan may include:
  - Records of the reference materials used to identify ecologically sensitive areas in the tournament area and the processes used to make competitors avoid them, including consideration of alternative sites.
  - Records of research made and reference materials used to determine the presence or absence of noxious fish, plants, algae or fish diseases in the tournament area and the processes used to prevent competitors from inadvertently spreading them.
  - Records of calculations used to determine adequate numbers of waste/recycling bins, and/or sanitation facilities, and/or the most appropriate refuelling areas.
  - A post-event impact assessment
  AND/OR
  - Documented evidence of additional or alternative strategies used to achieve the required outcome.

3.2.4 Scoring

Have the tournament organisers developed an environmental plan?

| Yes: 2 points | No: 0 points |

Is the environmental plan actively implemented and reviewed on a regular basis?

| Yes: 1 point | No: 0 points |

Are tournament participants specifically prohibited from entering sanctuary areas and other ecologically sensitive areas during the tournament?

| Yes: 1 point | No: minus 5 points | Not applicable: 1 point |

Are participants explicitly encouraged to take their rubbish away with them and remove additional rubbish from aquatic areas, camp sites etc?

| Yes: 1 point | No: 0 points |

Are participants required to observe all relevant rules relating to operation of vehicles and boats to ensure riparian habitats, shorelines and other areas are not damaged?

| Yes: 1 point | No: 0 points |

Are noxious fish species present in the tournament area?

| Yes: 0 points | No: 1 point |

If noxious fish are present in the tournament area, are participants encouraged to target them and have the organisers arranged to dispose of them in accordance with fisheries regulations?
Are measures in place to prevent the introduction of noxious aquatic plants and recognised fish disease agents to the tournament area via the activities of participants? e.g. cleaning boats and vehicles to remove plant seed or banning the use of imported green prawns as bait.

Bonus points are available for initiatives which encourage competitors to minimize environmental impacts which may be associated with the tournament. Some of these methods may include:

Minimization of carbon footprint by encouraging use of electric motors only, kayak fishing only, sailboats only etc.

Carbon emissions from tournament activities have been calculated and offset using an approved abatement provider?

Development of a post-event impact assessment which is made publicly available as part of the tournaments environmental plan

Other (please provide details)

1 bonus point for each additional answer

3.3 Contribution to fisheries research and management

3.3.1 Required outcome: To provide useful data to fisheries research and management

3.3.2 Guidance

Tournament organisers are in a good position to provide fisheries scientists and fisheries managers with useful information which can be used to better manage fish stocks. Data from fishing tournaments which fisheries agencies may be interested in include number of competitors, number of fish caught and/or released, catch per unit effort, size and species composition of catches, numbers of fish tagged and released, prevalence of fish disease agents (eg. red spot disease in Bream) and so on. Tournaments are also useful venues for researching various recreational fishing related topics, such as effectiveness of circle hooks in limiting deep hooking, reducing hooking mortality through use of lures etc. In some states, tournament organisers may be required by law to obtain permits.
and/or provide certain types of information. In all cases, it is likely that co-operation with fisheries authorities will provide benefits for all concerned.

Possible steps to achieve this outcome include:

- Obtaining all relevant fisheries related permits and ensuring compliance with all fisheries regulations including those related specifically to fishing tournaments.
- Make available details of all fish captured and released and/or weighed in during the tournament, including sizes, species, weights, condition (including prevalence of diseases/injuries) and so on.
- Recording other data on participation rates and fishing effort during the tournament.
- Encouraging participants to be involved in co-operative tagging programmes where they are available.
- Co-operating with State fisheries agencies whenever they request to monitor tournament activities, collect samples or involve participants in projects run as part of the tournament.
- Encouraging educational seminars and/or help to disseminate educational materials to fishers.
- Donate some of the proceeds of the tournament to support fisheries research or fisheries information gathering initiatives.

### 3.3.3 Evidence requirements

- All required fisheries permits obtained.
- Database maintained containing details of all fish captured and released and/or weighed in during the tournament, as well as fishing effort.
- Maintenance of tag and release/recapture records.
- Maintenance of records of correspondence with fisheries research and management agencies relating to co-operation with data collection, sample collection or other projects.
- Dissemination of educational materials to participants as well as spectators and other interested members of the community.

**AND/OR**

- Documented evidence of additional or alternative strategies used to achieve the required outcome.

### 3.3.4 Scoring

Have the tournament organisers obtained all relevant permits and fulfilled any other data requirements requested from State government fisheries departments (logbooks etc)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes: 1 point</th>
<th>No: 0 points</th>
<th>Not applicable: 1 point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Does the tournament maintain records of the number of participants and/or other measures of fishing effort?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes: 1 point</th>
<th>No: 0 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Does the tournament maintain records of the number of fish caught and released and/or weighed in?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes: 1 point</th>
<th>No: 0 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Does the tournament maintain records of the length, weight, condition (e.g. prevalence of obvious diseases/ spawning stage) of the fish caught and released and/or weighed in?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Does the tournament maintain records that can be used in research into fish survival?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Does the tournament participate in an approved fish tagging project or other fisheries related research projects during the tournament?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points  Not applicable: 1 point

Does the tournament produce a publicly available report on the statistics obtained in the tournament?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Are funds from the tournament donated to local, state or national fisheries research and development programs?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Section 3.3  Maximum of 8 points  Total score ( )
3.4 Catch and release tournaments

This section is included to assess in more detail the format used for catch and release fishing tournaments for the purposes of further rating their environmental performance. Organisers of catch and retain tournaments and/or spearfishing tournaments should fill out sections 3.5 or 3.6, respectively.

3.4.1 Education

When organizing a catch and release tournament, one of the main aims should be to maximize the survival of the fish released. The National Strategy for the Survival of Line Caught Released Fish www.info-fish.net/releasefish has generated a significant amount of information which can be used to educate tournament fishers on the best practice methods for releasing fish to maximise their survival.

3.4.1.1 Scoring

Are tournament participants briefed on areas, rules, weather conditions, protected species, size and bag limits and safety?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Are tournament participants made aware of the resources available from the survival of released fish program? (fact sheets, videos, DVD’s etc)?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Are tournament participants briefed on best practice methods for releasing fish?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Section 3.4.1 Maximum of 3 points Total score ( )

3.4.2 Gear regulations

There are a number of ways anglers can modify the gear they use to increase the survival of the fish they release. Stronger fishing lines reduce fighting time which can help reduce the chances of fish being eaten by predators. Use of lures or flies results in more fish being hooked superficially in the lip and mouth, reducing mortality rates over fish caught on baits. If bait is used, the use of circle hooks greatly reduces deep hooking, improving survival rates. Barbless hooks and replacement of treble hooks with single hooks on lures reduce hooking damage and fish handling times and are safer for fishers, while knotless landing nets with fine mesh minimise damage to the fishes fins and slime coat.

Tagging of the fish released during a catch and release tournament ensures that opportunities to obtain important information on fish movements, growth and survival are not missed.

3.4.2.1 Scoring

Is the use of any fish friendly types of fishing gear compulsory?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

If yes, please provide more details below:
Minimum breaking strain of main line to reduce fish fighting time

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Lure or fly only

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Barbless hooks only

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Circle hooks only (when using bait)

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Compulsory fish friendly (knotless) landing nets

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Other (please provide details)

1 bonus point for each additional answer

Other 1:

Other 2:

Other 3:

Are participants encouraged to tag their fish as part of an approved fish tagging program?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points  Not applicable: 1 point

Section 3.4.2  Total of 7 points (plus bonus points)  Total score ( )

3.4.3  Release at site of capture

Best practice methods of releasing fish relate to minimizing handling time, which means releasing fish at the site of capture as quickly as possible.

