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Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Senator for Tasmania

M E D I A R E L E A S E

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Tasmanian rec fishers to have say on Garrett's mako ban

Tasmania's recreational fishing community will come together at two public meetings next week to voice their concern at the Rudd Government's plan to ban fishing of mako and porbeagle sharks from this Friday January 29, 2010.

The first public meeting will be at the Bayside Inn, St Helens, on Monday night and the second meeting will be at the Mersey Yacht Club in Devonport on Wednesday night.

"My office has received almost 5000 petition signatures calling on Minister Garrett to postpone the ban and conduct genuine consultation with the recreational fishing groups. The signatories come from all over Australia with almost 1500 being Tasmanians.

"This ban will have a major impact on fishing families, charter boat operators, bait and tackle stores and the coastal communities where the local economy benefits from game fishing.

"But all of these people have been kept in the dark about the ban and Minister Garrett is doing nothing to allay their very genuine concerns as the ban date looms.

"St Helens alone sees hundreds of thousands of dollars flow through local businesses each year from game fishing competitors and recreational fishers.

"There is also widespread outrage because fishing families fear a ban on these species is the thin edge of the wedge when it comes to outlawing the fishing of other species with little scientific logic.

"I urge the Tasmanian recreational fishing community to get along to these meetings and have their say. There will be a number of speakers providing the latest updates on the matter, and all attendees will be able to ask questions or air their views.

"The Federal Coalition strongly supports fishermen in their fight to stop this ban."

St Helens meeting:

Monday 25 January, 2010
Bayside Inn, 2 Cecilia Street
6.30pm-7.30pm

Devonport meeting:

Wednesday 27 January, 2010
Mersey Yacht Club, Anchor Drive
7.00-8.00pm