

**A FIVE-YEAR MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR
RECREATIONAL FISHING ON THE SOUTH
COAST OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

*Final report of the
South Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group*

FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PAPER No. 194

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SECTION 1 FOREWORD

The development of this strategy represents a significant step in protecting recreational fishing quality in the South Coast Region and meeting the long-term needs for the sustainable management of recreational fishing.

All recommendations contained in this report were made only after careful consideration of the submissions and issues which were raised at public meetings, along with the action needed to be taken to protect the long-term sustainability of our fish stocks.

In its discussion paper, which was widely distributed and publicised, the South Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group put forward a range of proposals for community discussion. These proposals were developed after meeting directly with recreational fishers in key regional centres and building on the outcomes of the regional planning processes already undertaken.

The discussion paper attracted widespread comment, with 198 written submissions received from recreational fishers, angling clubs, and other stakeholders. The Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee and the review Working Group would like to thank those people and organisations that took the time to provide this valuable feedback.

The Working Group recognised that some of the most pressing concerns raised during public meetings and in submissions related to the interaction between the commercial and recreational fishing sectors, as well as providing adequate compliance and education resources for recreational fishing.

The Working Group acknowledged the strong public opinion on these issues and recognized the need to take community views into the development of the final recommendations.

The Working Group was also aware of the unique characteristics of the region, including weather conditions, limited boating facilities and isolated population centres, all of which effect the level of recreational fishing effort on the South Coast.

Finally, as Chairman I would like to thank all the members of the Working Group for their voluntary efforts during the comprehensive 18 month review process. Their efforts, along with all West Australians who took the time to participate in the review process, will go a long way to safe guarding the future of recreational fishing in WA.

DOUG BATHGATE

CHAIRMAN
SOUTH COAST RECREATIONAL FISHING WORKING GROUP
RECREATIONAL FISHERIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SECTION 2 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Guiding Principles for Management

Recommendation 1 - Key Principles for Management

It is recommended that recreational fisheries management in the region be based on the following key principles which were endorsed during the Gascoyne and West Coast planning processes:

- Government should ensure that adequate funding is available for the comprehensive research and management necessary for the effective management of recreational fishing.
- A key aim should be to ensure that the biodiversity of fish communities and their habitats and sustainability of fish stocks are preserved.
- Fisheries management should incorporate controls and measures that cover and anticipate increasing numbers of recreational fishers and their impact on fish stocks.
- Management should be based on the best available information and where critical information is unavailable a precautionary approach, which seeks to minimise risk to fish stocks, should be adopted.
- Fishing rules should acknowledge that equitable access to fishing opportunities across recreational user groups is important.
- The value of recreational fishing should be clearly recognised and given proper weight in all government and community planning processes, e.g. marine parks, industrial developments and any other the future development which may impact on the environment on the South Coast.
- Fishing rules should be kept simple and where possible and practical, made uniform across the region.
- Recreational fishing rules should be designed to protect the sustainability of stocks and manage the total recreational catch, as well as protect fish at vulnerable stages in their life cycle, e.g. spawning aggregations.
- The benefits from management of the total recreational catch should flow back to the recreational sector and be reflected in maintained or improved fishing quality and sustainability.
- Clear processes should be put into place to resolve resource-sharing issues and support the integrated management of fish stocks.

2.2 Information for Management – Biology, Catch and Fishery Performance

Recommendation 2 – Major Catch Survey

A major recreational catch survey should be undertaken every three years at a minimum to provide detailed information about the spatial and temporal distribution of recreational activity and catches on which to base management decisions. Information should also be collected on an annual basis on indicator species and in specific areas to monitor recreational fishing quality.

Recommendation 3 – Volunteer Angler Logbook Program

The Department of Fisheries should introduce a structured volunteer angler logbook program in the South Coast Region for key species in specific regional areas. The logbook program needs to be managed by the Department of Fisheries, with regular feedback provided to logbook participants.

Recommendation 4 – Priority Species for Research

Research should be undertaken on the following key recreational species in the South Coast to provide information on species biology and stock structure. Predictive fisheries stock assessment models and, where practical, indices of recruitment, should be developed for these key species:

Species	RESEARCH STATUS			
	Biology	Stock assessment	Exploitation status	Breeding stock level
Australian herring	Yes	Yes – based on commercial catch data.	Fully exploited.	Considered adequate.
Black bream	Wellstead and Walpole/ Nornalup Inlets only.	Yes – based on commercial catch data.	Fully exploited.	Considered adequate.
Cobbler	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dhufish, West Australian	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
Groper, Western blue	Underway	N/A	N/A	N/A
King George whiting	Yes	Yes – based on commercial catch data.	Fully exploited.	Considered adequate.
Silver trevally (skippy)	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
Queen snapper	Limited.	N/A	N/A	N/A
Red snapper (Bight redfish/nannygai)	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
Breaksea cod	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pink snapper (South Coast)	West Coast and Gascoyne only	N/A	N/A	N/A

Biology: Knowledge of age, size at maturity, spawning characteristics, etc.

Stock assessment: Estimate of current stock levels.

Exploitation status: Current catch as a percentage of the estimated total sustainable catch.

Breeding stock level: Percentage of mature fish needed to ensure sufficient recruitment.

Recommendation 5 – Fishing Quality Indicators

A range of ‘fishing quality indicators’ based on angler surveys should be developed to identify trends in fishing quality in the region and assist in the review of the effectiveness of this strategy.

These indicators should cover fishing quality, diversity and the value associated with the fishing experience.

The following species should be used as key indicator species:

Indicator species	ENVIRONMENT WHERE SPECIES IS MOST OFTEN FOUND		
	Estuarine	Inshore	Offshore
	Australian herring	Australian salmon	Bonito
	Black bream	Groper, western blue	Breaksea cod
	Cobbler	Flathead	Harlequin fish
	Flathead	King George whiting	Pink snapper
	King George whiting	Pike/snook	Queen snapper
		Pink snapper	Red snapper (Bight redfish/nannygai)
		Silver trevally (skippy)	Samson fish
		Shark, school and gummy	

2.3 Protecting Vulnerable Fish and Managing the Recreational Catch

Recommendation 6 – Bag and Size Limits

Category 1 Fish – total mixed daily bag limit of 7			
<p>Category 1 fish are considered to have the highest risk of overexploitation. Many fish in this category have low catch rates and levels of abundance, while others may be highly valued for their fishing and eating qualities. Many Category 1 fish are slow growing and mature at four years plus. For these reasons, Category 1 fish require a high degree of protection.</p> <p>(Note: *denotes recommended change to current management)</p>			
Species	Species bag limit	Size limit	Other controls
Billfish – inc sailfish, swordfish, marlins (combined)	1*		
Boarfish	4*		
Cobbler	4*	430mm	
Cods – inc breaksea and harlequin (combined) but excludes grey-banded rockcod	4	Breaksea 300mm Harlequin 300mm*	Max 30kg or 1.2m
Dhufish, West Australian	2*	500mm	
Groper, western blue	1	600mm*	
Hapuku/trevalla/bass groper and grey-banded rockcod (combined)	2*		
Mahi mahi	2*		
Mulloway	2*	700mm*	
Pink snapper	4*	410mm*	
Queen snapper (blue morwong)	4*	410mm	
Samson fish/amberjack/yellowtail kingfish (combined)	2*	600mm	
Sharks and rays (combined)	2*		
Trout, brown and rainbow (combined)	4	300mm	Rec licence
Tuna – southern bluefin, yellowfin, bigeye (combined)	2*		

Category 2 Fish – total mixed daily bag limit of 16

Category 2 fish have a moderate risk of overexploitation. Many fish in this category have moderate catch rates and levels of abundance. Category 2 Fish are mostly found in inshore and estuarine areas, are highly sought after by recreational fishers and mature at three to four years.

