

## **No8. Recreational Anglers Code of Ethics**

In order that freshwater fishers gain the optimum continued enjoyment from this great recreational pursuit, it is necessary that one and all appreciate and abide by, not only the Department of Primary Industries (Fisheries)' regulations, but a Code of Practice that provides

- for the rights of individuals,
- animal welfare,
- preservation of the fishery and fish habitat,
- protection of the environment, protection wild fisheries, and
- respect for your fellow angler and other persons.

Good ethical conduct is about being able to distinguish between right and wrong, and acting in such a manner that befits one's moral duty and obligations to the community as a whole, such as to ensure that fishers are welcomed in the future.

### **Respect for Landholder's Rights:**

- Obtain the landholder's permission before entering onto private land to fish.
- Drive only on defined tracks unless otherwise authorised.
- Leave all gates as found.
- Do not damage fences.
- Do not unduly disturb farm livestock or in any way damage crops and pasture.
- No dogs or firearms unless expressly permitted by the landholder.
- Do not light fires or camp without the approval of the landholder.
- Remove other people's rubbish, if any.
- Bring to the landowners attention any thing that would be in the best interest of him or his property.

### **Abide by Animal Welfare Guidelines:**

- Fish should be landed quickly to minimise damage and stress.
- Dispatching a caught fish should be undertaken quickly and humanely by a blow to the head or spiking through the brain just behind the eye (iki jimi method).
- Tethering of fish for any purposes is an unacceptable practice.
- The use of small barbless hooks and soft knotless landing nets are recommended for use where fish are to be released.
- When releasing a fish, keep it in the water, handle as little as possible with wet hands, carefully remove the hook, and walk the fish upright to regain its balance before allowing it to swim off.
- All fish bleeding from hooked gills should be killed as they will not survive.
- If lifting a fish to be released is unavoidable, support the fish's body weight with a horizontal lift using wet hands. Do not lift by the gills or tail.
- Where internal damage may result in hook removal from a fish to be released, the hook should be left undisturbed and the line cut as close as possible to the fish's mouth.
- The use of non-stainless steel hooks which rust and breakdown quickly are recommended.
- Coffe should only be used in circumstances where a net is not suitable due to the fish

- Gills should only be used in circumstances where a net is not suitable due to the fish size and the fish is then quickly dispatched.

### **Preservation of the Fishery and Fish Habitat:**

- Observe the DPI (fisheries) regulations: they are specifically designed for sustainable fishing.
- Observe the threatened species restoration/restriction zones and their protection.
- Take only what fish you need within the bag limit.
- Support and encourage activities that restore and enhance fish habitat and eliminate barriers to fish
- Protect water quality when accessing and crossing waterways by using designated tracks and crossings slowly.
- Remove all noxious or feral fish caught from the waterway, such as carp and redfin.

### **Protection of the Environment:**

- Take all rubbish, both yours and any other you may come across, home with you. If you carried it in, you're obligated to carry the remains out. This includes discarded fishing line and bait. Do not bury or burn rubbish.
- Minimise all negative impacts on the environment, such as with pollution and habitat destruction.
- Where permitted to light fires, treat them with utmost caution and ensure they are completely extinguished before leaving.
- Respect cultural heritage sites, such as those of spiritual or cultural significance, by not disturbing these areas.

### **Protection Wild Fisheries:**

- Clean and dry all fishing tackle and clothing, including waders and footwear, used outside Australia upon re-entry to avoid the importation of infectious agents, seeds or exotic species that may adversely impact on our freshwater fishery.
- Fur and feathers should only be imported if they can satisfy Customs that these commodities have been adequately treated to destroy infectious agents.
- Support and encourage activities that will prevent the release, or prevent any circumstance that has the potential to release, aquarium and other feral fish into the State's waterways.
- Make sure that all fishing gear, boat equipment, boats and trailers are entirely free from water weed debris when relocating to another waterway. Weed material subsequently found should be disposed of by securing in a plastic bag.
- Refrain from taking advantage of fish concentrations pressured by spawning cycles, vagaries of water flows/levels, or similar such events.

### **Respect for Your Fellow Angler a Other Persons:**

- Respect other angler's space and where appropriate share available water.
- Avoid disturbing fish by physical movement, bright light, or displacing water near other fishers, crossing lines or intruding on water covered by others who are fishing.
- Respect the rights of other recreational users of waterways in their sporting requirements.

- **Seek to educate ourselves and become well informed on fish life cycles, habits and feed requirements in order that well informed observations and opinions may be made.**

**The NSWCFAs respects and promotes this as a common code of ethics in freshwater angling.**

For further information, contact the Secretary, NSWCFAs, GPO Box 84, Sydney, NSW 2001, or refer to the NSWCFAs Website [www.freshwateranglers.com.au](http://www.freshwateranglers.com.au)

Last modified:April 11, 2006