3.4.3.1 Scoring

Are all fish released as quickly as possible as near to the site of capture as possible?

Yes: 15 points  No: 0 points – go to 3.4.4

Section 3.4.3  Maximum of 15 points  Total score ( )

3.4.4  Use of live wells and weigh ins

Any tournament formats which require fish to be maintained in live wells for later processing at a live weigh in add a number of issues which are avoidable if best practice methods of releasing fish are followed and the fish are measured (or weighed, or
photographed) then quickly released at the site of capture. Organisers of live weigh in tournaments should consider the following to ensure they make every effort to maximize the survival of the fish released after the weigh in.

3.4.4.1 Scoring

Are any of the following used to increase the effectiveness of live wells and fish handling techniques?

Specified minimum live well volume

| Yes: 1 point | No: 0 points |

Live wells required to be made from insulated materials

| Yes: 1 point | No: 0 points |

Spot checks for dissolved oxygen and other water quality parameters

| Yes: 1 point | No: 0 points |

Compulsory use of aeration/oxygenation or water replenishment systems

| Yes: 1 point | No: 0 points |

Compulsory use of knotless fish friendly landing nets

| Yes: 1 point | No: 0 points |

Timing of tournament to take advantage of cooler months

| Yes: 1 point | No: 0 points |

Disqualification of dead or sick fish, but with compulsory retention of the fish

| Yes: 1 point | No: 0 points |

Other (please provide details)

1 bonus point for each additional answer

Other 1:

Other 2:

Other 3:

How are fish transferred to the weigh station and weighed?

They remain in the water the entire time (using buckets etc) 2 points

They are briefly placed in a fish friendly net or envelope for weighing 1 point

They are simply placed in a hard container and weighed 0 points

Other (please provide details)
During the weigh in, what is the average time each fish spends out of the water?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Range</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 seconds (bucket)</td>
<td>3 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-15 sec</td>
<td>2 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-30 sec</td>
<td>1 point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-45 sec</td>
<td>0 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-60 sec</td>
<td>-1 point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 1 minute</td>
<td>-2 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If fish are held in a display/recovery tank prior to release, are regular checks made of the water quality (dissolved oxygen, ammonia, salinity etc.) in the display tank?

Yes: 1 point  No: minus 1 point

Are fish released at suitable release sites, preferably returned to their areas of capture?

Yes: 2 points  No: 0 points

Section 3.4.4  Total of 15 points (plus bonus points)  Total score (         )

3.5  Catch and retain tournaments

This section is included to assess catch and retain fishing tournaments in more detail for the purposes of further rating their environmental and social performance. Organisers of catch and release tournaments and/or spearfishing tournaments should fill out sections 3.4 or 3.6, respectively.

3.5.1  Education

It is worth remembering that participants in catch and retain tournaments must conform with fisheries regulations which require release of undersized, oversized and protected fish as well as non target species and fish in excess of bag limits. Because of this, it is still important that participants are aware of the best practice methods for releasing fish. It is also important for participants to be aware of the most appropriate methods for humanely killing fish, as outlined in the National Code of Practice for Recreational and Sport Fishing.

3.5.1.1  Scoring

Are tournament participants briefed on areas, rules, weather conditions, protected species, size and bag limits and safety?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Are tournament participants briefed on best practice methods for releasing undersized or non-target species?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Are tournament participants made aware of the resources available from the released fish survival program? (fact sheets, videos, DVD’s etc)

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points
Are tournament participants made aware of the need to kill fish humanely and of other guidelines contained in the National Code of Practice for Recreational and Sportfishing?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Section 3.5.1  Maximum of 4 points  Total score ( )

3.5.2  Gear regulations

Use of fish friendly fishing gear assists towards maximizing post release survival for undersized or unwanted fish, thus reducing the impact catch and retain tournaments have on fish populations.

3.5.2.1  Scoring

Is the use of any fish friendly types of fishing gear compulsory?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

If yes, please provide more details below:

Minimum breaking strain of main line to reduce fish fighting time

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Lure or fly only

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Barbless hooks only

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Circle hooks only (when using bait)

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Compulsory fish friendly (knotless) landing nets

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Other (please provide details)

1 bonus point for each additional answer

Other 1:

Other 2:

Other 3:

Section 3.5.2  Total of 6 points (plus bonus points)  Total score ( )
3.5.3 Reducing impacts on fish stocks

Catch and retain tournaments have the potential to concentrate fishing effort in a particular area at a particular point in time. In realisation of this, many tournament organisers are now enforcing rules which are more stringent than those enforced by local fisheries agencies. Limiting the number of fish which an angler can weigh in can reduce the impact of a catch and retain tournament over those tournaments which allow participants to weigh in an entire bag limit.

Large fish can produce hundreds or even thousands of times more eggs each spawning season than smaller (though still legal sized) fish. Responsible catch and retain tournament organisers can reduce impacts on fish stocks by reducing the traditional emphasis on targeting the largest, breeding sized fish by utilising weigh in categories like secret weights, random prize draws, offering prizes for recapture of fish tagged especially for the event, and so on. Prizes related to fishing, but not necessarily landing the most or biggest fish, can also be options worth exploring by innovative, responsible tournament organisers.

3.5.3.1 Scoring

Are there tighter limits on the number of fish allowed to be weighed in by each participant than the legally prescribed bag limit regulations?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Are strategies such as increased minimum sizes or reduced maximum sizes used to limit the number of fish weighed?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Are prizes awarded for capturing the heaviest specimens of each target species?

Yes: minus 2 points  No: 1 point

Are prizes awarded for the heaviest bag of fish?

Yes: minus 2 points  No: 1 point

Are there any rules implemented to eliminate the process of high grading (this is where fishers discard smaller fish when they catch a larger one).

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Are there alternative methods by which anglers have a chance to win prizes other than by weighing in the heaviest fish or heaviest bag for each species?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

If yes, do some of the methods used include:

Secret weights

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Random prize draws

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points
Non fish related prizes (e.g. best presented team)

Yes: 1 point                   No: 0 points

Other (please provide details)

1 bonus point for each additional answer

Other 1: 

Other 2: 

Other 3: 

Section 3.5.3  Total of 9 points (plus bonus points)  Total score (  )

3.5.4  Fish/Offal disposal

Since use of captured fish for food should remain the primary motive for weighing fish in catch and retain tournaments, participants should be encouraged to process their fish promptly to improve their eating qualities by accommodating gilled and gutted fish at the weigh in. It should be compulsory to keep fish on ice to improve their eating qualities and also reduce risks to public health, especially in warmer weather when fish carcasses decompose at a faster rate. Provision should also be made for adequate disposal of fish frames and other offal.

Australia’s national recreational fishing code of practice encourages fishers to take enough fish for their immediate personal consumption only. Tournament formats in which organisers take possession of the fish caught for commercial means (such as sale for profit or to donate the proceeds of sales to charities) are therefore contrary to the code of practice and hence are unacceptable. In some jurisdictions selling, auctioning or raffling fish caught by recreational fishers may be illegal without special permits. Recfish Australia does not condone any illegal activity and tournament organizers found to be involved with illegal activity as part of their tournament will be excluded from the NEATFish process. Donation of fish to scientific research has, however, proved to be an ethically sound outcome for tournaments which capture species difficult for researchers to access (e.g. billfish). This has significantly improved biological knowledge of these species.

