



Australian Government
Director of National Parks

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STAY CROC-SAFE THIS BARRA SEASON

With the Barramundi biting again this season, Kakadu National Park reminds all anglers to stay safe from the park's other toothy residents – crocodiles.

Kakadu has joined forces with the Amateur Fishermen's Association of the Northern Territory (AFANT) and crocodile specialists Big Gecko to flag the extra precautions needed when fishing in the Top End.

The reminder came as RecFish Australia released an updated national code of practice for recreational and sport fishing. The code recommends anglers release tired fish by holding them in the water, facing the current, to revive them.

Kakadu's acting Park Manager Roy Davis warned that putting your hands in the water is too dangerous where crocodiles might be present.

"We welcome the RecFish code but urge Top End fishers to take extra precautions in places like Kakadu – where there are barra in great numbers, there are going to be crocodiles," he said.

"Unfortunately we see people putting their hands into the water all the time. We ask that people avoid putting any part of their body into the water, even their hands, particularly when releasing a fish. You don't want your hand getting stuck between a barra and a hungry croc."

But Roy said there were alternatives to ensure both the humane treatment of the fish and the safety of the angler.

"We recommend that fishers use an appropriate long-handled net – like a landing net - to support the fish in the water until it is fully recovered," he said.

"If fishing from a riverbank or at a creek crossing, maintain a safe distance from the water at all times and if fishing at night use lights to keep an eye out for any potential danger.

"At Kakadu you should assume every body of water has a croc in it. Statistics show there are between two and six crocs for every one kilometre of water."

AFANT's Chris Makepeace also urged fishermen to continue taking commonsense precautions.

"For most Territory fishers this is just second nature but we welcome the chance to remind all anglers, particularly visitors to the NT, to stay safe when fishing in our waters where crocs are common," he said.

Big Gecko's Dr Adam Britton also encouraged fishermen to remember that crocodiles are opportunists and some have learned to steal fish from recreational fishermen.

"Some crocs are very bold and will approach on the surface, but others can surprise you from below the water. Just because you don't see a crocodile doesn't mean there isn't one there. "

Media contact: Miranda Schooneveldt 0428 630 910.