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VOLUME 234 PRICELESS

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JUN 20

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Bruce Belcher
Daintree Croc Tours



Lynton Heffer (Heff)
Owner / Editor



Jase Teelow
Gunnell Rod Australia



Jake Collette
Master V Skipper



Jamie Beitzel
Fishing On the Daintree



Ethan 'Choppa' Scott
Junior Reporter



Contact Us if you'd like to
Contribute - Most Welcome

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Contacts: Ph 0409 610 869
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Front Cover:
James Beitzel
Fishing on the
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Light at the End of the Tunnel

By Heff

No doubt this has been the toughest period QLD tourism has experienced including our very own fishing charter sector in FNQ. Literally we have been brought to our knees and that's not a lie for our southern readers. It has been a nightmare on all fronts. With the announcement of our QLD borders re-opening mid July it does offer a glimmer of hope moving forward. We are so reliant on tourism in the north, especially from domestic interstate travel and very much in particular from the southern states of NSW and VIC. I can only speak from our specific point of view as a fishing charter industry as it will vary from business to business for the likes of accommodation, snorkel and dive operators and so on.

At Fishing Port Douglas and the several boats we manage 90% of our annual trade comes from NSW and VIC. The remainder comes from other states and overseas travelers. The overseas numbers do fluctuate from year to year. However the revenue generated from our southern east coast states are our bread and butter for the most. The delayed closure of our QLD border has been extremely hurtful for a place such as Port Douglas.

Moving forward we will miss the mid year national school holiday run, further adding to the wound. However we have a potential starting point mid July to expect some traffic from other states and we can't wait. Yet I don't expect it to be significant for quite awhile. Last year July was a bumper month indicating how important this time is for us Far North Queenslanders. This year and understandably our Premier's lack of vision will see many sit and wait for travel to appear to run smoothly. Then they will commit to come back up here. August I anticipate more confidence and hell forbid if it doesn't September should go through the roof. Hopefully the rest of the year follows suit. As businesses we have literally lost close to 6 months of necessary trade and a lot of ground is to be made up.

We are very well conversed with COVID practises to run our charters as well as the rest of the town and other operators. Plane travel will have its required changes and may take a bit longer to get onboard, but once you arrive in our piece of paradise we will firing on all cylinders to give you a wonderful holiday experience.

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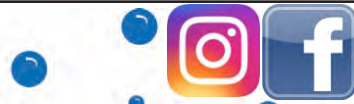
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New Fish Free Phone Apps

By Heff



GBR Zoning Maps

First off the cuff is the new free Government Phone App, Eye on the Reef either downloaded through the Apple Store or Google Play. The main component of the application is being able to navigate and fish legally the extensive various zones of the Great Barrier Reef. The beauty is that it will operate outside of mobile range which is common with most phone coverage on the reef in the Far North. Still you need to cross check with your paper zoning map and importantly your GPS location before you decide to wet a line.

It's free so download it !!

Google Lens Image Recognition - Free

Now this one is more a novelty for the angling enthusiast but I thought it does have some real merit when on the water. It would also apply importantly for visiting anglers not knowing what in particular they are catching and having the necessary resources at hand. Even for locals there will be a species you catch not really knowing what the hell it is.

I've tested this on common reef species and also from photo images in magazines as displayed by this picture of mud crabs. Basically you take a photo of the topic, say a coral trout for example. Just like on the movies, the app starts to apply facial, body and colour focal points which you can see

the dots and lines on the screen as it processes the information. With so much data and image collected on Google nowadays it will come up with an identification and all the associated related information on the fish.

Now it doesn't stop there for the fisho ! You may see a lure, boat brand, motor, fishing reel etc ... and you want to know that brand on the spot for future reference. Take a photo and you will be surprised what pops up on the screen. Furthermore, because fishing is part of an adventure you can take a photo of almost anything and Google will more than likely recognise it. History and information on islands, landmarks, flora and fauna are available.

Outside of fishing purposes it has endless capabilities on anything you can photograph on your phone. As I said it is a fun application with a lot of information it can provide instantaneously on all aspects of life, including identifying music songs.