As noted in section 3.2, tournaments which target noxious fish can have positive environmental outcomes, however these can be negated if the fish are not disposed of in accordance with fisheries regulations. Some planning for responsible methods of disposing of large numbers of noxious fish is usually required.

3.5.4.1  Scoring

Are there weigh in categories for fish which are gilled and gutted?

Yes: 1 point                   No: 0 points

Is adequate provision made to dispose of fish frames and offal ?

Yes: 1 point                   No: 0 points

Do some or all fish weighed become the property of tournament organisers?

Yes: minus 5 points
No: 2 points and skip next question on fate of the fish
If yes, what is the fate of the fish?

All fish donated for scientific research

**Yes:** 7 points  **No:** 0 points

Some or all fish donated to charities, welfare organizations etc.

**Yes:** 1 point  **No:** 0 points

Some or all fish sold or auctioned to raise money for charity use etc.

**Yes:** minus 2 points  **No:** 0 points

Some or all fish retained for the organisers personal use

**Yes:** minus 25 points  **No:** 0 points

Some or all fish sold with the intent to make profit

**Yes:** minus 25 points  **No:** 0 points

Other (please provide details)

Are noxious fish species specifically targeted?

**Yes:** 1 point  **No:** 0 points  **Not applicable:** 2 points

If noxious fish are targeted, is provision made to dispose of any noxious fish caught in accordance with fisheries regulations?

**Yes:** 1 point  **No:** 0 points

---

### Section 3.5.4

**Maximum of 6 points**  **Total score ( )**

---

### 3.6 Spearfishing tournaments

This section is included to assess spearfishing tournaments in more detail for the purposes of further quantifying and rating their environmental and social performance. Organisers of catch and release tournaments and/or catch and retain tournaments should fill out sections 3.4 or 3.5, respectively.

#### 3.6.1 Education

It is worth remembering that participants in spearfishing tournaments must conform with fisheries regulations which require undersized, oversized and protected fish not to be taken and bag limits to be adhered to. Because of this, it is important that participants are made aware of not only tournament specific regulations, but also all relevant fisheries regulations. Participants should also be made aware of the most appropriate methods for humanely killing fish, as outlined in the National Code of Practice for Recreational and Sport Fishing.

#### 3.6.1.1 Scoring
Are tournament participants briefed on areas, rules, weather conditions, protected species, size and bag limits and safety?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Are tournament participants made aware of the need to kill fish humanely and of other guidelines contained in the National Code of Practice for Recreational and Sportfishing?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Section 3.6.1  Maximum of 2 points  Total score ( )

3.6.2  Gear regulations

Use of appropriate fishing gear assists towards increasing selectivity of spearfishing activities and can also reduce impacts on fish stocks.

3.6.2.1  Scoring

Are participants only permitted to use snorkel (not SCUBA)?

Yes: 2 points  No: 0 points

Section 3.6.2  Maximum of 2 points  Total score ( )

3.6.3  Reducing impacts on fish stocks

Spear fishing tournaments have the potential to concentrate fishing effort in a particular area at a particular point in time. In realisation of this, many tournaments are now passing rules which are more stringent than those enforced by local fisheries agencies. This is a very environmentally responsible approach towards addressing some of the potential problems associated with focusing fishing effort during spear fishing tournaments. It is also important to try to ensure that wastage is eliminated. The advantage of spearfishing compared to other fishing activities is its selectivity as to which fish are taken, hence organisers should strive to maintain this advantage by ensuring that all spearing activity during the tournaments is done with the intention of weighing those fish at the weigh in.

Large fish can produce hundreds or even thousands of times more eggs each spawning season than smaller (though still legal sized) fish. Responsible spear fishing tournament organisers can reduce impacts on fish stocks by reducing the historical emphasis on targeting the largest, breeding sized fish by utilising weigh in categories like secret weights, random prize draws, offering prizes for recapture of fish tagged especially for the event, and so on. Prizes related to fishing, but not necessarily landing the most or biggest fish, can also be options worth exploring by innovative, responsible tournament organisers.

3.6.3.1  Scoring

Are there tighter limits on the number of fish allowed to be weighed in by each participant than the legally prescribed bag limit regulations?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points
Are strategies such as increased minimum sizes or reduced maximum sizes used to limit the number of fish weighed?

Yes: 2 points  No: 0 points

Is the tournament based on targeting of a specific species or species group (e.g. pelagic fish)?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Are participants only allowed to weigh-in one of each eligible species?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Is the practice of using berley or spearing fish and/or shellfish to attract predatory fish into the vicinity of the spearfisher an infringement of tournament rules?

Yes: 2 points  No: 0 points

Are prizes awarded for capturing the heaviest specimens of each target species?

Yes: 0 points  No: 1 point

Are prizes awarded for the heaviest bag of fish?

Yes: minus 2 points  No: 1 point

Are there any regulations implemented to eliminate the process of high grading (this is where fishers discard smaller fish when they catch a larger one)?

Yes: 2 points  No: 0 points

Are there alternative methods by which participants have a chance to win prizes other than by weighing in the heaviest fish or heaviest bag for each species?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

If yes, do some of the methods used include:

Secret weights

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Random prize draws

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Non fish related prizes (e.g. best presented team)

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Other (please provide details)

1 bonus point for each additional answer
3.6.4 Fish/Offal disposal

Since use of captured fish for food should remain the primary motive for weighing fish in spearfishing tournaments, participants should be encouraged to process their fish promptly to improve their eating qualities by accommodating gilled and gutted fish at the weigh in. Participants should be asked to keep their fish on ice to further improve their eating qualities and also reduce risks to public health, especially in warmer weather when fish carcasses decompose at a faster rate. Provision should also be made for adequate disposal of fish frames and other offal.

Australia’s national recreational fishing code of practice encourages fishers to take enough fish for their immediate personal consumption only. Tournament formats in which organisers take possession of the fish caught for commercial means (such as sale for profit or to donate the proceeds of sales to charities) are therefore contrary to the code of practice and hence are unacceptable. In some jurisdictions selling, auctioning or raffling fish caught by recreational fishers may be illegal without special permits. Recfish Australia does not condone any illegal activity and tournament organizers found to be involved with illegal activity as part of their tournament will be excluded from the NEATFish process. Donation of fish to scientific research has, however, proved to be an ethically sound outcome for tournaments which capture species difficult for researchers to access (e.g. billfish). This has significantly improved biological knowledge of these species.

As noted in section 3.2, tournaments which target noxious fish can have positive environmental outcomes, however these can be negated if the fish are not disposed of in accordance with fisheries regulations. Some planning for responsible methods of disposing of large numbers of noxious fish is usually required.

3.6.4.1 Scoring

Are there weigh in categories for fish which are gilled and gutted?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Is adequate provision made to dispose of fish frames and offal?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Do some or all fish weighed become the property of tournament organisers?

Yes: minus 5 points
No: 2 points and skip next question on fate of the fish

If yes, what is the fate of the fish?

All fish donated for scientific research

Yes: 7 points  No: 0 points

Some or all fish donated to charities, welfare organizations etc.
Some or all fish sold or auctioned to raise money for charity use etc.