(Note: *denotes recommended change to current management)

Species	Species bag limit	Size limit	Other controls
Bream – black	8*	250mm	2 fish over 350mm [#]
Dory, John and mirror (combined)	8*		
Flathead and flounder (combined)	8*	Flathead 300mm Flounder 250mm	
Goatfish	8*		
Leatherjacket	8*	250mm	
Red snapper (Bight redfish/nannygai)	8*	300mm*	
Salmon, Australian	4	300mm	
Snook and pike (combined)	8*	300mm	
Swallowtail	8*	300mm*	
Sweep, banded and sea (combined)	8*	250mm*	
Tailor	8	300mm	2 fish over 600mm [#]
Tarwhine	8*	230mm	
Trevally, silver (skippy) etc.	12*	250mm	
Tunas - other including bonito (combined)	8*		
Whiting, King George	12*	280mm	
Whiting, yellowfin	16*		
Wrasse – inc. western king wrasse and western foxfish	8*		

[#] Refer to Recommendation 8

Category 3 Fish – total mixed daily bag limit of 40

Category 3 fish have a lower risk of overexploitation. Fish in this category generally have higher catch rates and levels of abundance and are mainly found inshore. These fish have a widespread distribution and mature at two-plus years. Category 3 fish include all fish not listed in other categories except baitfish of the sardine, anchovy and hardyhead families (*Clupeidae*, *Engraulididae* and *Atherinidae*), redfin perch, gold fish, carp and tilapia.

(Note: *denotes recommended change to current management)

Species	Species bag limit	Other controls
Australian herring	40* combined	Minimum size - 180mm*
Garfish		
Mackerel, blue		
Mullet, sea and yellow-eye (combined)		
Whiting – (other)		
Unlisted species - (All species not specified except baitfish and feral freshwater species)		

Crustaceans		
(Note: *denotes recommended change to current management)		
Species	Bag limit	Other controls
Crab, blue swimmer (manna)	20*	Boat limit of 40*, size limit, gear controls
Crab, mud	5*	Boat limit of 10*, size limit, gear controls
Prawns, school and king (combined)	9 litres	Gear controls
Rock lobster, western and southern (combined)	8	Boat limit of 16, licensed fishery, size limit, gear controls, season.

Molluscs and other reef animals				
(Note: *denotes recommended change to current management)				
Species	Bag limit	Boat limit	Possession limit	Other controls
Abalone, brownlip	5 combined	10 combined	10 (20 at place of residence)	Licence & season
Abalone, greenlip				
Abalone, Roe's and all other abalone species not specifically mentioned (combined)	20	-	20 (80 at place of residence)	Licence & season
Cockles and pipis [#]	2 litres			
All other species of edible mollusc not specifically mentioned (combined)				
Mussels	9 litres			
Oysters [#]	20*			
Razorfish [#]	20*			
Scallops	20*			
Sea urchins [#]	20*			
Squid, cuttlefish and octopus (combined)	15	30		

[#] Refer to Recommendation 8

Recommendation 7 - Recommended Changes to the Current Legal Size Limits

Note: Any changes to the size limit will apply to all sectors including commercial fishers

Species	Old size (mm)	New size (mm)	Size when 50% of the stock reach maturity (mm)
Australian herring	-	180	196 (M) 215 (F)
Groper, western blue	500	600	Not known
Harlequin fish	-	300	Not known
Mulloway	500	700	750
Pink snapper (Wilson Inlet)	280	410	400
Red snapper (Bight redfish/nannygai)	230	300	Not known
Swallowtail	230	300	Not known
Sweep, banded and sea	-	250	Not known
Tarwhine	230	250	260

Recommendation 8 – Increased Protection for Certain Species

- 8(a) A spear fishing prohibition **should not** be introduced for western blue groper (*Achoerodus gouldii*) on the South Coast. If western blue groper stocks require increased protection in the future alternate management controls such as boat limits, maximum size limits or Fish Habitat Protection Areas should be considered.
- 8(b) A slot limit of two (2) black bream (*Acanthopagrus butcheri*) over 350 mm be introduced to provide increased protection for mature fish.
- 8(c) A slot limit of two (2) tailor (*Pomatomus saltatrix*) over 600 mm be introduced to provide increased protection for mature fish.
- 8(d) A process is required to formally identifying areas within Oyster Harbor, Princess Royal Harbor and the mouths of Wilson and Irwin Inlets for increased protection of cockles, oysters and razorfish, etc. This process should consider the merits of different management options and include input from research scientists, Fisheries Offices, and Regional RFAC members.

Recommendation 9 – Recreational Net Fishing

Recreational haul and set netting should be phased out on the South Coast over a three-year period. The process should involve a series of incremental closures, commencing with those waters that currently received the lowest level of recreational netting activity as follows:

1st Year Closures	2nd Year Closures	3rd Year Closures
Hamersley Inlet Princess Royal Harbour Stokes Inlet Thomas River	Broke Inlet Gordon Inlet/Gairdner River Irwin Inlet	Beaufort Inlet/Pallinup River Wellstead Inlet Wilson Inlet All ocean waters

Recreational throw nets to continue to be permitted for the take of baitfish in ocean waters only.

Recommendation 10 – Fishing Competitions

- 10(a) All fishing competitions with greater than 50 participants should be formally registered in advance with the Department of Fisheries.
- 10(b) Competition organisers should be required to keep an accurate record of the participation, catch and effort in each competition and forward catch returns to the Department of Fisheries for inclusion in the recreational fisheries database. If possible, information should be entered in electronic format which is compatible with the recreational fishing database. The Department of Fisheries should be responsible for issuing data sheets and an identified contact person should exist in the Department to liaise with the fishing clubs.

- 10 (c) To ensure fishing competitions are conducted in line with recreational fishing ethics and meet requirements under the *Animal Welfare Act*, a formal code of conduct for fishing competitions should be developed by the Department of Fisheries in consultation with fishing clubs and organising bodies.

2.4 Protecting and Enhancing Recreational Fishing Quality

Recommendation 11 - Recreational Fishing Priority Areas

The importance of recreational fishing as a component of tourism and lifestyle should be recognised in fisheries management and other planning processes that impact on fish habitat or fishing activity.

In particular, recreational fishing should be recognised as a priority activity in the following areas:

- All rivers and estuarine systems;
- Twilight Cove;
- Recherche Archipelago;
- Waters adjacent to Fitzgerald River National Park; and
- Cape Vancouver to West Cape Howe.

Recommendation 12 – Code of Conduct for Accessing Pastoral Leases, Nature Reserves and Aboriginal Land

That a code of conduct should be developed for recreational fishers accessing fishing locations through pastoral leases, nature reserves and Aboriginal land. The code should be developed in consultation with landowners/leaseholders and contain the following elements:

- No rubbish should be left behind.
- Any fish frames or offal should be removed.
- All gates that are shut must be left shut.
- Campfires to be permitted in accordance with local jurisdictional requirements.
- Under no circumstance should any fences be cut or interfered with.
- Any machinery or equipment should not be interfered with.
- Firearms or dogs should not be taken on to stations without the approval of the station owner.
- Aboriginal land should only be entered with the approval of the Aboriginal landowners.

Recommendation 13 – Access to Fishing Locations through Private Land

Regional recreational fishing representatives in each region should enter into negotiations with owners/leaseholders to define access routes to fishing locations. These routes and the code of conduct should be promoted by the Department of Fisheries in advisory material.

