

## CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

This report is the culmination of 18 months work by the Standing Committee on State Development. The Standing Committee received the reference for the Fisheries Management and Resource Allocation Inquiry on 1 May 1996. It soon became apparent that the original reporting date of 30 September 1996 was inadequate to ensure that the Standing Committee could give proper consideration to each Term of Reference. In recognition of this, the Legislative Council extended the reporting date to 30 September 1997. Following the resignation of my predecessor, the Hon Patricia Staunton, in September 1997, the reporting date for this inquiry was further extended to 12 November 1997.

The Standing Committee also conducted a related inquiry, Fisheries Advisory Bodies, during this time. Two additional hearings were held in February 1997 and Report Number 16, *The Fisheries Management Amendment (Advisory Bodies) Act 1996*, was tabled on Friday 11 July 1997.

The Standing Committee advertised for public submissions in relation to the Fisheries Management and Resource Allocation Inquiry on Saturday 28 September 1996. A total of 86 submissions were received from recreational and commercial fishers, environmental groups, NSW Fisheries, academics and members of the public. Evidence was also obtained from 129 witnesses during 18 public hearings held between January and July 1997.

This report is divided into four parts. Part 1 introduces many of the issues dealt with later in the report through providing a history of fishing and fisheries management in New South Wales and a description of the physical nature and management of Australian fisheries. Part 2 addresses the administration of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*. The Act's main provisions are outlined, followed by a description of the implementation of the Act and the present fisheries management and resource allocation functions and performance of NSW Fisheries. Part 3 deals with resource sustainability issues including: marine and inland habitat management; the role and potential of aquaculture in the supplementation of wild-capture fisheries; and the role of fisheries research in providing the Minister and NSW Fisheries with reliable information on which fisheries management decisions can be based. Part 4 focuses on resource assessment and equity issues, with specific reference to compensation and indigenous participation in the fishing industry. The Standing Committee makes 33 recommendations throughout the report which aim to improve the conservation, sustainable development and equitable allocation of the fisheries resources of New South Wales.

In my capacity as Chair and on behalf of the Members of the State Development Committee, I would like to thank the Secretariat staff involved in

the research and preparation of this report. Thanks must go to the Director, Stewart Webster, and the Committee Officer, Annie Marshall, for their management of the inquiry process and work on the final report. I extend special thanks to the Senior Project Officer, Michael Lowry, who was recruited in August 1996 specifically to assist the Standing Committee with the inquiry. Michael's research, grasp of the material and drafting of the final report was invaluable. I would also like to thank John Wilkinson and Stewart Smith of the Parliamentary Research Service for their assistance in the preparation of Chapters 1 and 6 respectively.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for all those individuals and organisations who contributed to the inquiry through lodging submissions and appearing before the Committee.

Hon Tony Kelly MLC  
Chairman