

# New fly fishing regulations to improve quality of visitor experience

NASSAU, BAHAMAS, July 9, 2015 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Department of Marine Resources for The Islands Of The Bahamas has announced an initiative that is underway to create new regulations on fly-fishing.



“The aim of this initiative is to prepare legislation that will regulate this part of the fishing industry providing rules to govern those who participate in it, whether as fisherman, guide or lodge operator, and to ensure that the marine environments upon which the fishery is based, are protected. It is further expected that changes will result in the further development of the sector and of its contribution to the economy of The Bahamas” said Michael T. Braynen, Director of The Department of Marine Resources.

This initiative is intended to improve the quality of experience among visiting anglers by defining the role and responsibilities for each stakeholder. Fly Fishing Guides will be required to undergo formal training and certification to international standards, obtain a captain’s license, as well as a license to operate their guiding services business. All lodges regardless of size will be subject to high inspection standards and licensing as prescribed by under the Hotels Licensing Act. Anglers too will be expected to play a role in the preservation of the marine resources by purchasing a non-restrictive fishing license in a process that is easy, accessible and customer friendly. Fifty Percent of the revenue from the propose sale of licenses is to be deposited into a “Conservation Fund for the benefit of future generations.

The draft bill and accompanying regulations are not an effort to stifle, prevent or prohibit any category of anglers from fly fishing within the Islands of The Bahamas, or to restrict international investor participation in the sector.

Fly-fishing draws thousands of anglers to The Bahamas annually. It is seen both as a valued part of the national tourism product, as well as an important aspect of the Bahamian lifestyle and culture. This activity provides recreation, employment and income for many, especially in our Out Islands, and is a significant contributor to the national gross domestic product.

The Ministry of Tourism recognizes that the draft bill in its current form is generating much debate among our global partners and friends, and look forward to a new version to which all stakeholders, resident and non-resident would have contributed. Our expectation is that the new fishing legislation would improve the quality of visitor experience in The Bahamas.

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