Recommendation 14 – Position Statement on Restocking as a Stock Enhancement Strategy

Management of wild fish stocks should be the primary focus for recreational fisheries management. Restocking should only be considered as a strategy to assist with the recovery of

a stock where it can be identified that the stock has been significantly depleted and its recovery is endangered or will be prolonged.

To minimise any ecological impacts, all stock enhancement projects should be assessed against disease risk, biodiversity and genetic diversity criteria. Any stock enhancement project should also be adequately monitored and evaluated.

2.5 Resource Sharing

Recommendation 15 – Resource Sharing

The following species should be considered as a priority for total catch management under an integrated management framework:

- Australian salmon;
- Australian herring;
- Black bream;
- King George whiting; and
- Southern demersal species, including shark.

For each species, a forum should be held with key stakeholders, including from the recreational, commercial, indigenous and conservation sectors, to identify key issues which need to be taken into consideration in the development of an integrated management plan for the South Coast Region.

2.6 Protection of Fish Habitats

Recommendation 16 – Low Impact Wilderness Fishing Experiences

Twilight Cove should be managed as a remote wilderness fishing area on a trial basis to provide an opportunity for high quality fishing experiences.

The following guiding principles should be used for the management of the wilderness area:

- Low take;
- Low environmental impact; and
- A code of practice should be developed for recreational fishing in the area.

2.7 Improving Community Stewardship - Education and Compliance

Recommendation 17 – South Coast Region Community Education Plan

A recreational fisheries community education plan should be developed for the South Coast Region which focuses on the issues and species that are most important to the region. The plan should seek to keep the recreational fishing community informed of management decisions, give a clear lead on the values and attitudes which will assist in sustaining fish stocks and develop a broad community recognition of the value of recreational fishing.

The plan should, at minimum, contain the following elements:

17(a) Regional Fishing Guide

A comprehensive regional guide to recreational fishing in the South Coast Region should be produced to inform and educate fishers about recreational fishing management arrangements, fishing ethics, research, conservation issues and promoting stewardship for fish stocks and the environment.

17(b) Educational Resource Materials

Adequate quantities of practical educational tools such as measuring gauges, fish rulers, adhesive bag limit guides and boat ramp and fishing venue signs should be produced to support the regional fishing guide.

17(c) Annual Media Campaign

An annual media campaign should be implemented to promote recreational fishing and fishing ethics in the region.

17(d) Volunteer Involvement in Education

Encourage the establishment and development of volunteer groups in structured fisheries education activities across the region.

Recommendation 18 - Volunteer Fisheries Liaison Officers (VFLO) Program

The operation of the VFLO program should be enhanced on the South Coast by actively encouraging increased membership for all key regional centres.

Recommendation 19 – Additional Patrol Capacity

An additional two patrols (four Fisheries and Marine officers), incorporating at least one Aboriginal Fisheries Liaison Officer, should be dedicated to recreational field compliance and education activities during peak fishing seasons in the South Coast Region.

These resources should be allocated to:

- *Albany*: One additional patrol crew to service peak season fishing compliance needs between Walpole and Bremer Bay.
- *Esperance*: One additional patrol crew to service peak season fishing compliance needs between Hopetoun and the WA/SA border.

Recommendation 20 – Regional Fisheries Management Officer

A Recreational Fisheries Management Officer should be appointed to assist with the implementation of the South Coast review, assist with the development of integrated fisheries management plans for key fisheries in the region and coordinate the VFLO program.

SECTION 3 OVERVIEW OF SOUTH COAST REVIEW

The South Coast Regional Recreational Fishing Strategy and the Pilbara/Kimberley Recreational Fishing Strategy are the final reviews to be undertaken in the current regional recreational fishing planning process. Recreational fishing strategies have recently been implemented in the West Coast and Gascoyne Regions.

Development of the South Coast strategy commenced with a Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee (RFAC) planning day in April 2003. The purpose of this planning day was to review the outcomes of the Gascoyne and West Coast planning processes and develop proposals for the future management of recreational fishing in the South Coast Region.

The outcomes from this planning day laid the foundation for the South Coast Strategy. A Drafting and Review Working Group was subsequently appointed to oversee the drafting of a strategy and assist with the review of public submissions. The Working Group consisted of the following membership;

<i>Chairman</i>	–	Mr Doug Bathgate	Chairman of RFAC
<i>Executive Officer</i>	–	Mr Clinton Syers	Department of Fisheries

Working Group Members

Mr Doc Reynolds	–	RFAC
Mr Len Armstrong	–	RFAC, Chairman of Great Southern Regional RFAC
Mr Kevin Beeck	–	Great Southern Regional RFAC
Mr Frank Prokop	–	Recfishwest
Mr Ian Curnow	–	Department of Fisheries

The draft strategy (Fisheries Management Paper No.182 ‘*A Quality Future for Recreational Fishing on the South Coast – A five-year draft strategy for managing the recreational component of the catch*’) was released in July 2004 for public comment through print and electronic media and by direct mail. Public meetings were held in Walpole, Albany and Esperance to brief the community on the issues and proposals raised in the discussion paper.

Most of the public meetings were well attended and members of the community used the opportunity to comment on the virtues of the different proposals contained in the discussion paper. The public comment period ended on 14 October 2004 and a total of 198 submissions were received.

The Working Group met in November 2004 to discuss the matters raised in all the submissions and formulate final recommendations to the Minister for Fisheries.

SECTION 4 OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

The Department of Fisheries and the South Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group would like to thank the people and associations who took the time to complete submissions on the proposals and issues outlined in its discussion paper.

A total of 198 written submissions were received, comprising of submissions from:

- 183 Individuals
- 5 Fishing clubs and recreational fishing associations
- 3 Aquatic tour operators
- 2 Regional Recreational Fishing Advisory Committees
- 2 Commercial fishing associations
- 2 Community groups
- 1 Development Commission

198 TOTAL

The comments and suggestions put forward in the submissions provided valuable feedback and all of the matter raised were analysed in detail by the Working Group.

The Working Group's proposals on managing the recreational catch and resource sharing attracted the greatest comment. The key issues raised by the community on all proposals are detailed in 'Section 5 - Issues and Recommendations' of this document.

The Working Group was provided with a comprehensive list of all individual comments raised in the various submissions to assist in finalising recommendations. The Working Group considered not only the frequency with which issues were raised, but also discussed the validity of various comments. The Working Group also noted and considered views and issues raised during the public meetings held around the region.

A summary of the level of support for each proposal as indicated in submissions is attached in Appendix A.

SECTION 5 ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Fisheries Management Paper No.182 ‘*A Quality Future for Recreational Fishing on the South Coast – A five-year draft strategy for managing the recreational component of the catch*’ provides detail for the rationale behind the proposals and should be read in conjunction with this paper.

5.1 Guiding Principles for Management

Fisheries Management Paper No.182 proposed a set of guiding principles for management that were consistent with the principles endorsed during the Gascoyne and West Coast planning processes.

There was strong community support (90 per cent) for the proposed principles for management. The Working Group did not consider any of the matters raised in the small percentage of submissions that disagreed warranted change in their position and, given the endorsement for these principles in previous reviews in other bioregions, the Working Group recommended that the draft principles for management apply to the region.