Yes, Very Scary what technology is now providing and monitoring. ■



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The Dragon's Den

By Steve Adamson

The past several weeks has seen us conduct a handful of charters and also implement our commercial fishing efforts whilst the tourism trade is down. With the announcement of borders opening around mid July we might see a bit more traditional charter work on our books. I'm still a bit sceptical as to how much traffic we'll see in the next month because planning a trip interstate is not just a snap decision. I sense many will wait and see how the flights go and also that there will no reversal on closing the borders again if there is any sought of Covid outbreak. I believe we'll see more interstate visitors from August onwards and September should be a cracker. It will be interesting to see if we gain much business with the up and coming school holidays from Queenslanders themselves before the borders re-open. It is interesting the timing of the border opening is just after the southern school holidays finish - thanks Premier for killing the FNQ tourism industry to date !!

Anyway with that off my chest, the fishing on our recreational charters has been reasonable enough. They have been obviously from the local area including great support from the Tableland producers. We haven't claimed massive catches but there's been some handy moments. I suspect the fishing would have been super hot a month or so ago when the currents shifted coming from the south. That's when the fishing can go into overdrive but we were in lock down. Unfortunately the fish are none the wiser and won't wait for us land dwellers. The fish we did catch mainly comprised of a



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mixed bag including various emperor, coral trout and patches of small and large mouth nannygai. It was pleasing to see some good sized mackerel are up and about and they will only improve in numbers as the days tick on. Surprisingly the shark activity was rather pesky at times and took a toll at some of our prime spots. I know they stole a heap of big, quality red fish which would have turned some days into significant results.

As mentioned we have a temporary commercial licence to experiment with whilst normal trade is down. We have an arrangement with a Cairns based wholesaler who distributes our catch. We've done a couple of trips which has helped to keep the business ticking over and few bucks in our back pockets. It proved worthy enough to extend the licence especially for when our off-season comes around from mid January to April. Our preference however is to operate the daily recreational charters when ever we can. At a commercial level fishing from dawn right into the night for several days is very taxing and personally not something I could do regularly at my tender age. I do really like the comfort of my own bed each night thank you very much !! ■

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Catching Spanish Mackerel at Night

By Steve Adamson



During our last commercial endeavour on the Dragon Lady (which is a daily recreational charter boat), we found ourselves fishing well into the night. Once darkness approached we would concentrate on finding some quality ground which would produce the nannygai from that point on. The mark had to be appealing on the sounder because it would be the last move for the day. An isolated good sized bommie off the reef, holding a truck load of bait was what we looked for. It also had to be on the back of the reef from the wind direction offering some protection should it decide to pick up.

Our couple of night time efforts topped up the day time catch nicely with the nannygai and also some cracking red emperor. However what was a heap of fun the floating mackerel rod lit up on a regular basis after dark. The majority of anglers would associate mackerel to be a pure day time predator, mainly because that's when they are used to catching them. From my time many years ago doing overnight charters I knew that the mackerel can be prolific night time feeders. If there is food to be had they'll be there no matter the time of the clock. You'd be surprised what hours other pelagic fish keep as well.

With our commercial set up with the wholesaler they were simply not interested in any mackerel at all, so what we caught stayed between the crew of Freddy, Fraser

and myself for personal consumption. With this in mind we religiously had a mackerel line out the back of the boat. However we didn't quite expect it to produce its best results at night.

Now it was a standard mackerel rig, gang hooked with a big fat pilchard as bait. We fished off the bottom roughly in 40m of water and we set the bait roughly 15-20m below the surface. With the deck lights blaring after dark it becomes a beacon in the darkness. Bait is attracted to light and the predators follow. From a mackerel perspective they tend to circle or hover around the main school of big fish which are constantly stirring up the smaller bait schools. They then pick off in one foul swoop any stray wanderers from the commotion. Interestingly the 'reds' tend to do laps around the main bait school and when they collectively strike it is mayhem. In the same token a lot of the strikes on the mackerel rod occurred simultaneously. A flicker of light from the boat against the pilchard flank would be all they needed to go full tilt.