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Some or all fish retained for the organisers personal use

Yes: minus 25 points  No: 0 points

Some or all fish sold with the intent to make profit

Yes: minus 25 points  No: 0 points

Other (please provide details)

Are noxious fish species specifically targeted?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points  Not applicable: 2 points

If noxious fish are targeted, is provision made to dispose of any noxious fish caught in accordance with fisheries regulations?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Section 3.6.4  Maximum of 6 points  Total score (   )
4. **Social Assessment**  
This section scores a maximum of 20 points and 1 star

4.1 **Social Amenity of the Tournament**

4.1.1 **Required outcome: Maximise social benefits of the fishing tournament to the local community.**

4.1.2 **Guidance**

Tournament organisers should strive to maximise the social benefits their tournament brings to the communities in the area the tournament is held. However in most cases a balance needs to be struck, as a concentration of too many participants in one area can have detrimental impacts on local infrastructure, such as public boat ramps, parking lots, waste bins, public toilets and other facilities; and in doing so has the potential to adversely affect relations with local residents and non-participating fishers. Being open to suggestions on how things may be improved, and having an effective method of recording, management and resolution of any complaints which may arise, is also good policy.

Possible steps to achieve this outcome include:

- Contacting local governments, councils and other authorities to ensure that all permits and other permission requirements for holding the tournament are met. Local indigenous groups may also need to be contacted in some areas.
- Hold tournaments in locations which have enough room and infrastructure (eg boat ramps, car parks, accommodation) both on land and on the water to accommodate the competitor influx.
- Providing alternative temporary facilities (tents, marquees etc).
- Contributing financially or in kind towards maintenance and upkeep of existing facilities and/or development of new facilities (eg toilet blocks, waste bins, fish cleaning facilities etc).
- Publicising the tournament with local tourism bodies in order to promote tourism etc.
- Conducting surveys of the local community to determine their level of satisfaction with the event.
- Maintain records of the number of positive and negative reports on the event in local newspapers and television
- Implementation of a formal suggestions/complaint review and resolution procedure.

4.1.3 **Evidence requirements**

- Records showing the facilities at the tournament site having been researched and mapped, their adequacy estimated, and their use limited or their number supplemented as appropriate.
- Records of contributions/donations towards maintenance and upkeep of existing facilities or development of new facilities.
- Records of liaison with local tourism bodies and/or local government in regard to promotion of the tourism potential of the tournament locality.
- Records of surveys determining the level of community satisfaction with the competition
- Records of positive and negative media reports on the event
  AND/OR
- Documented evidence of additional or alternative strategies used to achieve the required outcome.

4.1.3 Scoring

Is there a strategy for ensuring facilities and infrastructure for participants are adequate?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes: 1 point</th>
<th>No: 0 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Have tournament organisers contacted local councils, tourism bodies and/or local businesses in order to ensure the tournament is held in locations and at times which complement, rather than clash with other local community activities or events?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes: 2 points</th>
<th>No: 0 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Does the tournament contribute financially or in-kind towards maintenance of existing facilities and/or development of new facilities at the tournament locality?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes: 1 point</th>
<th>No: 0 points</th>
<th>Not applicable: 1 point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Does the event have the formal support of the local council or tourism body?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes: 2 points</th>
<th>No: 0 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Have tournament organisers released information and/or publicised the tournament with media and local event coordinators?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes: 1 point</th>
<th>No: 0 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Do the tournament organisers keep a record of positive and negative articles about the event in the local media?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes: 1 point</th>
<th>No: 0 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Was the local community surveyed about their levels of satisfaction with the competition?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes: 1 point</th>
<th>No: 0 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Do the tournament organisers keep a record of complaints from participants or the public and do they have a formal complaints resolution process?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes: 1 point</th>
<th>No: 0 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Section 4.1 Maximum of 10 points Total score ( )
4.2 Social interaction promoted by the tournament

4.2.1 Required outcome: Maximise community and family involvement

4.2.2 Guidance

Tournament organisers should strive to involve local communities in the planning and logistical management of their events wherever possible. This can help reduce or eliminate potential conflicts which might otherwise occur and can help with spreading educational or other messages which organisers and/or sponsors wish to disseminate to the wider community. This process of maximising community involvement also extends to encouragement of family involvement. Encouraging families to participate in fishing tournaments or associated social functions is educational, nurtures family and social values, promotes exercise and outdoor activities and introduces the next generation to the sport of fishing.

Possible steps to achieve this outcome include:

- Providing opportunities for involvement of families and/or children in the tournament itself and/or in other tournament related social activities.
- Providing opportunities for involvement of local officeholders, politicians and other important persons in the tournament itself and/or in other tournament related activities.
- Notifying local stocking groups or involve them in the conduct of the tournament if the fish being caught are from a stocking program. This can reduce the potential for conflict or “double booking” of water bodies on particular dates.
- Facilitating involvement of persons with special needs or disabilities
- Holding seminars, educational meetings or other promotional events to which invitations also extend to interested parties in the local community.
- Promote the health benefits of outdoors activities

4.2.3 Evidence requirements

- Possession of all required permits and permissions for holding the tournament and notification of local fish stocking groups of the timing of the tournament (if relevant).
- Records of invitations encouraging involvement of fish stocking groups, and/or members of local communities in the competitive or social aspects of the tournament.
- Incorporation of ladies or children categories and social functions to encourage family involvement.
- Incorporation of educational, promotional and/or social events to which the local community can also attend.

AND/OR

- Documented evidence of additional or alternative strategies used to achieve the required outcome.
### 4.2.4 Scoring

- **Is the involvement of children encouraged through inclusion of children’s categories, family teams, kids fishing classes and/or other strategies?**
  - Yes: 2 points  No: 0 points

- **Is the involvement of women encouraged through inclusion of female categories or through provision of other incentives for women to participate?**
  - Yes: 2 points  No: 0 points

- **Is the involvement of persons with special needs or disabilities encouraged through ensuring their needs are catered for?**
  - Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

- **Does the tournament include social functions in conjunction with the fishing tournament to encourage broader participation?**
  - Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

- **Do the tournament organisers provide educational opportunities for competitors and/or the local community?**
  - Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

- **Are local community groups and/or their leaders been involved or invited into the planning, organization or running of the tournament?**
  - Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

- **If some or all of the fish targeted in the tournament are stocked by a local stocking group, were they notified or involved in the planning or conduct of the tournament?**
  - Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points  Not applicable: 1 point

- **Do the tournament organisers actively promote the health benefits of fishing and outdoors activities?**
  - Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

---

**Section 4.2 Maximum of 10 points**

**Total score ( )**
5. **Economic Assessment**

This section scores a maximum of 20 points and 1 star

**5.1 Economic amenity of the tournament**

**5.1.1 Required outcome:** Quantification and publicising the economic impact of the tournament

**5.1.2 Guidance**

Tournament organisers should strive to demonstrate the economic impact their tournament has to the economy of the area in which the tournament is held. Not only is it important for organisers themselves to know how much economic activity is generated by the tournament, it is also important to let local councils, tourism bodies and the local community know the result so that the year to year economic performance of the tournament, and hence its economic contribution to the local community can be evaluated and improved. To assist organisers with this process, an example of a generic economic survey for fishing tournaments participants can be found in Appendix 4.

Possible steps to achieve this outcome include:

- Conducting expenditure surveys to determine how much money flows from tournament organisers and participants into the local community.
- Liaison with tourism bodies, locals councils, sponsors and/or event planning professionals to develop publicity materials emphasising the economic benefits generated by the tournament.
- Working to maximise the retention of local economic benefits to the local community through the use of local businesses as preferred accommodation providers, caterers, equipment suppliers etc.
- Working with local businesses (petrol stations, accommodation providers etc.) to measure the economic activity directly associated with spending by tournament participants.
- Publicising economic information about the tournament through media releases etc.