Recommendation 1 – Key Principles for Management

- Government should ensure that adequate funding is available for the comprehensive research and management necessary for the effective management of recreational fishing.
- A key aim should be to ensure that the biodiversity of fish communities and their habitats and sustainability of fish stocks are preserved.
- Fisheries management should incorporate controls and measures that cover and anticipate increasing numbers of recreational fishers and their impact on fish stocks
- Management should be based on the best available information and where critical information is unavailable a precautionary approach which seeks to minimise risk to fish stocks should be adopted.
- Fishing rules should acknowledge that equitable access to fishing opportunities across recreational user groups is important.
- The value of recreational fishing should be clearly recognised and given proper weight in all government and community planning processes, e.g. marine parks, industrial developments and any other the future development which may impact on the environment on the South Coast.
- Fishing rules should be kept simple and where possible and practical, made uniform across the region.
- Recreational fishing rules should be designed to protect the sustainability of stocks and manage the total recreational catch, as well as protect fish at vulnerable stages in their life cycle, e.g. during spawning aggregations.

- The benefits from management of the total recreational catch should flow back to the recreational sector and be reflected in maintained or improved fishing quality and sustainability.
- Clear processes should be put into place to resolve resource-sharing issues and support the integrated management of fish stocks.

5.2 Information for Management – Biology, Catch and Fishery Performance

The Working Group's proposal for a major catch survey to collect quality time-series data on recreational fishing activity received very high support in submissions (86 per cent).

People agreeing that comprehensive catch and effort information is essential for the effective management of recreational fishing and also to assist with the resolution of resource sharing issues.

Given the lack of recreational catch and effort data the Working Group believed the major creel surveys should be conducted at least every three years and preferably over shorter periods if funding is available.

There was moderate support for the volunteer angler logbook program (67 per cent). However, the Working Group did note some comments in submissions raised concern over the accuracy of information recorded in a voluntary logbook, and that the log books may not represent an accurate cross section of recreational catches.

The Working Group was of the view that the logbook should not be used to provide quantitative estimates of total recreational catches, but rather provide valuable information on catch trends among regular fishers. This information may provide an early indication of a problem requiring further research or management.

The Working Group also noted that for any logbook program to work effectively, volunteers who supply information must receive feedback on a regular basis. For this to happen, adequate resources must be set aside for the coordination and administration of the logbook program.

Recommendation 2 – Major Catch Survey

A major recreational catch survey should be undertaken every three years at a minimum to provide detailed information about the spatial and temporal distribution of recreational activity and catches on which to base management decisions. Information should also be collected on an annual basis on indicator species and in specific areas to monitor recreational fishing quality.

Recommendation 3 – Volunteer Angler Logbook Program

The Department of Fisheries introduce a structured volunteer angler logbook program in the South Coast Region for key species in specific regional areas. The logbook program needs to be managed by the Department of Fisheries, with regular feedback to logbook participants.

5.2.1 Species Biology

The Working Group identified in its discussion paper the need for more research on key recreational species in the South Coast Region. While a considerable amount of biological information is known about some specific species, little stock assessment information is available on most species.

The Working Group's proposal for a list of priority species for research received very high support in submissions (87 per cent). Following further consideration of comments made in submissions and advice from the Department of Fisheries' Research Division, the Working Group supported the inclusion of the following species: Australian herring, cobbler, dhufish and western blue groper. Given the strong community support, the Working Group endorsed the proposed list of species along with the abovementioned species.

Recommendation 4 – Priority Species for Research

Research should be undertaken on the following key recreational species in the South Coast to provide information on species biology and stock structure. Predictive fisheries stock assessment models and, where practical, indices of recruitment, should be developed for these key species:

Species	RESEARCH STATUS			
	Biology	Stock assessment	Exploitation status	Breeding stock level
Australian herring	Yes	Yes – based on commercial catch data.	Fully exploited.	Considered adequate.
Black bream	Wellstead and Walpole/ Nornalup Inlets only.	Yes – based on commercial catch data.	Fully exploited.	Considered adequate.
Cobbler	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dhufish, West Australian	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
Groper, western blue	Underway	N/A	N/A	N/A
King George whiting	Yes	Yes – based on commercial catch data.	Fully exploited.	Considered adequate.
Silver trevally (skippy)	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
Queen snapper	Limited.	N/A	N/A	N/A
Red snapper (Bight redfish/nannygai)	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
Breaksea cod	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pink snapper (South Coast)	West Coast and Gascoyne only	N/A	N/A	N/A

Biology: Knowledge of age, size at maturity, spawning characteristics, etc

Stock assessment: Estimate of current stock levels

Exploitation status: Current catch as a percentage of the estimated total sustainable catch

Breeding stock level: Percentage of mature fish needed to ensure sufficient recruitment

5.2.2 Quality Indicators for Recreational Fishing

The Working Group’s proposed list of ‘fishing quality indicators’ received very high support in submissions (85 per cent) and was endorsed by the Working Group. The Working Group did not consider that any of the matters raised by people who disagreed warranted change from the initial position.

During the public meetings and in submissions many anglers expressed a desire to be involved in research that will assist in the effective management of the recreational fishery. Collecting information on key ‘signature’ species, which are recognised as important to the recreational fishery, represents a real opportunity for anglers to participate in recreational fisheries research.

The indicators should cover fishing quality, diversity and the value associated with the fishing experience.

Importantly data collected on indicator species may provide valuable trend information on the level of abundance and sizes for each key species in years between major creel surveys. After taking into account comments received in submissions, the Working Group supported the inclusion of Australian herring, cobbler and pike/snook in the list of indicator species. The Working Group also supported the addition of bonito and shark (school and gummy) to strengthen the representation of offshore pelagic indicator species on the South Coast.

Recommendation 5 – Fishing Quality Indicators

A range of ‘fishing quality indicators’ based on angler surveys should be developed to identify trends in fishing quality in the region and assist in the review of the effectiveness of this strategy.

These indicators should cover fishing quality, diversity and the value associated with the fishing experience.

The following species should be used as key indicator species:

	ENVIRONMENT WHERE SPECIES IS MOST OFTEN FOUND		
	Estuarine	Inshore	Offshore
Indicator species	Australian herring	Australian salmon	Bonito
	Black bream	Groper, western blue	Breaksea cod
	Cobbler	Flathead	Harlequin fish
	Flathead	King George whiting	Pink snapper
	King George whiting	Pike/snook	Queen snapper
		Pink snapper	Red snapper (Bight redfish/nannygai)
		Silver trevally (skippy)	Samson fish
			Shark, school and gummy

5.3 Protecting Vulnerable Fish and Managing the Recreational Catch

5.3.1 Bag Limits

In the draft discussion paper the South Coast Recreational Fishing Working Group endorsed the implementation of the three-tiered bag limit structure that was developed during the West Coast and Gascoyne Regional Reviews.

Generally there was strong community support for the bag limit structure and most comment related to the bag limits proposed for individual species. When reviewing submissions and comments the Working Group was mindful that the bag limits needed to be linked back to the abundance and biology of fish, rather than just placing 'socially acceptable' limits on different species.

With respect to the proposed bag limit categories, the following feedback was received in submissions.

Category 1 Fish

The proposed mixed daily bag limit of seven Category 1 Fish received moderate support in submissions (58 per cent). However, of the submissions that disagreed, only 20 people (11 per cent) indicated that they believed the proposed mixed daily bag limit for Category 1 fish was too low.

It was apparent from comments received in submissions and at the public meetings that many people did not support the proposed mixed bag limit of seven Category 1 Fish because they believed the individual bag limit for some should be higher than seven fish. This was particularly true for red snapperⁱ (Bight redfish/nannygai) - *Centroberyx spp.*

The proposed individual species bag limits for Category 1 Fish received the support of approximately 50 per cent of submissions. Of the submissions that disagreed with the proposed individual species bag limits for Category 1 Fish, 60 people (30 per cent) commented that red snapper should be placed in Category 2 with an increased bag limit (i.e. if red snapper was moved to Category 2 there might have been up to 80 per cent support in submissions for the individual Category 1 bag limits).