So if you find yourself on the water at night having a go at the 'reds', you'd be mad not to have a floating mackerel line amongst the mix as well. Working in with at least two or more anglers is definitely an advantage when its all happening deep below and also from further up the water column when the 'razor gang' decide to let loose. ■



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Adaptability in a Tourist Town

By Heff

At Fishing Port Douglas and our associated charter boats we've all had to be adaptable. With mid July and onwards looking to resume to some normality, there's been now nearly 4 months of trying to turn over an extra buck or two to supplement the government assistance which has been a lifeline. However when running a business it hasn't cut the mustard in trying to keep your head above water. Below is a basic outline as to how all of us have adapted and modified our business models in these darkest of economic times waiting to come out the other side.

Fishing Port Douglas

- Overhaul of our 50 plus page website, most comprehensive fishing website in QLD
- Concentration of bigger on-line presence for the local monthly Line Burner magazine and Facebook social media
- Job Keeper assistance

Dragon Lady Charters

- Acquiring a temporary commercial fishing licence allowed with the boat's survey. Then supplying fresh fish to a wholesaler in Cairns, still doing the occasional recreational fishing charter along the way
- Keeping crew employed via the Job Keeper Program
- Installed a new boat auxillary / generator and new deck lighting amongst various other improvement
- However still unsure about the outcome of local marina tenancy during this period which they have proven to be very elusive

Saltaire Game Charters

- Job Keeper program
- Son, Jake completed a Master V ticket via TAFE and Qld Maritime



- Father, Damian relocated a boat from Weipa back to Cairns
- Maintaining in Cairns a couple of boats for southern owners
- Obtained free berthage for the moment at the Cairns Marlin Marina via a contact. It is a government owned marina. The local marina in Port Douglas were again non-correspondent through this whole process

Jamie Beitzel's Fishing on the Daintree

- Been able to conduct a handful of charters and also on the Job Keeper program
- Very resourceful with his son Fletcher assisting more elderly residents north of the Daintree to maintain their properties with acreage
- Again with Fletcher, purchasing on the internet classic old farm bikes, sprucing them up and turning them into profit

Exceed Sportfishing

- Jake has been fortunate to pick up work with his former employee with the Amokura game boat, bringing it back north from NSW to Cairns where it is on the hard slip doing a fair bit of upgrade maintenance
- Has in the meantime upgraded his twin 220hp engines on his sportfishing boat ready to get back into charter work again

However we are all champing at the bit to get back to what we do best, charter fishing and catching fish !!!



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All User Friendly New Websites



By Heff

With the recent launches of our new websites at Fishing Port Douglas and Jamie Beitzel's - Fishing on the Daintree, our IT team at ICIT have designed them to be user friendly to everyone, even those with certain challenges. Even for me it has been a very interesting process as technology becomes a major factor when running a business.

Being Web accessible means that our websites, tools and technologies are designed and developed so that people with disabilities can use them. Web accessibility encompasses all disabilities that affect access to the Web, including:

- auditory**
- cognitive**
- neurological**
- physical**
- speech**
- visual**

In the IT world, accessibility is built into the website with hardware and software designed to help those who experience these disabilities. Okay let's examine further as to what I'd imagine to be the major challenge to view or interpret our product. For example how does a blind person be able to read our website?

Two categories of assistive technology are used most by blind internet users: Screen readers are software that translates screen contents into synthetic speech. People who are blind or have extreme low vision use

assistive technologies like JAWS or NVDA to read aloud the content and actions on web pages.

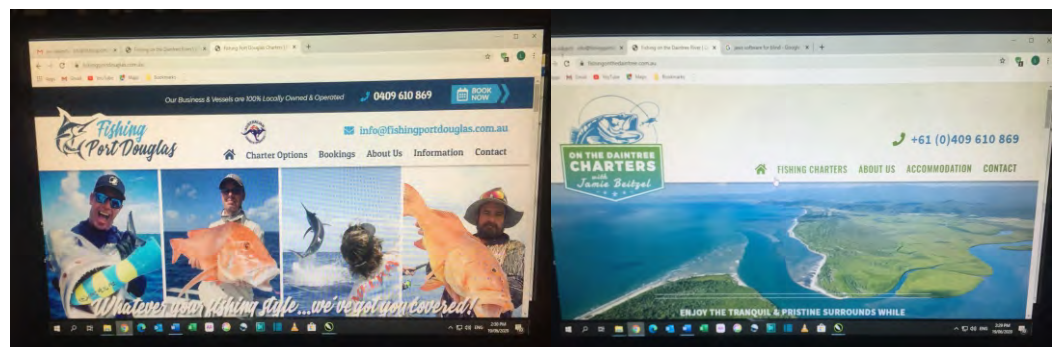

There's also refreshable braille displays that are hardware devices containing a strip of retractable braille pins, allowing braille characters to be generated on the fly.