**5.1.3 Evidence requirements**

- Implementation of participant expenditure surveys or other economic assessments which are designed so that the economic impact of the tournament can be determined (see Appendix 4 for examples of a format for an economic survey for fishing tournaments).
- Records of expenditure by tournament organisers on temporary facilities, venue hire, caterers, subcontractors, fish restocking, donations to fisheries research, donations to fisheries management etc.
- Records of liaison/agreements/contracts with local business supplying services to the tournament.
- Records of liaison and correspondence with local businesses to record the extent of the economic activity associated with the tournament.
• Generation of media releases, articles in newspapers and magazines, and other activities (television shows etc.) which release economic information.

AND/OR

• Documented evidence of additional or alternative strategies used to achieve the required outcome.

5.1.4 Scoring

Are some profits from the event donated to support local community groups or charities?

| Yes: 2 points | No: 0 points |

Do organisers maintain detailed records of their own expenditure associated with planning, setup, running and cleanup for each tournament?

| Yes: 2 points | No: 0 points |

Do the organisers favour local suppliers in providing services to the tournament?

| Yes: 2 points | No: 0 points |

Have the organisers ever conducted a survey to determine the economic benefit of the tournament?

| Yes: 2 points | No: 0 points |

Have the organisers conducted a survey to determine the economic benefit of the tournament in the past 3 years?

| Yes: 2 points | No: 0 points |

Are the organisers proposing to determine the economic benefit of future events?

Next year

| Yes: 2 points | No: 0 points |

In 2 years time

| Yes: 1 point | No: 0 points |

Please indicate the extent of the magnitude of the gross economic benefit of the tournament to the local economy in which it is held

| Not known | 0 points |
| 0-$9999/yr | 1 point |
| $10,000-$49,999/yr | 2 points |
| $50,000-$99,999/yr | 3 points |
| $100,000-$249,999/yr | 4 points |
| $250,000-$499,999/yr | 5 points (includes 1 bonus point) |
| $500,000 – 999,999/yr | 6 points (includes 2 bonus points) |
| > $1,000,000/yr | 7 points (includes 3 bonus points) |
Have these economic figures been verified by independent authorities (tourism bodies etc)?

| Yes: 1 point | No: 0 points | Not applicable: 1 point |

Has the economic benefit of the tournament increased in recent years?

| Yes: 1 point | No: 0 points | Don’t know: 0 points |

Have details of the economic benefit of the tournament been included in press releases or been distributed to relevant local councils, sponsors, business development bodies etc?

| Yes: 2 points | No: 0 points |

Section 5.1 Total of 20 points (plus bonus points) Total score ( )
6. Risk management assessment
This section scores a maximum of 10 points and 0.5 stars

6.1. Addressing public safety and risk management issues

6.1.1 Required outcome: That organisers ensure public safety issues are addressed and that tournament risk is managed

6.1.2 Guidance
Promoting safe practices for tournament participants and spectators is very important. This section assesses the public safety and risk management measures implemented by tournament organisers in order to maximise the safety of all participants and other persons associated with the tournament. This section will help insurers and underwriters determine the level of risk associated with each particular tournament format. Scores obtained in this section may be used by insurance agencies to help determine insurance premiums and discounts.

Possible steps to achieve this outcome include:

- Taking steps to ensure that the safety of all participants and spectators remains paramount at all times.
- Taking steps to ensure that all legal requirements related to operation of vehicles and boats are understood by tournament participants.
- Implementing additional safety related regulations. Examples may include check out/in methods to keep track of tournament participants, cancellation of high risk activities (eg offshore boating) due to poor weather, compulsory use of lifejackets by boat fishers on bar crossings, compulsory use of barbless hooks to reduce chances of angler injury, and so on.
- Development of a risk management plan which is regularly reviewed annually and/or after each event.
- Keeping records of any insurance claims made and showing that remedial steps have been taken to reduce the risk of future claims.

6.1.3 Evidence requirements
- Records of rules, regulations and other techniques used to ensure the safety of participants.
- Records of insurance arrangements relating to the tournament, including public liability.
- Records of any insurance claims made during the previous 5 years.
- Evidence of development and review of a risk management plan.
AND/OR
- Documented evidence of additional or alternative strategies used to achieve the required outcome.
6.1.4 Scoring

Does the tournament currently hold public liability insurance?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Is this the first year that this fishing tournament has been run by the current organisers?

Yes: 0 points  No: 0 points

If the answer to the above question is no, how many previous tournaments have the organisers successfully completed?


Have the organisers made an insurance claim related to the tournament within the past 5 years?

Yes: 0 points  No: 0 points

If yes, please provide details:


What is the expected attendance at the event (competitors and spectators)?


Do the organisers perform a site inspection prior to the event to ensure that no obvious hazards exist in the fishing area, boat ramps, weigh in sites etc?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Have the tournament organisers developed a risk management plan which is reviewed annually and/or after each event?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Is there an emergency evacuation plan in place for areas where large numbers of competitors congregate during the tournament?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points  Not applicable: 1 point

Do the organisers require that any subcontractors, volunteers and/or venue suppliers hold their own insurance, or at least ensure the activities of these people are covered by the tournament insurance?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points  Not applicable: 1 point
Do the organisers provide sunscreen or other sun safety equipment to encourage participants to be sun smart?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Have the relevant fisheries and boating law enforcement agencies been advised of and invited to monitor the event?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Do the tournament organisers implement additional regulations above legal requirements that actively promote participant safety?

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

If yes, how?

Check out/in methods to keep track of tournament participants

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Cancellation of high risk activities due to poor weather

Yes: 1 point  No: 0 points

Other (please provide details)

1 bonus point for each additional answer

Other 1: 

Other 2: 

Other 3: 

Section 6.1  Total of 10 points (plus bonus points)  Total score ( )
7. **Record keeping**

7.1 **Fulfilling the evidence requirements of the standard**

7.1.1 **Required outcome:** That organisers maintain reliable records of their activities

7.1.2 **Guidance**

Tournament organisers participating in the NEATFish system should ensure they maintain accurate records to fulfill the evidence requirements they need for their declaration of conformity with the Standard (Appendix 1). Failure to maintain adequate records makes it difficult to determine whether the tournament fulfills the requirements of the standard. This could jeopardise the credibility of the tournament and the Standard, so to encourage maintenance of reliable records penalties of up to 20 NEATFish points apply for non compliance (which can be detected by random compliance audits). It would be useful for organisers to follow the outline suggested in Appendix 1 as collation of this information in a uniform manner will help both organisers as well as the recreational fishing industry if an industry managed fishing tournament database is developed in the future.

Possible steps to achieve this outcome include:

- Note the evidence requirements listed in the various sections of this Standard which are relevant to your tournament.
- Ensure that this evidence is collected and recorded in a clear, concise manner and is stored in a safe place (suitably backed up if stored in electronic data bases).
- Ensure that the records are accurate and up to date.
- Ensure that internal audits (or external audits if desired) of these records are undertaken annually and that any corrective actions are documented.
- Make the information available to certification bodies or Recfish Australia upon request as part of the random compliance audit process.

7.1.3 **Evidence requirements**

- Maintenance of records pertaining to evidence requirements for all sections of the Standard.
- Maintenance of data in secure databases which are backed up if stored electronically.
- Documentation which shows auditing of these records on an annual basis.
  
  AND/OR
  
  - Documented evidence of additional or alternative strategies used to achieve the required outcome.
7.1.4 Scoring

Are records maintained showing compliance with the evidence requirements for all sections of the Standard?

Yes: 0 points  No: minus 10 points

Are these records updated and audited annually, suitably backed up and made available to interested parties upon request?