The Working Group also received a number of comments on the proposed bag limit for some key species. These comments primarily related to cods, pink snapper and hapuku (*Polyprion oxygeneios*) and trevalla (Family Centrolophidae).

These comments were as follows:

Red snapper (Bight redfish/nannygai): The Working Group was concerned that Red snapper could be at risk to overexploitation as they are a slow-growing deepwater species. Adding to this concern was the recent reduction in red snapper quota from the Commonwealth managed trawl fishery. However, comments made in submissions and at all three public meetings indicated that red snapper were found in high abundance and were the key demersal species

ⁱ Red snapper (*Centroberyx gerrardi*) are often incorrectly known as 'Nannygai' on the South Coast. Nannygai (*Centroberyx affinus*) are a similar east coast species with 7 dorsal fin spines whereas Red snapper have 6 spines.

for recreational boat fishers on the South Coast. Reported catches from State managed commercial fishers and charter operators also indicated a healthy level of abundance.

Most people were of the view that red snapper should be placed in Category 2 with an individual species bag limit of at least eight, given a current bag limit of 20 applies (red snapper and swallowtail combined).

Due to the level of abundance and overwhelming level of community support, the Working Group endorsed transferring red snapper to Category 2, with an individual species bag limit of eight.

Cods: Comments made in submissions showed a small level of support (seven people) for cods to have an increased bag limit or be designated as Category 2 Fish. The Working Group had not proposed any change to the current bag limit of four for cods. It was the Working Group's opinion that cods were at a high risk to over exploitation being a slow-growing, long-lived species. For these reasons the Working Group did not believe an increased bag limit for cods could be justified.

Pink snapper: Comments made in submission showed a small level of support for pink snapper (five people) to have an increased bag limit or to be designated as Category 2 Fish. Pink snapper are a slow-growing, long-lived species, which are particularly vulnerable to overexploitation. Reduced bag limits and spawning closures have been introduced in Shark Bay's inner gulfs and Cockburn Sound in recent years, following a decline in pink snapper stock in these areas. For the above reasons the Working Group endorsed the original proposal for pink snapper to placed in Category 1 with a bag limit of four.

Hapuku and trevalla: The Working Group's original proposal was for a combined bag limit of two hapuku and trevalla. Comments in submissions (seven people) suggested that a combined bag limit of four should be considered for these offshore deepwater species as they currently received little recreational fishing pressure. The Working Group took these comments into consideration, but as these long-lived and slow growing species commonly reached in excess of 20 kilograms, the Working Group was of the view that the proposed combined bag limit of two represented more than a reasonable catch for an individual.

In addition, the Working Group was concerned that with the popularity of deep-sea fishing steadily increasing, a suite of similar deep-sea demersal species were also being subjected to increased fishing pressure. Subsequently the group decided to include bass groper (*Polyprion americanus*) and grey-banded rockcod (*Epinephelus octofasciatus* - also known as saddleback cod on the South Coast) with hapuku and trevalla, in effect creating a combined bag limit for potentially vulnerable deep-sea demersal species.

Given the level of community support for the remainder of the Category 1 species, the Working Group endorsed the Category 1 bag limits with the amendments identified above.

Recommendation 6(a) – Bag Limits Category 1 Fish

Category 1 Fish – total mixed daily bag limit of seven			
Category 1 fish are considered to have the highest risk of overexploitation. Many fish in this category have low catch rates and levels of abundance, while others may be highly valued for their fishing and eating qualities. Many Category 1 fish are slow growing and mature at four years-plus. For these reasons, Category 1 fish require a high degree of protection. (Note: *denotes recommended change to current management)			
Species	Species bag limit	Size limit	Other controls
Billfish – inc. sailfish, swordfish, marlins (combined)	1*		
Boarfish	4*		
Cobbler	4*	430mm	
Cods – inc. breaksea and harlequin (combined) but excludes grey-banded rockcod	4	Breaksea 300mm Harlequin 300mm*	Max 30kg or 1.2m
Dhufish, West Australian	2*	500mm	
Groper, western blue	1	600mm*	
Hapuku/trevalla/bass groper and grey-banded rockcod (combined)	2*		
Mahi mahi	2*		
Mulloway	2*	700mm*	
Pink snapper	4*	410mm*	
Queen snapper (blue morwong)	4*	410mm	
Samson fish/amberjack/yellowtail kingfish (combined)	2*	600mm	
Sharks and rays (combined)	2*		
Trout, brown and rainbow (combined)	4	300mm	Rec licence
Tuna – southern bluefin, yellowfin, bigeye (combined)	2*		

Category 2 Fish

The proposed mixed daily bag limit of 16 for Category 2 Fish received moderate support (64 per cent). The Working Group noted that of the 30 per cent of submissions that disagreed, only 14 people (eight per cent) stated that they disagreed because they believed the proposed mixed daily bag limit for Category 2 was too low. It is also likely that the Working Group's decision to transfer red snapper into Category 2 would result in increased community support for Category 2 Fish.

The proposed individual species bag limits for Category 2 Fish also received moderate support (63 per cent). Of the 38 per cent of submissions that disagreed, 18 people (11 per cent) commented that the proposed bag limit for silver trevally (skippy) was too low and four people commented that the proposed combined bag limit for snook and pike should also be increased.

The Working Group's consideration of these comments were as follows:

Silver trevally (skippy): The Working Group's original proposal was for a bag limit of 8 for silver trevally. Comments raised in submissions suggested that silver trevally were a key table fish for land-based anglers and that they occurred in high abundance on the South Coast. Based on the level of inshore fishing pressure, their level of abundance and the feedback from the community the Working Group supported a revised bag limit of 12 for silver trevally.

Snook and pike (combined): The Working Group’s original proposal was for a combined bag limit of 8 for snook and pike. Comments raised both in submissions and at the public meeting in Esperance suggested that given their level of abundance a combined bag limit of 16 should apply. The Working Group was of the view that fishers on the South Coast primarily encountered snook, which are the larger of the two species and readily exceed one metre in length. Having considered these comments, the Working Group maintained its support for the propose combined bag limit of eight, stating that these species were often targeted on the South Coast and there was a threat of localised depletion.

Given the level of community support, the Working Group endorsed the Category 2 bag limits with the inclusion of red snapper and the amendment to the bag limit for silver trevally.

Recommendation 6(b) – Bag Limits Category 2 Fish

Category 2 Fish – total mixed daily bag limit of 16				
Category 2 fish have a moderate risk of overexploitation. Many fish in this category have moderate catch rates and levels of abundance. Category 2 Fish are mostly found in inshore and estuarine areas, are highly sought after by recreational fishers and mature at three to four years. (Note: *denotes recommended change to current management)				
Species	Species bag limit	Size limit	Other controls	
Bream – black	8*	250mm	2 fish over 350mm [#]	
Dory, John and mirror (combined)	8*			
Flathead and flounder (combined)	8*	Flathead 300mm Flounder 250mm		
Goatfish	8*			
Leatherjacket	8*	250mm		
Red snapper (Bight redfish/nannygai)	8*	300mm*		
Salmon, Australian	4	300mm		
Snook and pike (combined)	8*	300mm		
Swallowtail	8*	300mm*		
Sweep, banded and sea (combined)	8*	250mm*		
Tailor	8	300mm		2 fish over 600mm [#]
Tarwhine	8*	230mm		
Trevally, silver (skippy) etc.	12*	250mm		
Tunas - Other including bonito (combined)	8*			
Whiting, King George	12*	280mm		
Whiting, yellowfin	16*			
Wrasse – inc. western king wrasse and western foxfish	8*			

[#] Refer to Recommendation 8

Category 3 Fish

The proposed mixed bag limit of 40 for Category 3 Fish and the proposed individual species bag limits for Category 3 Fish both received very high support in submissions (80 per cent and 88 per cent). Due to this high level of support, the Working Group endorsed the proposed mixed bag limits and individual species limits for Category 3.