On our websites they are able to have the text translated to them either way and when they come across a photo it is also encrypted so a description is described to them - ie a Barramundi.

This technology has been around for a little while now but from what I can gather you have to have this ability built into your website to be right up there in the market. Google being the main player in the game ranks this component as a big priority.

Even with this in mind it reassuring to know that as small businesses we are able to reach these new audiences and more importantly we are inclusive to everyone that likes their fishing.

When it comes to our reverting our information into actual charters we have over the years been very angler friendly. Examples of clients have included the blind, deaf, wheel chair reliant, amputees, autistic, down syndrome to name a few. They have all proven to be wonderful people to do deal with. I'll give you the tip, they appreciate being out on the water catching a fish or two more than anyone. ■

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QLD Tourism Industry Council

With Daniel Gschwind - CEO media release 21/6/20



Just when our confidence was growing that an announcement of free movement across national borders was imminent, the situation in Victoria has put a dark shadow of doubt over this. While the number of infections in that state highlight the importance of hygiene and social distancing measures, it should not divert us from the path towards a well-managed return to business in Queensland. We will continue to make the case to follow the Roadmap to easing restrictions, including opening of the borders.

On the upside, the earlier-than-expected easing of travel restrictions within Queensland was an important first step to breathe some life back into tourism. We have reports of a sharp surge in bookings from a number of operators which is encouraging. Certainly not an end to the overwhelming challenges but a light has been turned back on. Those businesses away from major population centres and those with a higher reliance on interstate or international visitors will continue to have a more challenging time. With that in mind, we will continue to advocate strongly on a national stage to keep support measures like JobKeeper in place as long as it is needed. We work closely with our national organisation the Australian Tourism Industry Council (ATIC), a collaboration of all state and territory industry councils.

I had an opportunity earlier to visit North Queensland with the Premier and speak to a number of members and operators not only about their current struggles but about their priorities for the recovery. It was important for the Premier to hear directly how COVID-19 is not just a health concern but also an economic and community crisis. The empty streets, idle Reef boats and shut restaurants were a stark backdrop to the visit in Cairns.

In Townsville, the important role that tourism, hospitality and events play in this regional economy was equally highlighted by operators and the local government in the meetings we had. Needless to say the Whitsundays, in the most glorious winter weather, also was a sad sight from a business activity point-of-view.

Recent aviation announcements, including the additional Queensland Government funding support bringing the package to \$15 million, is welcomed news for airports, regional destinations and operators. Let's hope visitors from the South can fill those planes.

Later this week we will join the Premier and the Treasurer for the second Queensland Industry Recovery Alliance meeting. It is a great forum to speak up for tourism and get some traction for our priorities. If there is any positive side the current crisis is may be the opportunity to think innovatively and boldly about how to make Queensland an even better place to live and work. At QTIC we are also challenging our thinking on such issues as the tourism distribution system and – one of the rapidly emerging issues – the looming insurance crisis, particularly for adventure operators. You will hear more from us in the coming weeks.



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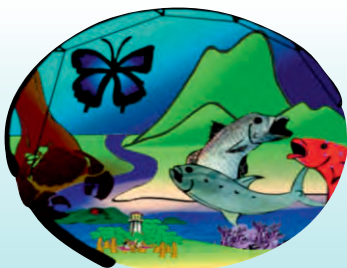
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On the Daintree Charters

With Jamie Beitzel



Well finally we have seen a bit of charter movement up here and I've been lucky enough to conduct quite a few charters in recent times. I suspect with the borders due to re-open in the coming weeks we may get back to some normality soon. I had one particular family join me for their Daintree River experience catching some good fish and doing a lot of croc spotting along the way, which is a real bonus at this time of year. These poor buggers were on their big trip around Australia and got stuck in QLD when the Covid crisis hit. They had already done their leg in the southern states on the east coast. Their plan is to eventually get across to the wonders of the NT and then onto the WA Kimberley's. Whilst in FNQ they extended their stay on a place at Shannonvale at the foothills of the Daintree National Park. I hope they can get on their merry way soon to completing the holiday of a lifetime.

