

31 July 2022

The Hon Dugald Saunders MP  
Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Western New South Wales  
GPO Box 5341  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Minister,

The NSW Council of Freshwater Anglers (NSWCFA) is the peak body for freshwater recreational fishing organisations in NSW, representing more than 30 fishing associations and clubs. Protection of native fish during spawning is very important to our members.

We ask that you amend the commercial fishing regulations so as to prevent the netting of Australian bass in the Macleay River, particularly in the Australian bass spawning season.

Despite calls over many years from anglers, particularly the members of local fishing club (and NSWCFA member) Bass Kempsey, to stop the netting of Australian bass, the practice continues.

You are probably aware that it has been widely reported and documented that between 31 May and 1 June this year, hundreds of spawning Australian bass were caught by commercial fishers in the Macleay River.

NSW DPI Fisheries encourages community groups such as Bass Kempsey to pay to stock Australian bass into waterways through the 'Dollar for Dollar' stocking program. It also prohibits recreational anglers from taking Australian bass during the bass spawning season—but it still allows netting by commercial fishers throughout the year.

We understand that you recently met with representatives of Bass Kempsey to discuss this matter—we are a strong supporter of their efforts and commend their recommendations to you, as the current management regime seems unacceptable and unsustainable.

Could you please advise what actions you can take to stop the netting of spawning bass in the Macleay River.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Radge Diakiw".

Radge Diakiw  
Hon Secretary  
NSW Council of Freshwater Anglers