Recommendation 6(c) – Bag Limits Category 3 Fish

Category 3 Fish – total mixed daily bag limit of 40		
<p>Category 3 fish have a lower risk of overexploitation. Fish in this category generally have higher catch rates and levels of abundance and are mainly found inshore. These fish have a widespread distribution and mature at two-plus years. Category 3 fish include all fish not listed in other categories except baitfish of the sardine, anchovy and hardyhead families (<i>Clupeidae</i>, <i>Engraulididae</i> and <i>Atherinidae</i>), redfin perch, gold fish, carp and tilapia. (Note: *denotes recommended change to current management)</p>		
Species	Species bag limit	Other controls
Australian herring Garfish Mackerel, blue Mullet, sea and yellow-eye (combined) Whiting – (other) Unlisted species - (All species not specified except baitfish and feral freshwater species)	40* combined	Minimum size - 180mm*

Crustaceans

The proposed daily bag limit of 20 and boat limit of 40 blue swimmer crabs received very high support (82 per cent). Nine people (six per cent) believed that proposed daily bag limit of 20 and boat limit of 40 blue swimmer crabs was too high, however the Working Group did not believe these comments warranted a change to the proposal.

The Working Group’s proposed daily bag limit of five and boat limit of 10 mud crabs received high support in submissions (76 per cent). However, many people commented that they had rarely or never encountered mud crabs on the South Coast. Although mud crabs are commonly associated with the State’s north, they are occasionally encountered in estuarine systems in the lower southwest as a result of larvae being carried down on the Leeuwin Current.

While high numbers of mud crabs are unlikely to be encountered on the South Coast, the Working Group was concerned that if they became an unlisted species the bag limit would default to 40. For this reason the Working Group supported a daily bag limit of 5 and boat limit of 10 mud crabs - the same limits which currently apply in the West Coast and Gascoyne regions.

Given the level of community support, the Working Group endorsed the proposed crustacean bag limits.

Recommendation 6(d) – Bag Limits Crustaceans

Crustaceans		
(Note: *denotes recommended change to current management)		
Species	Bag limit	Other controls
Crab, blue swimmer (manna)	20*	Boat limit of 40*, size limit, gear controls
Crab, mud	5*	Boat limit of 10*, size limit, gear controls
Prawns, school and king (combined)	9 litres	Gear controls
Rock lobster, western and southern (combined)	8	Boat limit of 16, licensed fishery, size limit, gear controls, season.

Molluscs and other reef animals

The proposed bag limits for molluscs and other reef top animals received high support (79 per cent). In addition, five people (three per cent) believed the bag and boat limit for squid should be reduced to 10 and 20 respectively. However, as there are no sustainability issues currently associated with squid, the Working Group did not believe a reduction in the bag limit was necessary. Given the high level of support, the bag limits for molluscs and other reef-top animals were endorsed by the Working Group.

Recommendation 6(e) – Bag Limits Molluscs and Other Reef Animals

Molluscs and other reef animals				
(Note: *denotes recommended change to current management)				
Species	Bag limit	Boat limit	Possession limit	Other controls
Abalone, brownlip Abalone, greenlip	5 combined	10 combined	10 (20 at place of residence)	Licence & season
Abalone, Roe's and all other abalone species not specifically mentioned (combined)	20	-	20 (80 at place of residence)	Licence & season
Cockles and pipis [#] All other species of edible mollusc not specifically mentioned (combined)	2 litres			
Mussels	9 litres			
Oysters [#]	20*			
Razorfish [#]	20*			
Scallops	20*			
Sea urchins [#]	20*			
Squid, cuttlefish and octopus (combined)	15	30		

[#] Refer to Recommendation 8

5.3.2 *Size Limits*

The Working Group's proposed changes to the size limits for a number of species received strong community support in submissions. In finalising their recommendations the Working Group was wary of the constraints of the *Fish Resources Management Act 1994 (FRMA)* in relation to sectoral size limits.

Currently the provisions of the *FRMA* allows for fish to be either commercially protected (size limits which only apply to the commercial fishing sector) or totally protected (size limits which apply equally to both the commercial and recreational fishing sectors). The provisions of the *FRMA* do not allow for a recreational size limit that is higher than the commercial size limit for the same species.

In the past, this situation has resulted in many minimum legal size limits being based on a size at which fish are readily taken with certain types of commercial fishing gear rather than the species biology. The Working Group acknowledged that as sectoral allocation issues are considered under integrated management, certain circumstances such as mortality rates of commercially-caught fish might justify a lower size limit for commercial fishers, provided other mechanisms can be put in place to constrain catches and protect breeding stock.

For this to be a management option in the future, an amendment to the *FRMA* is necessary. In the interim the Working Group was of the view that the protection of immature fish was of paramount importance.

The Working Group was also of the view that if the commercial sector was affected by any of the recommended changes to legal minimum size limits, they should consider modifying existing fishing gear so as to target mature fish rather than insisting that size limits be based on current fishing practices.

Comments received in response to the proposed changes to size limits were taken into consideration as follows:

Cods: The Working Group's proposal to introduce a minimum size limit of 300mm for all cods received very high support in submissions (83 per cent). However, as size limits apply state-wide there was a concern that a blanket minimum size for all cods may impact on species commonly encountered in other regions, such as Chinaman cod.

The Working Group noted that of the two species of cod commonly caught in the region, breaksea cod already had a minimum size of 300mm. Harlequin fish are the other commonly caught cod species which are known to grow to 750mm in length. Rather than introducing a blanket minimum size limit for all cod species the Working Group supported the introduction of a minimum size limit of 300mm for harlequin fish only.

Western blue groper: The Working Group's proposal to increase the minimum size limit of western blue groper to 600mm received very high support in submissions (80 per cent). Several comments in submissions expressed concern that a greater number of fish would be returned to the water suffering from the effects of barotrauma if the minimum size limit for blue groper was increased. Other comments received in submissions suggested that increased protection could be given to blue groper by the introduction of a maximum size limit and/or a boat limit for recreational fishers.

The Western Australian Fishing Industry Council (WAFIC) advised that during the West Coast review their stakeholders supported an increase from 400mm to 500mm only for western blue groper. WAFIC stated that a significant percentage of blue groper taken by the commercial gill net and commercial longline fishery were between 500mm and 600mm and were strongly opposed to any further increases in the minimum size limit.

The Working Group noted that while research is currently being undertaken on this large, long-lived species, the size at maturity has yet to be published. The proposed increase in the minimum size limit of western blue groper from 500mm to 600mm is due to this species being a protogynous hermaphrodite – that is, maturing as a female and then subsequently changing to a male around the minimum legal size of 500mm. Given the strong level of community support for this proposal the Working Group endorsed the minimum size of 600mm for western blue groper.

Mulloway: The Working Group's proposal to increase the minimum size limit of mulloway to 700mm received moderate support in submissions (65 per cent). Comments in submissions express concern that a greater number of fish would be returned to the water suffering from the effects of barotrauma if the minimum size limit for mulloway was increased from 500mm to 700mm.

However, the Working Group was of the view that as mulloway were primarily caught by land-based fishers, concerns over the effects of barotrauma were not an issue for recreationally caught fish.

