

RECREATIONAL ANGLERS WORK TO SAVE SUFFOCATING FISH



MEDIA RELEASE



Passionate anglers who volunteer their time to create and restore fish habitat in Australia's waterways, have been left heartbroken as mass fish kills continue in a 40-kilometre stretch of the Darling River, near the town of Menindee in far western NSW.

Members of Australia's largest recreational fishing conservation organisation, OzFish Unlimited, are desperately working to save native fish from suffocating, with plans to pump oxygen into the system by installing several aerators into major weir pools where fish may seek refuge.

OzFish Founder, CEO and former NSW Fisheries advisor Craig Copeland said the tragic event has devastated populations of Murray Cod, Golden and Silver Perch and Bony Bream, leaving many of the organisation's inland members "deeply affected."

Our core business is to look after Australia's fish, and big fish kills like this are difficult to watch so we will try and do what we can for the fish that are left as these conditions continue."

OzFish Unlimited with the support of their major partner BCF are raising funds through their ongoing "Give Back to Habitat" campaign to purchase and operate these much needed aerators.

Mr Copeland acknowledged that the rescue attempt was not a long-term solution but said *"the process would help counteract areas of low oxygen levels which have presented in the river due to low flows.*

Our OzFish community will do whatever they can to help, but Government must find a way to maintain base flows in the future to prevent this from occurring again and diminishing our valuable fisheries.

We have watched large female Murray Cod perish, a fish that can produce egg counts of up to 90,000, so if we consider the total number of fish lost – it is simply incalculable"

The organisation's local branch in the Sunraysia District, Victoria has created a GoFundMe page to raise money and awareness of the devastation.

OzFish Sunraysia President, Braeden Lampard, described the scenes of dead fish as simply horrific.

"This is not about blame for how it occurred it's about what can we do to help more fish from dying now and then addressing the water issue to stop our fisheries from being decimated."

Donations to the OzFish GoFundMe page can be made by clicking on <http://bit.ly/SaveTheDarlingFish> or by visiting any BCF store as part of their "Give Back to Habitat" Campaign."

For more information head to <https://ozfish.org.au> | <https://www.facebook.com/OzFishUnlimited/>

To arrange an interview contact Bob Grieve on 0412 325 694

OzFish Unlimited is a non-for-profit organisation dedicated to helping millions of Aussie recreational fishers take care of their rivers, lakes and estuaries to shore up the future of the sport they love. OzFish Unlimited partners with the broader community to invest time and money into the protection and restoration of our waterways, counteracting degradation.

