

**Queensland Seafood**  
Industry Association

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## **MEDIA ALERT**

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Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2008

### **'Healthy Waterways Champion 2008' to be put out of fishing business by Environmental Protection Agency fishing bans in Moreton Bay?**

In a cruel irony of the Environmental Protection Agency's fishing bans to be implemented as part of its just-announced rezoning plan for Moreton Bay Marine Park, professional fisherman Greg Savige, judged to be Queensland's "Healthy Waterways Champion" for 2008 -- and nominated by the EPA itself -- may be forced out of his fishing business.

The well-known Bribie Island-based net fisherman was honoured at the Healthy Waterways awards in late May in recognition of his years of work on "fireweed" and other environmental issues in Moreton Bay. A spokesman for the organising committee said the CSIRO National Research Flagships "Waterways Champion Award" recognised Greg's years of tireless work.

"Greg Savige has been fundamental in raising awareness of the effects of Lyngbya blooms on human health and the environment," he said. "Greg has dedicated thousands of hours actively attending meetings, workshops and conferences, as well as steering an advisory committee, in an effort to maintain the health of south-east Queensland waterways. His enthusiasm, keen observation skills and knowledge of Moreton Bay have greatly assisted understanding of the complex processes involved in the Lyngbya blooms."

Andrew McNamara, Minister for Sustainability, Climate Change & Innovation, told the awards night crowd that Healthy Waterways Awards were important in raising public awareness about the tremendous work done by the community, industry and government towards improving the health of SEQ waterways. "I would like to acknowledge those members of the community who have taken a keen interest in our waterways and work tirelessly to protect them," he said.

However, under the zoning plan released by EPA on Sunday, fishing grounds that produce 80% of Greg's annual catch have been given over to recreational-only fishing and his nets will be banned. After 30 years' fishing in northern Moreton Bay from his home on Bribie Island, Greg, still only in his early 50s, faces forced relocation to the southern end of Moreton Bay or an exit from the industry.

“The whole rezoning process has focused on fishing but fish numbers are fine. Fisheries managers in the Department of Primary Industries & Fisheries look after them. I believe some people in EPA have gone out with an agenda to get rid of professional fishermen.”

Greg is still determined to work to protect the marine environment in Moreton Bay. He is currently involved in turtle research with EPA staff and is also organising an environmental workshop this Thursday (October 23) to try to help protect seagrass beds.

Further information: Winston Harris 07 3262 6855 or 0418 448 616