GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA
Department of **Fisheries**
Department of **Parks and Wildlife**

Lalang-garram/Camden Sound Marine Park News update for commercial fishers – Issue 4

Zoning status

As explained in previous newsletters, the outer boundaries of the marine park were created in June 2012 and the management plan was approved in October 2013. Legislative changes are still needed to create management 'zones' in the marine park. Until this time, permitted activities within Lalang-garram/Camden Sound Marine Park remain unchanged.

There has been no further progress on the compensation applicable to operators affected by the establishment of the marine park.

Planning for other proposed Kimberley marine parks will continue in 2014 and we will continue to keep you informed on how you can provide input into this process.

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Commercial fishing licences

Operators in commercial fisheries and aquaculture in Western Australia must be licensed by the Department of Fisheries. That is, each person working as master or crew member on a commercial fishing vessel, regardless of the time and status of employment, must hold a valid commercial fishing licence.

Licences can be applied for at your local Department of Fisheries office, or via post. If you are unsure whether a staff member requires a commercial fishing licence or not, please do not hesitate to telephone the Department of Fisheries Broome office on (08) 9193 8600.

Licence fees ensure an appropriate return to the community for a degree of exclusive access to community resources (fish or water) for commercial purposes. Industry also benefits from our management and research to help ensure WA's fisheries remain sustainable and profitable.

The funds raised from commercial licences are used only for the purposes set out in the Fisheries Research and Development Account, which includes commercial fishing and aquaculture management, enforcement, community education, research and monitoring of fishing activity. The funds cannot be used for recreational fishing.

Research update

In September 2013, the Department of Fisheries joined forces with The University of Western Australia on an extensive research field trip in the marine park. Eighteen researchers deployed almost 500 baited remote underwater video systems (BRUVs) and 300 fish traps to gather baseline data on the diversity, abundance and size distribution of fish, shark and ray populations.

Genetic tissue samples were also taken, as part of a study examining how populations of the same species connect with each other. The use of such non-destructive research methods means that few fish are harmed and those captured in traps can be measured and returned to the water alive.

The Department of Fisheries is also working to address gaps in knowledge about the park's key ecological features. Studies are focusing on the importance of estuaries and nearshore habitats on the life cycle of key fish, shark and ray species. In particular, they will identify important fish habitats including fish spawning grounds, nursery areas and habitats, and look at the role of tides and mangroves on species as they change from juveniles to adults.

Further studies will develop cost-effective monitoring methods to trace the potential recovery of the 'benthic' (seabed) environment and fish groupings, following the removal of trawling in two special purpose zones (whale conservation and wilderness conservation) and sanctuary zones.

The state of our fisheries

Each year, Western Australian researchers put the State's aquatic resources under scrutiny and produce a report of the results. The latest report has revealed that sustainability measures are working to deliver positive results. Approximately 97 per cent of commercial fisheries are targeting stocks where no additional management is required to either maintain or achieve an acceptable breeding stock level. In addition, fishing methods, which could potentially affect some habitats, are highly regulated, with more than 90 per cent of the State's coastline unaffected by these activities.

North coast fisheries are in particularly good condition with all fisheries listed as being at low or moderate risk with no additional management actions required.

See the table below for a summary of the risk as it relates to commerically targeted fish species.

Captured fish species

Fish species	Aquatic zone	Risk	Status and Current Activities
Finfish	Estuarine/ Nearshore	MODERATE	The barramundi and threadfin salmon stocks are considered to be at acceptable levels.
	Inshore (shelf) Demersal	MODERATE	The current status of demersal finfish stocks captured by the Pilbara trawl fishery requires a review. A research survey is underway to assist in determining if the recent low catch rates are due to changes to trawl gear or to localized depletion.
	Pelagic	MODERATE	The Spanish mackerel stock in this region is at acceptable levels, and there are few other pelagic fish that are impacted.
Crustaceans	Estuarine/ Nearshore	LOW	There is a small amount of fishing for mud crabs and blue swimmer crabs in some estuarine and inshore areas.
	Inshore (shelf)	MODERATE	There are a number of separate prawn stocks and fisheries within this bioregion that each has limited entry, seasonal and area closures. Annual recruitment to these stocks is variable, which combined with the higher costs of operating in this region, has resulted in fishing effort being much lower in recent years.
Molluscs	Nearshore	LOW	The North Coast Trochus Fishery in King Sound is an indigenous fishery targeting the commercially important gastropod shell *Tectus niloticus*, commonly known as trochus. It is a hand collection fishery open to nominated fishers from the community. No fishing took place in 2012. The pearl oyster fishery only targets a very small section of the pearl oyster stock both spatially and within the available size range. Recent catches have been well below the quota levels due to low market demand but are beginning to increase again.
Echinoderm	Nearshore	LOW	Bêche-de-mer, also known as 'sea cucumbers' or trepang, are commercially harvested echinoderms (sea slugs) processed and sold for medicinal purposes in Asia. The majority of the effort has been expended in the Kimberly region, although there have been several years with substantial effort directed into the Pilbara region.