Well fishing on the Daintree is well and truly in its winter phase and it can be a challenge for 'average Joe' doing their own thing. Over the years however I've established a plan which serves me well producing good fish. One of the keys is to catch live bait which can be a bit thin at this time of year. Sardines are by far the best and live prawns equally good if you are lucky enough to find them. Also you need to concentrate your

efforts below the ferry where there is some salt water and the water temperature is slightly warmer. Upstream we have seen a steady trickle of water coming off the mountains and the water temperature is quite chilly which is not overly conducive for our tropical species to be active.

My recent trips have seen me tangle with some quality one metre queenfish in the main channel, some ripping fingermark on the deeper structure and some sizeable golden trevally closer to the mouth. They've all been better than your average fish and very pleasing to know this system can produce great fishing all year round. The trips with the sun shining have certainly been more productive compared to the cool, overcast days.

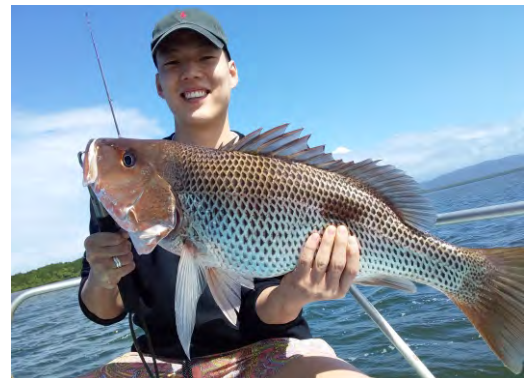
If you find the water to be quite dirty don't be afraid to use fresh dead baits down at the mouth and across the flats on a rising tide. You'll still see enough attention to make it worthwhile.

I'm proud to announce the release our brand new website:

www.fishingonthedaintree.com.au

With the great assistance by Heff from Fishing Port Douglas we now have a strong presence on the internet and a modern looking product which will serve us well.

I'll catch you on the Daintree or nearby soon.... ■



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Reel Cooking with Mick Hart

Stripey Fish Fingers



With financial hardship surrounding many of us, this month I've chosen an accessible fish and a cost effective recipe which is always a family favourite. The Stripey can be found along our coastal reefs so you don't have to travel miles to source them. Being a member of the seaperch family you can be guaranteed excellent texture and eating qualities. Minimum size is 25cm.

Ingredients

4 legal size Stripey or Spanish Flag
 1 egg beaten with splash of milk
 1 cup of bread crumbs
 Dusting of flour
 Fresh herbs from the garden (chives, thyme, dill or parsley)
 Lemon
 Olive oil

Method

Fillet fish and cut in half, removing bones and bloodline.
 Chop herbs and mix through crumbs.
 Season fish well and dust in flour, egg and then crumbs.
 Fry to golden brown in a little olive oil, drain on paper towel and squeeze over lemon. Serve with mayo, on a salad or a crusty roll.



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My Mates & Fish Eating Habits

By Heff



With the Covid pandemic and associated lock downs I was quite interested as to how Australians had adapted in regard to eating habits and trying to establish a correlation to their eating of fish and seafood. I did find an interesting report that indicated a 71% increase in the amount of time being spent on food and cooking websites during the past few months inclusive of seafood recipes. It was indicative of all age groups but a significant increase by people aged under 40yrs.

For many of us, the local supermarket has been one of the very few places we have ventured to in the past month or two and possibly for a bit more to come. Apparently supermarket in-store magazines have thrived in this environment and are by far the most read magazines in Australia. Collectively at the moment they have a total of approx 6.7 million or 35% of Australian's reading their publications each month. Poor old Fishing Magazines across the country have taken a flogging!!

Fresh fish and seafood recipes are well featured in these supermarket magazines but are still at the higher end of the dollar spend. Staple products such as pasta and rice I gathered are the big sellers in the current climate.

So where does fishing product fit in the scheme of things. It has been the case for a long time, unless you go and catch it yourself, you'll pay a premium to buy it elsewhere. However, most people still have the belief that it has to be part at least once of a weekly intake.