Yes: 0 points  No: minus 10 points

Section 7.1 Up to 20 points deducted for non compliance  Total score ( )
8. **Scoring and determination of NEATFish rating**

Add up the scores from the sections relevant to your tournament using this table. Don’t forget to subtract any penalty points incurred in section 7.1, and make sure you add any bonus points where you have received them. Once you determine your score out of 100, obtain your NEATFish rating from the table at the bottom of the page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Catch and Release only tournaments</th>
<th>Catch and Retain only tournaments</th>
<th>Mixed catch and Release/catch and retain tournaments</th>
<th>Spearfishing tournaments</th>
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<td>/ 7*</td>
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<td>/ 15</td>
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<td>/ 15*</td>
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<td>/ 6*</td>
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<td>/ 0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**YOUR SCORE**

**TOTAL SCORE**

100+ 100 100* 100

† For catch and release tournaments, fill out either sects. 3.4.3 (release at site of capture) OR 3.4.4 (use of live wells), but do not fill out both.

* For mixed catch and release/catch and retain tournaments, add scores from sects 3.4 and 3.5, then divide by 2. Use the average score to calculate your total score.

Environmental sections: Total 50 points and maximum 2.5 stars
Social sections: Total 20 points and maximum 1 star
Economic section: Total 20 points and maximum 1 star
Public safety/risk management section: Total 10 points and maximum 0.5 star
Record keeping section: Subtract from 0 to 20 points from score

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEATFish RATING</th>
<th>Circle your NEATFish rating based on your total score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>★ 1 star</td>
<td>&lt;20</td>
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<tr>
<td>1½ stars</td>
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<td>41-50</td>
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<tr>
<td>3½ stars</td>
<td>61-70</td>
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<tr>
<td>★★★★ 4 stars</td>
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<tr>
<td>4½ stars</td>
<td>81-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★★★★★ 5 stars</td>
<td>&gt;91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. **Official recognition of NEATFish ratings**

Upon completion of the questionnaire process outlined in this Standard, official recognition of the NEATFish status of your tournament can be obtained. This can be done electronically by logging on at [www.neatfish.com](http://www.neatfish.com) and completing the questionnaire online. The NEATFish website has been designed to make filling in and lodging the NEATFish questionnaire simple, quick and easy.

Alternatively, you can download a copy of the standard from [www.neatfish.com](http://www.neatfish.com), print off a hard copy of the questionnaire and scoring sheet, and manually fill in your score. The remainder of the manual process involves sending NEATFish administration (admin@neatfish.com):

- A copy of your declaration of conformity (pro-forma in Appendix 1) or an equivalent declaration of conformity issued by a JAS-ANZ accredited EMS certification body (see Section 1.4 and Appendix 2);
- Copies of the questionnaire and scoresheet in section 8 (for later verification) and;
- the appropriate fee ($95+GST).

Once your tournament has been approved, you will be awarded your NEATFish certificate (Appendix 5). Each certificate is individually numbered and can be used as evidence to show your tournament’s NEATFish rating is officially recognised. Each certificate remains the property of Recfish Australia and is valid for one calendar year if there are no major changes to the way in which the competition is run.

Where tournament organisers run a series of more than one tournament each year under identical organizational structures in one State jurisdiction, only one tournament will need to be assessed through NEATFish and officially recognized in order for the entire series to claim the same NEATFish rating. However, if Recfish Australia are made aware of problems with any one of the tournaments in the series which could bring this Standard or assessment process into disrepute, all tournaments in the series could suffer the same consequence of loss of certification status if the audit process finds organisers in breach of the conditions outlined in this Standard. Because fisheries regulations vary from State to State, tournament series which are run in more than one State will need to undertake the NEATFish assessment process for one tournament in each state. If desired by the series organisers, the points obtained from each tournament assessed in the various States can be averaged so that the entire series can claim one overall NEATFish rating.

If a tournament organiser is found to have made a false or reckless claim regarding compliance with the Standard, or has been found to be involved with illegal activity as part of their tournament, any recognition already granted shall be cancelled, the certificate returned, and that organization shall not be eligible to apply for official recognition until a period of 12 months has elapsed. A second or third instance of a false or reckless claim shall preclude that organisation from making application for official recognition for a further 3 years or five years respectively.

In the event that a tournament organiser wishes to lodge an appeal against a decision made by NEATFish administration, the matter should be raised with Recfish in accordance with its Complaints and Appeals Procedure, which is available in Appendix 6.

If you wish to seek an even more robust certification under an internationally recognised environmental standard, an explanation of the recommended pathway from this Standard to ISO 14001 has been included in Appendix 3.
Appendix 1: Declaration of conformity

Part 1 General requirements

A declaration of conformity is required from tournament organisers to provide evidence that the Standard is being adhered to and to maintain the confidence of regulators, competitors and the general public.

The declaration must include the following components:

a. Identification of the issuer of the statement (usually the tournament organiser, or organising committee);
b. Name of the tournament;
c. The following conformity statement” The [name of tournament] is in conformity with the requirements of the Standard for National Environmental Assessment of Tournament Fishing (NEATFish), Version 6 Recfish Australia, February 2009;
d. Identification of the supporting documentation;
e. Identification of the person(s) who conducted the assessment of compliance, the scoring and the determination of NEATFish rating;
f. The NEATFish star rating;
g. If seeking formal recognition by Recfish Australia, agreement to being subject to formal audit if required (see Section 1.4 of the Standard); and acknowledgement and acceptance of the sanctions policy (see Section 9);
h. Full name and position of the signing person(s) authorised by the tournament organiser to sign on its behalf.

A pro-forma example of a declaration of conformity is included on the next page.

To obtain official recognition of the NEATFish rating of your tournament, this one page declaration of conformity can be sent to NEATFish administration, together with a copy of your scoring sheet and the prescribed fee ($95+GST). An official certificate will then be provided. The entire process can be performed quickly and easily online at www.neatfish.com. It is up to the tournament organisers to ensure that the documentation supporting their declaration is kept in order and up to date.
Pro-forma example of a declaration of conformity

Part 1 of the declaration of conformity is a one page statement which should be worded as detailed below. Ideally, the statement will be made on the official letterhead of the organisers/organising committee, as this will serve to identify the issuer of the statement. If the NEATFish questionnaire is completed online at www.neatfish.com and submitted for approval, you will automatically be forwarded to a webpage which generates a proforma declaration of conformity using the information you supplied as part of the tournament registration process.

Issuer of the Statement: The Deolali Fishing Club Inc.

Name of the Tournament: The Annual Deolali Eel Fishing Tournament

Statement of Declaration:
a) The Annual Deolali Eel Fishing Tournament is in conformity with the requirements of the Standard for National Environmental Assessment of Tournament Fishing (NEATFish), Version 6 Recfish Australia, February 2009, as supported by the documentation listed in Part 2 and verified by Joseph B Bloggs, Secretary Deolali Fishing Club).
b) The Annual Deolali Eel Fishing Tournament will submit its tournament and/or documentation listed in Part 2 for assessment by Recfish on receipt of a formal request.
c) I understand and accept the consequences of making any false claims.

Points scored: 55  Star rating: 3 Stars

Signed: ______________________

Cumin Spinner
President
Deolali Fishing Club Inc.
Part 2: Supporting documentation (retained by the tournament organiser)

The acceptance of a tournament organiser declaration of conformity is conditional on their listing and retaining the documents on the basis of which the declaration was made, and making the list and documentation available upon request by Recfish Australia (or by NEATFish administration).

Minimum records to be kept are listed below. Alternatively, organisers can provide evidence of any additional or alternative strategies used to achieve the required outcomes.