Again, WAFIC and the South Coast Licensed Fishermen's Association did not support this proposal because they believed the recent increase from 450mm to 500mm had already resulted in a large waste of fish.

The proposed increase in minimum size for mulloway from 500mm to 700mm is based on a size of maturity of 750mm. Even though the proposed minimum size limit was still below the size of maturity for this species, the Working Group believed a 700mm minimum size limit would be accepted by fishers while offering increased protection for juvenile fish. Given these comments the Working Group endorsed the proposal for a minimum size of 700mm to apply to mulloway.

Pink snapper (Wilson Inlet): The Working Group's proposal to increase the minimum size limit of pink snapper in Wilson Inlet to 410mm received moderate support in submissions (67 per cent). However, a number of people were concerned that pink snapper rarely reached 410mm in the Inlet and an increase in size limit may lead to a large wastage of fish taken by commercial and recreational net fishers.

This proposal was not supported by WAFIC or the South Coast Licensed Fishermen's Association. They believed this would result in the majority of pink snapper caught in cobbler and bream nets as part of their operations being discarded, reducing the viability of commercial estuarine fishing in Wilson Inlet.

The current minimum size limit of 280mm is based on the size at which the fish readily taken and able to be marketed, whereas the proposed minimum size of 410mm is based on the size of maturity of 400mm for this species.

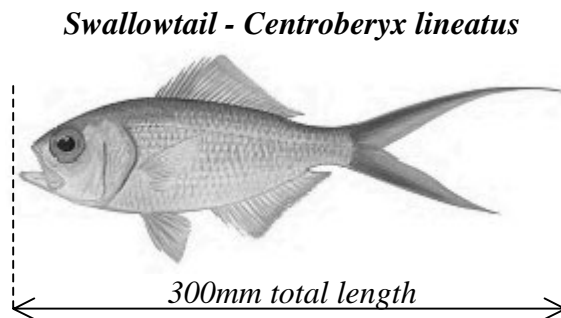
The Working Group was of the view that pink snapper were usually targeted when they aggregated in the lower reaches of Wilson Inlet and net fishers targeting other species such as mullet caught insignificant numbers of pink snapper as by catch. It would therefore be feasible for net fishers to avoid fishing these areas.

The Working Group also noted that the current minimum size limit of 280mm created a possible defence for fishers if apprehended with pink snapper smaller than the minimum size of 410mm, which applies throughout the rest of the South Coast region. Given these reasons the Working Group endorsed the proposal.

Red snapper (*Bight redfish/nannygai*): The Working Group's proposal to increase the minimum size limit of red snapper to 300mm received high support in submissions (74 per cent). WAFIC received no objections from commercial fishers, but believed the proposed increase may result in the discard of this species by wetline fishers on the South Coast. Given the level of community support, the Working Group endorsed the proposed size limit of 300mm.

Swallowtail (*Centroberyx lineatus*): The Working Group's proposal to increase the minimum size limit of swallowtail to 280mm received moderate support in submissions (61 per cent). WAFIC received no objections from commercial fishers but believed the proposed increase may result in the discard of this species by wetline fishers on the South Coast. After giving this proposal further consideration the Working Group was of the opinion that the minimum size limit for swallowtail should be increased to 300mm.

Swallowtail have an extremely long filamentous tail and as minimum sizes apply to total length, the Working Group was of the view that 280mm represented a relatively small fish. In addition, a minimum size limit of 300mm would also be consistent with other *Centroberyx* species (i.e. red snapper).



Sweep, banded and sea: The Working Group's proposal to introduce a minimum size limit of 250mm for sweep received high support in submissions (80 per cent). Given the level of community support the Working Group endorsed this proposal.

Additional species

Australian herring: Eight people commented in submissions that a minimum size limit should be introduced for Australian herring. In addition Department of Fisheries Research Scientists have recently expressed concern over Australian herring stocks in State's lower southwest. Given that a commercial size limit of 180mm currently applies to Australian herring, the Working Group supported the introduction of a minimum size limit of 180mm to apply to recreational fishers.

Tarwhine: Recfishwest proposed for the minimum size for tarwhine to be increased from 230mm to at least 250mm, given that they are known to mature at approximately 260mm. The Working Group endorsed this proposal.

Recommendation 7 – Recommended Changes to the Current Legal Size Limits

Note: Any changes to the size limit will apply to all sectors including commercial fishers.

Species	Old size (mm)	New size (mm)	Size when 50% of the stock reach maturity (mm)
Australian herring	-	180	180 (M) 200 (F)
Groper, western blue	500	600	Not known
Harlequin fish	-	300	Not known
Mulloway	500	700	750
Pink snapper (Wilson Inlet)	280	410	400
Red snapper (Bight redfish/nannygai)	230	300	Not known
Swallowtail	230	300	Not known
Sweep, banded and sea	-	250	Not known
Tarwhine	230	250	260

5.3.3 Increased Protection for Certain Species

Western blue groper

The Working Group’s proposal to introduce a spear fishing prohibition for western blue groper (*Achoerodus gouldii*) on the South Coast received high support in submissions (72 per cent). However, 23 per cent of people disagreed to the proposal (including the Albany Spearfishing club, Albany Freediving Club and the Australia Anglers Association of WA) stating the total catch from the recreational sector was low compared to the commercial catch and the proportional catch taken by spearfishing represented a small percentage of the recreational catch.

They also stated that it would be discriminatory to prohibit one section of the recreational sector and that the current bag limit of one provided sufficient protection. The Working Group supported these comments and was of the view that if increased protection was required in the future, alternate management controls such as boat limits, maximum size limits or Fish Habitat Protection Areas should be considered.

Black bream and tailor

Many anglers are drawn to the South Coast because of its reputation for excellent shore-based fishing. With recreational fishing pressure increasing, the Working Group believed that trophy-size black bream and tailor needed additional protection.

To achieve this additional protection, the Working Group proposed slot limits for both species. The Working Group’s proposal that only two black bream over 350mm may be kept received moderate support in submission (67 per cent). However, comments in submissions and at the Walpole meeting questioned the need for additional protection for black bream, stating that commercial fishers would otherwise catch these fish. People were also concerned

that a slot limit may lead to confusion amongst anglers travelling from the West Coast region, where a slot limit only applies in the Swan and Canning Rivers.

While the Working Group acknowledged these concerns, it believed the introduction of a slot limit would increase community awareness around the need to protect large breeding fish. Slot limits could also ultimately lead to an increase in the average fish size, increasing the overall quality of the fishery.

The Working Group was also of the opinion that while a slot limit currently only applied to black bream in the Swan and Canning Rivers, a proposal to apply this limit to the entire West Coast region should be considered by the Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee (RFAC).

The Working Group acknowledged that a slot limit will impact adversely on catch and release bream fishing competitions. To facilitate such competitions the Working Group believed that an exemption to the slot limit should be considered on a case-by-case basis, provided that all fish are released and competition details are recorded in accordance with *Recommendation 10*.

The Working Group's proposal for a slot limit of two tailor over 600mm received high support in submissions (70 per cent). Department of Fisheries research scientists have recently raised concerns about tailor stocks, particularly on the West Coast where a slot limit is already in place. Given the level of community support, the Working Group endorsed this proposal, stating it would provide increased protection for mature fish and make the rules uniform between both regions.

Cockles, oysters and razorfish

The Working Group's proposal for increase regulation around the harvesting of cockles, oysters and razorfish received moderate support in submissions (63 per cent). Department of Fisheries research scientists have raised particular concerns that unsustainable harvesting practices may result in areas of localized depletion of intertidal species such as cockles. In addition, several of these species are believed to be long-lived (20⁺ years) and it may take a number of years for stocks to regenerate if they become depleted.