I've read all the figures and I've come up with my own conclusions having consulted with many friends of various stages of their lives living up here.

Friends 20-50 WITHOUT KIDS in the household

Not surprisingly, this group of mates seem to be time-poor when it comes to meal preparation and the stats back this up saying they are 37% more likely to agree that they don't have time to cook and prepare meals. My mates tend to eat on the run or eat out at whenever possible. They seem to be less concerned about fattening foods a lot of the time and quick convenience outlets such as Fish 'n' Chip shops are still popular. Grabbing a coffee and a meal from the Servo Stations is part of normal life. Restaurant lifestyle is also a feature of their habits where they may look at the seafood dishes. However, quite a few have their own boats and do fish for the fun of it but importantly will endeavour to fill the freezer best they can.

Friends WITH KIDS UNDER 18 in the household

A lot of these mates are parents under the pump working two jobs in a lot of instances and are more likely to feel that they don't have time to cook and prepare meals, even though they try their best to have a sit down family meal. Fast and affordable meals that are still nutritious and appealing to all members in the household are key. They tend to avoid foods with genetically modified / processed ingredients and are more likely to purchase more fresh product and also a good supply of chilled / frozen food ready for a quick cook up. Staples and fresh salads & vegetables take up a lot of their shopping purchase. Fish & Seafood purchases are not priority. However those that do have a boat will attempt to catch as many fish as possible when they hit the water, give the kids a great time and see what they can stock up in the freezer.

Friends AGED 60+ (no kids in the household)

This apparently comprises of almost one-third of Australian grocery buyers, and according to my mates in this golden bracket say they have a bit more time to prepare and cook meals. They are also the most mindful about what they eat. They generally seek simple, basic favourites that are nutritious and cost-efficient. However, they are happy to purchase seafood and the likes if the price is right. They very much avoid fast food places and rarely visit the old Fish and Chip shop. They do however love to purchase from the local Santiago prawn trawler and also the commercial reef fish boat Condamine when they dock on a monthly basis. They are not into big days on the water in smaller boats and do prefer to charter a bigger comfortable boat if they want to go fishing. Naturally they like to take home a good feed but not overly stressed if it is a quite day.

It is amazing where the mind will take you whilst we remain quiet in the Far North due to border closures but still it was an interesting exercise!! I got some of the weirdest looks whilst asking about their shopping and eating habits... ■



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Commercial Fishing Impacts

With 80 - 90 % of Commercial Export Trade affected by COVID 19, it has been left to survive on our own domestic market. Here's the latest:

Domestic food service

In Australia a very high proportion of domestic supply is provided to food services. The closure of restaurants due to the coronavirus restrictions has resulted in a drop in demand of around 70 to 80 percent.

Some innovation is occurring, with restaurants moving to sell takeaway, and fish and chip shops appear to have been less affected. A mix of imported and domestic seafood is sold into this sector.

Domestic retail sales

Retail sales of seafood remain more robust than exports and food service markets, although seafood was not a primary choice when consumers began stockpiling food supplies as coronavirus restrictions were put in place in Australia. This may be related to perceptions that seafood does not generally freeze well and a lack of consumer confidence in preparing seafood at home. Consumers also became more selective with what they bought and seafood took longer than other proteins to see an increase in sales.

However, companies that supply major retailers, particularly supermarkets, appear to be faring well despite the market disruptions. For independent seafood retailers the story is more complex and the impacts are highly variable; some companies are

struggling while others are seeing strong sales. Those retail shop fronts in Far Nth are struggling with so many people out of work in the Tourism industry.

Campaigns to 'buy local', particularly in coastal towns currently missing tourist dollars, have helped to boost fresh fish sales in some areas. A number of retailers have also found success through online sales and offering home delivery.

Commercial Fishing fleets

Demand issues aside, social distancing, travel restrictions and quarantine requirements for crew have affected some fleets' ability to fish. Restocking vessels with food and other supplies has been difficult given shortages of some foods and limits on purchases to address peaks in demand and supply difficulties caused by stockpiling.

Aquaculture

In the aquaculture sector, some of its market strengths are now the same factors that are causing pressure to mount. The usual need to provide a year-round supply and to target premium food service with a quality controlled product means production systems are fully stocked. Although demand has plummeted, producers continue to incur the daily expenses of feeding livestock and maintaining operations.