Sect 3.1: Impacts on fish stocks
- Documented information listing the fish species targeted, at risk/protected species and noxious species present in the tournament area, and whether any of the targeted fish species are likely to be from stocked populations, spawning or taking part in pre spawning aggregations during the tournament.
- Calculations of allowable participant numbers based on factors such as the availability of boat ramps, accommodation, the area of fishable water in the tournament area, and so on.
- Records of any tournament rules which show participants have to adhere to more stringent minimum size limits and/or bag limits, and/or a reduced number of fish that can be weighed in by each participant.
- Evidence of promotion of catch and release fishing, and minimisation of both bycatch and interactions with threatened, protected and/or endangered species.
- Evidence of any financial and/or other support for stocking/restocking

Sect 3.2: Impacts on the environment
- An environmental plan designed to prevent or minimise environmental impacts due to the tournament. The plan should include at a minimum:
- References to the materials used to identify ecologically sensitive areas in the tournament area and the processes used to make competitors avoid them.
- References to the materials used to determine the presence or absence of noxious fish, plants, algae or diseases in the tournament area and the processes used to prevent competitors from inadvertently spreading them.
- Records of calculations used to determine adequate numbers of waste bins, and/or sanitation facilities, and/or the most appropriate refuelling areas.
- Records of calculations of carbon footprint and/or greenhouse emissions

Sect 3.3: Contribution to fisheries research and management
- Evidence that organisers have obtained all required fisheries permits.
- Compilation of a database which can be made available to the relevant state fisheries department containing, at a minimum, details of all fish captured and released and/or weighed in during the tournament, as well as fishing effort. Additional information can be recorded if desired or required by local fisheries agencies.
- Maintenance of tag and release/recapture records
- Maintenance of records of correspondence with fisheries research and management agencies relating to offers of co-operation with data collection, sample collection or other projects.

Sect 3.4: Catch and release tournaments
Documentation must be maintained to support the answers supplied to questions set out in sections 3.4.1, 3.4.2, 3.4.3 and/or 3.4.4.

Sect 3.5: Catch and retain tournaments

Documentation must be maintained to support the answers supplied to questions set out in sections 3.5.1, 3.5.2, 3.5.3, and 3.5.4.

Sect 3.6: Spearfishing tournaments

Documentation must be maintained to support the answers supplied to questions set out in sections 3.6.1, 3.6.2, 3.6.3, and 3.6.4.

Sect 4.1: Social amenity of the tournament

- Records showing the facilities at the tournament site having been researched and mapped, their adequacy estimated, and their use limited or their number supplemented as appropriate.
- Records of contributions/donations towards maintenance and upkeep of existing facilities or development of new facilities.
- Records of liaison with local tourism bodies and/or local government in regard to promotion of the tourism potential of the tournament locality.
- Records of surveys determining the level of community satisfaction with the competition.
- Records of positive and negative media reports on the event.

Sect 4.2: Social interaction promoted by the tournament

- Possession of all required permits and permissions for holding the tournament and notification of local fish stocking groups of the timing of the tournament (if relevant).
- Records of invitations encouraging involvement of fish stocking groups, and members of local communities in the competitive or social aspects of the tournament.
- Incorporation of ladies or children categories and social functions to encourage family involvement.
- Incorporation of educational, promotional and/or social events to which the local community can also attend.

Sect 5.1: Economic amenity of the tournament

- Results from expenditure surveys or other economic assessments which are designed so that the economic impact of the tournament can be determined.
- Records of expenditure by tournament organisers on temporary facilities, venue hire, caterers, subcontractors, fish restocking, donations to fisheries research, donations to fisheries management etc.
- Records of liaison/agreements/contracts with local business supplying services to the tournament.
- Records of liaison and correspondence with local businesses to record the extent of the economic activity associated with the tournament.
- Generation of media releases, articles in newspapers and magazines, and other activities (television shows etc.) which release economic information.
Sect 6.1: Addressing public safety and risk management issues

- Records of rules, regulations and other techniques used to ensure the safety of participants.
- Records of insurance arrangements relating to the tournament, including public liability.
- Records of any insurance claims made during the previous 5 years.
- Evidence of development and review of a risk management plan.

Sect 7.1: Fulfilling the evidence requirements of the Standard

- Maintenance of records pertaining to evidence requirements for all sections of the Standard.
- Maintenance of data in secure databases which are backed up if stored electronically.
- Documentation which shows auditing of these records on an annual basis.
Appendix 2: Independent certification bodies competent to conduct auditing of the standard

Tournament organizers may use the services of any of the third party certification bodies accredited by the Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ) as being competent and having the appropriate policies and procedures in place to audit environmental management systems.

A list of those certification bodies and their contact details can be obtained from www.jas-anz.com.au and following these links:

1. JAS-ANZ register
2. Accredited bodies
3. Program: Environmental management systems

Alternatively, JAS-ANZ can be contacted on (02) 6282 5840.
Appendix 3: The pathway from NEATFish to ISO 14001

What is ISO 14001?

ISO 14001:2004 Environmental Management Systems – Requirements with guidance for use sets out the requirements for an organisation that wishes to put in place an environmental management system that takes into account significant environmental aspects of its operations and legal and other requirements. It applies to the environmental aspects that the organisation can control or influence, but does not itself state specific environmental performance criteria.

ISO 14001:2004 is applicable to any organisation that wishes to put in place, maintain and improve its environmental system and conformity can be demonstrated by:

- self-determination and self-declaration;
- seeking confirmation by an outside organisation such as a interested party or a regulator; or
- by obtaining certification from a thirty party certification body such as one accredited by JAS-ANZ.

A possible pathway to ISO 14001

1. First achieve a 5 star NEATFish rating.

2. Conduct a gap analysis, comparing your policies, procedures and activities against the requirements of the international standard. To assist you in this, Table 1 identifies broad areas of technical correspondence between the Standard for National Environmental Assessment of Tournament Fishing (NEATFish) and AS/NZS ISO 14001. The objective of the comparison is to demonstrate how both standards can be used together and to indicate the gaps that must be addressed if an organisation wants to progress to the ISO standard. It must be stressed that Table 1 may not accurately reflect the situation of your own organisation, because of its own individual sphere and style of operation and its specific environmental aspects. It indicates where there may in practice be similarity between the two standards. There may, conversely, be cross-connections that are not shown in Table 1. You may wish to seek the services of a JAS-ANZ accredited certification body to conduct the gap analysis for you. Several of them have checklists that you can use to gauge the completeness and maturity of your system.

3. It is likely that the principal areas that require attention will be a formal environmental policy and the documented and monitored procedures for maintaining and continually improving an environmental management system. The necessary policies and procedures should be developed and put in place progressively, building on your existing systems and experiences. There is no need to start again with a blank sheet of paper.

4. Do what is right for your own organisation. The standard is written in a way that provides lots of flexibility. Many organisations ignore that flexibility and try to transplant overly bureaucratic systems into their own business that may work for someone else but add little value to their own operations.

5. Consult and involve your staff. They are the people who are familiar with the existing processes, and if they are committed to environmental improvement they may have the best suggestions. After all they are the ones who will have to make it work, and if they do not understand the new initiatives and support them, the system is bound to fail.
6. Focus on effective systems, not on gaining third-party certification as quickly as possible. Do not get caught up in the goal of achieving certification. The environmental policies and procedures and the environmental management system as a whole must work for you. Keep the system simple, avoid complicated processes and minimize paperwork (which is in itself a commendable environmental goal).

