



Aquatic Resources Management Act (ARMA) Update

Issue 01

17 February 2023

Welcome to the first ARMA Update. These updates will be provided on an as needs basis as we progress towards full implementation of ARMA on 1 November 2023. They will serve to update key stakeholders on progress, activities and events related to ARMA implementation. We will also share some interesting information and facts about ARMA.

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) is happy for you to use material from these updates in communications with your members/stakeholders.

Recent project milestones and achievements

25 November 2022

[Declaration of the *Pinctada maxima* pearl oyster resource in WA waters](#) as a Managed Aquatic Resource under section 14(1) of ARMA. This formally triggers the requirement to develop an Aquatic Resource Management Strategy (ARMS) for the resource.

Stakeholder engagement

DPIRD has recently commenced re-engaging with stakeholders in respect to ARMA.

15 November 2022

DPIRD met with representatives from WAFIC, Aquaculture Council of WA (ACWA) and Western Rock Lobster (WRL)

primarily to discuss commercial fishing licensing in the Managed Aquatic Resource framework under ARMA.

25 November 2022	Working draft of the pearl oyster ARMS provided to members of the Pearling Industry ARMA Working Group.
30 November 2022	Working draft of the pearl oyster ARMS sent to Recfishwest.
1 December 2022	An update on ARMA implementation (Abrolhos Islands Regulations) was provided to the Abrolhos Bodies Corporate Committee.
2 December 2022	First monthly meeting between DPIRD and ACWA at which ARMA will be a standing item.
2 February 2023	First meeting of the ARMA stakeholder reference group (DPIRD and peak bodies).
7 February 2023	Pearling ARMA working group meeting.

Upcoming events and engagement

February 2023 - April 2023 Statutory consultation on the pearling ARMS.

March 2023

Potential workshop on fishing commercial entitlement under an Aquatic Resource Use Plan.

**March 2023 –
April 2023**

Consultation on Aquatic Resources Management (**General**) Regulations through ARMA Stakeholder Reference Group

Issues under discussion

DPIRD is currently in discussions with WAFIC, WRL and the Pearling Industry ARMA Working Group regarding fishing of catch entitlement in a Managed Aquatic Resource.

The default model under ARMA requires that catch entitlement is held by the master of the boat that is used for fishing. While this works well for owner/operators or lessee/lessor relationships, it means that where someone wishes to employ a master to fish for them, the catch entitlement needs to be transferred to the master. There is no mechanism for catch entitlement to be returned to the original holder other than if the master agrees to transfer it back.

DPIRD understands that this is a concern for industry and is investigating other potential options that could be legislated under Aquatic Resource Use Plans. DPIRD has discussed an option based on nomination of masters/boats. It is intended to hold a further workshop on this potential model with commercial fishing stakeholders ahead of drafting the first Aquatic Resource Use Plan under ARMA (for the pearl oyster resource).

How to find a copy of ARMA

Because of the protocols for publishing legislation, it is currently not possible to view a consolidated, up-to-date version of ARMA online. Versions of ARMA can be found [here](#). The version [current from 27 February 2018](#) provides a consolidated copy of ARMA, but does not include the amendments made in 2021, which are particularly relevant to understanding the Managed Aquatic Resource framework in Part 3. The [current version](#) includes only sections of ARMA that have come into force, but is useful as it includes most amendments made in 2021. The amendment to ARMA passed by Parliament can be found [here](#) and provides all amendments made, not just those for sections that are currently in force.

Did you know....

That when ARMA commences, all Interim Managed Fishery Management Plans will transition as Managed Fishery Management Plans and are automatically amended to remove any expiry date. All Interim Managed Fishery Permits will transition as Managed Fishery Licences.

For further information please contact arma@dpird.wa.gov.au

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