The Australian Barramundi Farmers Association (ABFA) reports cash flow is the critical and immediate issue while alternative markets are sourced.

The Barramundi sector is heavily invested in food service, which has now mostly stopped. They are working hard to show consumers that Barramundi freezes well and is a good alternative to

meats in everyday meals. There are some positive signs but far from being the solution to this crisis.

Longer-term recovery is likely to be affected by disrupted production cycles as producers are unable to, or reluctant to, stock fingerlings, coupled with large volumes of seafood needing to be harvested and no assurance of a rapid recovery in the food service sector.

Exporting

To support exporters the Australian Government has also announced \$110 million in international freight assistance for high-demand fisheries and agricultural produce. This will initially focus on the key markets of China, Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore and the UAE, with four key departure hubs: Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Perth.

Overall Summary

With recreational charter businesses being put on ice for over 2 months, there is some movement on the commercial front, albeit at a fraction of its capacity. Locally prawn trawlers, coral trout live trade, fresh reef fish operators along with prawn and barra aquaculture farms are walking on a thin line just hanging in there.



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Change Might Be On Its Way with Bruce Belcher

From the moment we were informed that there would be a leadership change in our local government I sensed an awkward moment for this region, in this aspect. Gone was my hope of realising that Cape Trib could one day be a world standard national park, complete with the absence of non-indigenous people. However, my ideals were replaced with a new regime that would kill the goose that laid the golden egg. The prospect of replacing the ferry with a bridge was the catalyst.

The ferry has always been able to de-main progress across the river. The day had come which I had guessed was inevitable. Progress would blind us to a good chance that Australia could compete worldwide to showcase a national park on the same level as some of those iconic places around the world. That chance evaporated from that moment of leadership change. It is nothing personal as I have never met the new mayor. That is just the way it goes.

I've travelled internationally and whenever I return to Australia I have this amazing feeling of freedom and knowing that most things that we have and use are unreachable in some places (or even unheard of) and yet people still complain of our "third world standards". Australians cannot generally see passed their noses.

It is perhaps coincidental that during this pandemic, I have had time to read "Daintree Blockade", by Bill Wilkie. This book tells the story of those people with good foresight to see this opportunity to protest, in the hope of stopping the Queensland Government from ripping the heart out of this unique region and instead, protect it for the reasons I've just described. The word "unique" is often used too loosely but in this case, it is optimised. If you research the Cape Trib section of the Greater Daintree region, you will realise what I am talking about with the word "unique". Ecologically and scientifically, the uniqueness of this region is not seen anywhere on Earth. Politics and greed have put the blinkers on most Australians.

I could be described as a one-eyed and ideological greenie when, in fact, I see myself as a middle of the road person who attempts to listen to both sides. However, when it comes to this area and meeting international tourists, believe me, they tell me how truly lucky we are to have such a wonderful place and how important it is for our future, particularly for our children's heritage, just to name one important fact. Why interfere with such an obvious and unique place.

While reading Bill's book, I was able to reflect on the time when all this was happening. It was toward the end of 1983, just when my wife Zona and I arrived here on our honeymoon. I had spent some of my youth here in the early 70s and I had a Holden HR



sedan which could traverse any outback road in Australia. My car was often the only one on the ferry as I made my way, on the muddy and dirty road, to Cape Trib. Our honeymoon was a promise that I would show Zona a place that I considered the best in the world, for us. Thirty- seven years later, I still have not yet asked her if she wants to go home to Melbourne! I am not whining, just reflecting on what could have been done and was over- looked. Now, we will continue on our own proud Aussie way, oblivious to what wonders we have and what other nations envy. I guess that ignorance is bliss!

See you next month.

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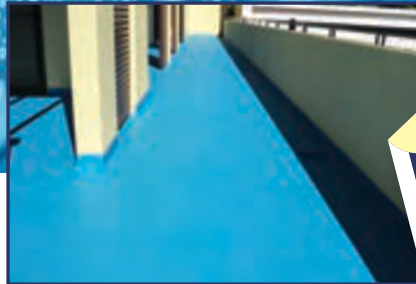
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