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13 March 2007

Re: Environmental Statement Regarding Discarded/Lost Fishing Line, Stainless Steel/Alloy Hooks and Fishing.

Dear concerned marine conservationist,

The problem of discarded or lost fishing tackle causing damage to aquatic wildlife is of major concern. Fishing line discarded from boats, beaches, jetties or anywhere else can remain in the aquatic environment for very long periods of time continuing to kill or injure marine life.

Similarly, rust resistant stainless steel or alloy hooks (SS/A hooks), especially in conjunction with attached line, can injure or kill aquatic life repeatedly over long time periods. Those who take the time to consider the long-term effects of these hooks on aquatic life soon realise that there are cheaper and more sensible alternatives. The negative effects of rust resistant hooks on marine wildlife are generally accepted by those in the know; however the impacts are not widely understood by the general public. As such it is worrying that SS/A hooks are still readily available to fishers.

The fishing tackle we use can have an unintended and negative impact on marine wildlife. There are simple steps that we can take to minimise the problem and help create healthier ecosystems. Standard hooks will not rust if rinsed of salt water and stored correctly, so why use SS/A hooks? Fishing line is easily bundled up and disposed of thoughtfully so why let it go into the environment where it can undermine the future of fishing and damage wildlife?

- **Discarded or lost fishing line remains in the aquatic environment for extended periods where it entangles, injures and kills fish, birds and marine mammals horribly, unnecessarily and repeatedly.**
- **Lost stainless steel and alloy hooks remain in fish and other wildlife and the environment for longer than alternatives, where they can kill again and again.**
- **Normal metal hooks rust quickly in a fish's stomach and more rapidly than stainless in the marine environment causing less damage to wildlife if lost.**
- **Fishing line is easily collected and disposed of thoughtfully.**
- **Stainless steel hooks are more expensive than alternatives.**
- **Fishers For Conservation recommends the use of alternatives to stainless steel and other rust resistant alloy hooks.**
- **Learn more about FFC and our education campaign at www.ffc.org.au For more information on our fishing tackle education campaign see <http://www.ffc.org.au/Stainless%20Steel%20Hooks.html>**

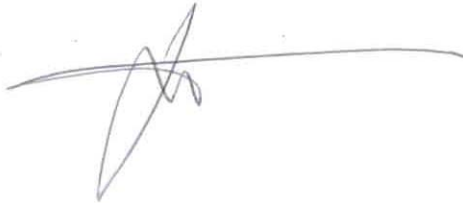
Fishers for Conservation is calling on individuals and organisations to support our Environmental Statement regarding fishing with Stainless Steel and Alloy hooks.

Please take the time to read the attached statement and return the email or letter lending your personal support and/or the support of your organisation. Your support will cost you nothing if replying by email and will help to raise public awareness and encourage change.

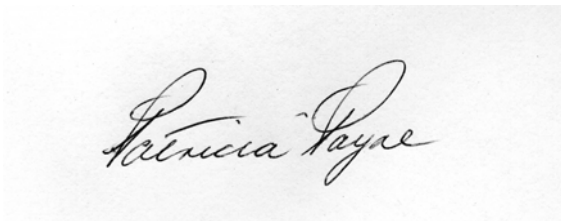
This statement is being sent to thousands of organisations and individuals and we expect the list of organisations that do not support this non-controversial, common sense statement to be a short one.

Please avoid line loss and recover lost line when safe to do so and if you currently use rust resistant hooks dispose of them thoughtfully and consider other alternatives when next at the tackle store.

Kind regards,



Josh Coates
Secretary



Patricia Payne
Steering Committee Member



Jan Oates
Education Campaign Volunteer