For full details, see the **Status reports of the fisheries and aquatic resources of Western Australia 2012/13**, at the Department of Fisheries website, **www.fish.wa.gov.au**

Good vessel maintenance – keep your bottom clean!

All vessels entering WA's waters, regardless of their size or frequency of visits, pose a risk to the State's aquatic biosecurity. Good vessel maintenance and effective antifouling not only prevent the introduction of new invasive marine pests (IMPs) and spread of those already here, it also provides benefits including increased vessel performance and speed, lower fuel consumption and reduced maintenance costs.

IMPs are marine plants or animals, which, if introduced to WA, could find their new homes so attractive they out-compete native species and cause a host of other problems. It has been estimated that of the 250 non-indigenous marine species identified in Australian waters, as many as three quarters have arrived as biofouling on vessels. All vessels carry marine species, whether in ballast water, biofouling or tangled in gear and equipment. And many have the potential to survive the voyage, establish viable populations and become significant invasive pests. Your vigilance will help stop pests from entering beautiful WA and establishing themselves here.

Prevent the spread of aquatic pests by following these five simple steps:

1. **Regularly inspect and clean** areas most prone to biofouling such as niche areas including internal sea water systems, docking strips, sea chests, pipe openings, propellers, shafts and rudders.
2. **Dry and maintain** your boat and equipment. Air drying will kill most small pest species in about 24 hours.
3. **Re-apply** or apply an authorised antifoul paint where appropriate and well within the life-span specified by the manufacturer, paying particular attention to coverage of pipe openings, niche and internal areas.
4. **Regularly check** and ensure marine growth prevention systems (MGPS) are operating efficiently and effectively. In the absence of an MGPS, ensure that other options for treating internal seawater systems are undertaken regularly and effectively.
5. **Report** any unusual sightings to **FishWatch** on **1800 815 507,** via email to **biosecurity@fish.wa.gov.au** or through **WA PestWatch** on the Department's website. You can also report sightings through the free **WA PestWatch app**.

WA PestWatch App

ANDROID APP ON Google play

Available on the App Store

A heavily biofouled vessel being cleaned in dry dock to reduce the risk of translocating invasive species.

REDMAP – Spot, Log, Map

Spotted anything unusual while on or in the water?

Redmap (Range Extension Database & Mapping project) invites the Australian community to spot, log and map marine species that are not usually seen in particular coastal areas. Some species may be new to you, some may be shifting or extending their range, and the presence of others may vary seasonally.

Over time, Redmap will use this 'citizen science' data to map which Australian marine species may be 'moving house' (extending their distribution range) in response to changes in the marine environment, such as ocean warming.

Ocean temperatures around most parts of the Australian coast have warmed at more than twice the global average, even faster in some regions. A temperature rise of a few degrees does not really sound like a lot, however for our marine ecosystems, small temperature changes are having a significant impact on the distribution of our marine species.

The Department of Fisheries supports this national initiative, which involves people from a range of community sectors collectively monitoring a variety of marine ecosystems and reporting sightings across a diverse range of species groups. Our research scientists are responsible for verifying the species identity of submitted photos.

Redmap allows you to collect your own marine data, share stories and upload photos of 'unusual' sightings. To be involved, just log on to **www.redmap.org.au** and tell them what species you have spotted that you think are unusual for any given area. If you've got a photo that's even better!

Contact us

This newsletter outlines some changes that will be happening in the Lalang-garram/Camden Sound Marine Park and other related information. If you have further questions regarding fishing in the marine park, please do not hesitate to email me, Kara Dew, your local Department of Fisheries Community Education Officer, at Kara.Dew@fish.wa.gov.au

Any of our staff at the Broome office will also be happy to assist – call (08) 9193 8600.

For further information regarding the Lalang-garram/Camden Sound Marine Park or wildlife in Western Australia, please contact Department of Parks and Wildlife Marine Park Coordinator Todd Quartermaine on (08) 9195 5524 or todd.quartermaine@dpaw.wa.gov.au, or visit the DPaW website at **www.dpaw.wa.gov.au**

Cover photo: Shannon Conway

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