



The Hon. Sid Sidebottom MP

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

Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

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Ten million reasons to enjoy local seafood on Australia Day

ABARES will compile the first national stock assessment reports of Australia's key wild fish species with input from the Commonwealth and the states and Northern Territory governments in a new initiative to promote sustainability.

Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Sid Sidebottom said the ABARES National Fisheries Stock Status Reports will help fishers and seafood consumers make informed choices in the fish they catch and eat.

"For the first time, Australian fishers, seafood consumers and policy makers will soon have available a single national assessment of the status of the top 50 wild caught species, based primarily on their contribution to the value of Australian fisheries," Mr Sidebottom said.

"The status reports will be a straightforward way to get clear information on the sustainability of our key fish species and make comparisons, allowing more informed choices about the great Aussie seafood we catch and buy to throw on the barbie each Australia Day.

"The first report is expected mid-2012, and will include information on stock levels, catch, fishing methods, biology and environmental issues.

"This information will come online later this year and be available from www.fish.gov.au. To make this information even more accessible, a smartphone application will be also developed."

Mr Sidebottom said the ABARES National Fisheries Stock Status Reports are one of 26 projects being funded through the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation's annual \$10 million funding round for research and development.

The projects are aimed at contributing to the long-term viability of Australia's \$2.18 billion seafood industry and seafood exports worth \$988 million.

"Choosing Australian seafood is a healthy option, and the Australian Government is working with industry to ensure we have the best fisheries in the world," Mr Sidebottom said.

Further information on projects funded by the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation is available at www.frdc.com.au