Table 1 – over page
Table 1. Comparison of procedures and activities of the Standard for National Environmental Assessment of Tournament Fishing (NEATFish) against the requirements of the international standard and AS/NZS ISO 14001

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<tr>
<th>Standard for NEATFish</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>ISO 14001:2004</th>
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<td>Scope</td>
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<td>Introduction &amp; Scope</td>
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<td>Revision of the Standard</td>
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<td>(not addressed here, but normal ISO/AS practice is 5-yearly)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complaints and appeals</td>
<td>App. 6</td>
<td>Nonconformity, corrective action and preventive action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Record keeping</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Control of records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulfilling evidence requirements, scoring and determination of NEATFish rating</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>Internal audit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(not addressed)</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Management review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4: An example of a generic format for economic surveys

Tournament Name:______________________________________________________
Date(s):______________________________
Location:_____________________________________
Name of team and/or persons covered in this survey ___________________________
__________________________________________________________

ACCOMMODATION

Where did you stay?_______________________________
How long did you stay?__________nights
What type of accommodation? (circle answer)
House
Motel
Hotel
Unit
Caravan
Tent
Other (specify)______

What was the nightly rate (per person)________________
How many people stayed ?____________
Did you get a discount?  Yes   /    No
If Yes, why?________________________________________
How did you hear about the accommodation?

__________________________________________________________

FOOD

Did you bring your own food? Yes   /   No
If Yes, which meals?______________________________
Overall, how many meals did you eat out/ purchase?

__________________________________________________________

Average spend (per meal) on:
Breakfast__________
Lunch__________
Dinner__________
**TRAVEL EXPENSES**

How did your team get to the tournament?____________________________________

Total travel cost to tournament?____________________
Travel cost from tournament?____________________

Overall travel cost (including during the tournament)____________________________

**MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES (not including food, travel, accommodation or entry fees)**

Did you purchase anything from the area for the tournament? Yes / No

If Yes, total cost________

Did you purchase anything from the area not for the tournament? Yes / No

If Yes, total cost________

**OVERALL**

Total Expenditure (excluding entry fee)_______________________________________

Additional information which you might find useful to obtain from a questionnaire designed for competitors to fill out might include questions about the quality of the fishing, the quality of accommodation and other services in the area being fished, and also questions about any improvements which could be made to the tournament format, organization, etc.
Appendix 5: Example of official NEATFish certificate
Appendix 6: Complaints and Appeals Procedures

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. Objective of this Procedure

1.1 This document details the procedure to be followed in the event of Recfish Australia receiving a complaint about its certification activities or about a fishing tournament certified to the Standard for National Environmental Assessment of Tournament Fishing.

2. How to Lodge a Complaint

2.1 A complaint shall be submitted to the Chief Executive of Recfish and shall include sufficient objective evidence to substantiate the claims and allow for the Action Officer to make an appropriate decision on the action to be taken. The complainant shall be required to demonstrate that the fishing tournament organiser has had sufficient opportunity to rectify the situation.

2.2 Dissatisfaction based on hearsay will not be considered as a complaint.

2.3 It is not always obvious that a piece of incoming correspondence is a complaint. An item will only be considered a complaint if refers directly to Recfish Australia or to a certified fishing tournament. Before considering it as a complaint Recfish Australia will need to be satisfied that attempts have already been made to resolve the issue.

3. Handling the Complaint

3.1 In the event of a complaint about Recfish the Action Officer will be the Recfish Chief Executive.

3.2 In the event of a complaint about a fishing tournament the Action Officer will be NEATFish administration.

3.3 The Action Officer will open a file on the complaint and ensure that all actions are documented.

3.4 The Action Officer shall send a letter of acknowledgement to the complainant.

3.5 The Action Officer shall confirm that appropriate attempts have already been made by the complainant to resolve the issue with the tournament organiser. Where the Action officer considers that appropriate attempts have not been made to resolve the issue, the complainant shall be advised to take the matter up with the tournament organiser.

Complaints about Recfish

3.6 The Chief Executive shall investigate or cause an investigation to be conducted. In resolving the issues the Chief Executive shall consider both short term and longer term actions that are required by the parties concerned.

3.7 The Chief Executive shall write to the complainant detailing the results of the investigation and action taken.

Complaints about Fishing Tournaments

3.8 The Action officer shall, consistent with confidentiality, formally bring the substance of the complaint and any relevant facts to the notice of the tournament organiser, even where these have been already made known by the complainant.
3.2 The Action Officer shall formally request the tournament organiser to respond within 14 days, giving comments on the complaint and details of the actions the organisations proposes or has taken to investigate and/or resolve the matter. There may be need for several rounds of correspondence between the interested parties. A formal audit of records of a tournament may be required.

3.3 Once the Action Officer is satisfied that the matter has been resolved, the Action Officer shall ensure that the parties are officially informed of the outcomes of the investigation.

APPEALS PROCEDURE

1. Objective of this Procedure

1.1 This document details the procedure to be followed in the event of a tournament organiser wishing to make an appeal against a decision of NEATFish administration relating to the Standard for National Environmental Assessment of Tournament Fishing.

2. How to Lodge an Appeal

2.1 An appeal shall be lodged not less than 40 days after notification of a decision by Recfish Australia or NEATFish administration, by sending a substantiated letter of appeal and a $1,000 deposit by registered mail to the Chief Executive of Recfish.

3. The Appeals Panel

3.1 On receipt of an appeal, an Appeal Panel shall be established to determine the validity and pass judgment on the appeal.

3.2 The Appeal Panel shall consist of three Directors of Recfish Australia from whom a Chairperson will be elected. No member of the Panel shall have a direct interest in the subject of the appeal in any form. Competence to consider the appeal is considered inherent in all Directors.

3.3 The Chief Executive shall advise the appellant of the identity of the Panel members and seek assurances from members and the appellant that there is no conflict of interest, whether financial, commercial, personal or for any other reason. The declarations shall be documented by the Chief Executive. Any conflicts of interest shall be resolved or the membership of the Panel changed.

4. Information

4.1 If requested by members of the Panel to provide information in relation to an appeal, the personnel involved in making the decision relating to the fishing tournament shall do so. The provision of information will be without prejudice towards all others.

5. Confidentiality

5.1 The members of the Panel are under an obligation of confidentiality concerning anything that may come to their knowledge while performing their function, with regard to the tournament organiser or tournament participants.

6. Consideration of the Appeal

6.1 Consideration of the appeal shall commence within 20 days after receipt of the appeal. The appellant shall be given at least 5 working days’ notice of the time and place of the hearing.

6.2 The members of the Panel shall judge in all fairness.
6.3 The Panel may consult experts and make all provisions, which may include meetings or teleconferences, deemed necessary to make a sound judgment.

6.4 The appellant has the right to formally present their case and present witnesses or written testimony.

6.5 The Panel is obliged to make a decision within three months of receipt of the appeal.

6.6 The Panel shall decide on the appeal by a majority of votes and inform the parties concerned not later than ten days after the date of the judgment.

6.7 The judgment shall be signed by all members of the Panel.

6.8 In exceptional circumstances the judgment may be to refer the appeal to a full meeting of the Directors of Recfish Australia, in which case the requirements of this Procedure relating to conflict of interest and confidentiality shall apply to all Directors.

6.9 The judgments of the Panel are considered binding.

6.10 In the event of the appeal being unsuccessful, the reasonable out of pocket costs of conducting the appeal shall determined by the Chief Executive and deducted from the deposit. The balance of the deposit (or the full deposit in the event of a successful appeal) shall be returned promptly to the appellant.