The major areas identified as being of particular concern were Oyster Harbor, Princess Royal Harbor and the mouths of Wilson and Irwin Inlet. Comments received in submission suggested that rather than introducing total prohibitions on the harvesting of these species, consideration should be given to introducing temporal or spatial closures for problem areas.

Given these comments, the Working Group endorsed a process of formally identifying areas within Oyster Harbor, Princess Royal Harbor and the mouths of Wilson and Irwin Inlets where increased protection of cockles, oysters and razorfish, etc, is required. This process should consider the merits of different management options and include contributions from research scientists, Fisheries Offices, and Regional RFAC members.

Recommendation 8 – Increased Protection for Certain Species

8(a) A spear fishing prohibition **should not** be introduced for western blue groper (*Achoerodus gouldii*) on the South Coast. If western blue groper stocks require

increased protection in the future, alternate management controls such as boat limits, maximum size limits or Fish Habitat Protection Areas should be considered.

- 8(b) A slot limit of two black bream (*Acanthopagrus butcheri*) over 350mm be introduced to provide increased protection for mature fish.
- 8(c) A slot limit of two tailor (*Pomatomus saltatrix*) over 600mm be introduced to provide increased protection for mature fish.
- 8(d) A process is required to formally identify areas within Oyster Harbor, Princess Royal Harbor and the mouths of Wilson and Irwin Inlets for increased protection of cockles, oysters and razorfish, etc. This process should consider the merits of different management options and include contributions from research scientists, Fisheries Offices, and Regional RFAC members.

5.3.4 Net Fishing

Netting is predominantly undertaken in estuaries on the South Coast, primarily targeting sea mullet and yellow eye mullet. However, other species such as Australian herring, tailor, whiting, crabs, skipjack, bream and cobbler are also taken in nets as bycatch or as targeted species.

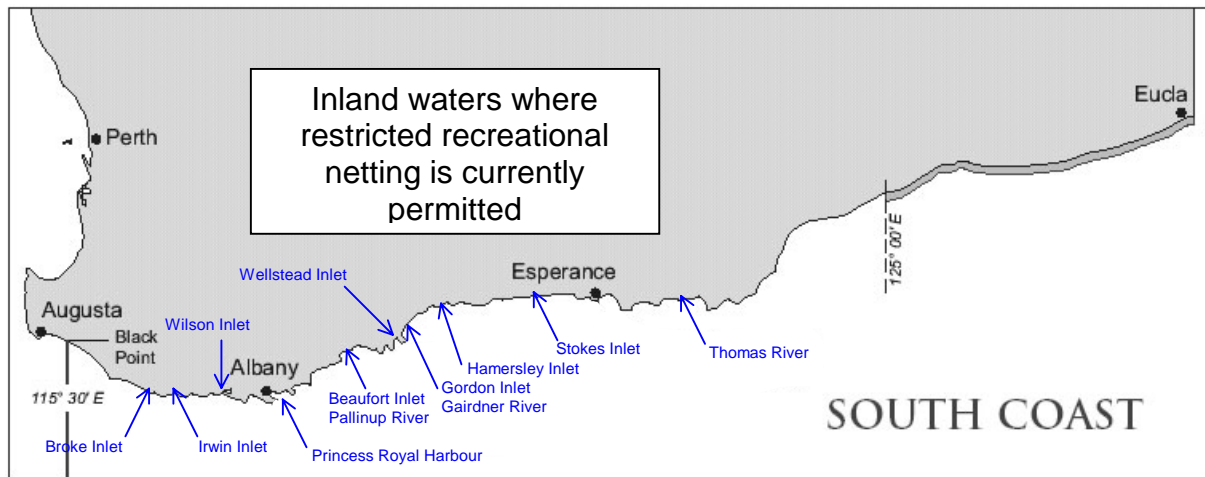
Submissions on the two netting proposals were polarised either strongly in favour of prohibiting all netting or allowing netting to continue on the South Coast. The Working Group's proposal to phase out all recreational netting over a three to five-year period received moderate support in submissions (63 per cent) whereas the proposal to allow netting to continue in a restricted capacity received low support (36 per cent).

In addition, the proposal that throw nets be permitted in ocean waters of the South Coast as a means of collecting baitfish received very high support (89 per cent).

The Working Group considered the outcomes of the 1990 review into recreational haul and gill netting when finalising its recommendations (Fisheries Management Paper No. 56). This review recommended that recreational net fishing be phased out gradually throughout Western Australia except where it could be demonstrated that the target species could not be caught by rod or line. The review also recommended that estuaries and beach areas, which are dominated by prime angling species, be given priority in the phase-out process.

Given the recommendations of this review and the level of community support in submissions and at the public meetings, the Working Group endorsed the proposal to phase out all recreational netting on the South Coast with the exception of throw nets as a means to collect baitfish.

The Working Group was of the view the phase-out process should occur over a three-year period and involve the incremental closure of areas based on the current level of netting activity. It was proposed that this process commence with the closure of areas that received the least amount of recreational netting effort based on the results of a recent netting survey (Baharthah and Sumner - yet to be published).



Recommendation 9 – Recreational Net Fishing

Recreational haul and set netting should be phased out on the South Coast over a three-year period. The process should involve a series of incremental closures, commencing with those waters that currently received the lowest level of recreational netting activity as follows:

1 st Year Closures	2 nd Year Closures	3 rd Year Closures
Hamersley Inlet Princess Royal Harbour Stokes Inlet Thomas River	Broke Inlet Gordon Inlet/Gairdner River Irwin Inlet	Beaufort Inlet/Pallinup River Wellstead Inlet Wilson Inlet All ocean waters

Recreational throw nets to continue to be permitted for the take of baitfish in ocean waters only.

5.3.5 Fishing Competitions

The Working Group’s proposal for registering fishing competitions and collecting catch data received high support in submissions (around 70 per cent). Information from fishing competitions could provide valuable information on recreational catches to assist in the management of recreational fishing. The Working Group endorsed this proposal with the modification that the Department of Fisheries should provide catch and effort data sheets and that an identified contact person should exist in the Department to liaise with the fishing clubs.

Recommendation 10 – Fishing Competitions

- 10(a) All fishing competitions with greater than 50 participants should be formally registered in advance with the Department of Fisheries.
- 10(b) Competition organisers should be required to keep an accurate record of the participation, catch and effort in each competition and forward catch returns to the Department of Fisheries for inclusion in the recreational fisheries database. If possible, information should be entered in electronic format which is compatible with

the recreational fishing database. The Department of Fisheries should be responsible for issuing data sheets and an identified contact person should exist in the Department to liaise with the fishing clubs.

- 10(c) To ensure fishing competitions are conducted in line with recreational fishing ethics and meet requirements under the *Animal Welfare Act*, a formal code of conduct for fishing competitions should be developed by the Department of Fisheries in consultation with fishing clubs and organising bodies.

5.4 Protecting and Enhancing Recreational Fishing Quality

5.4.1 Recreational Fishing Priority Areas

The Working Group's proposal for recreational fishing priority areas received moderate support in submissions (60 per cent). Comments in submissions indicated that several people disagreed with this proposal because they believed a 'recreational fishing priority area' would operate in a similar manner to a Marine Park and may restrict recreational fishing activities.

The Working Group reiterated that a 'recreational fishing priority area' was an area which would be managed primarily for the priority of recreational fishing, aimed at increasing the overall recreational fishing qualities of the area.

Most comments made at the public meetings and in submissions supported the concept of priority areas for recreational fishing, which could be established to protect recreational fishing quality, and managed primarily for recreational fishing values.

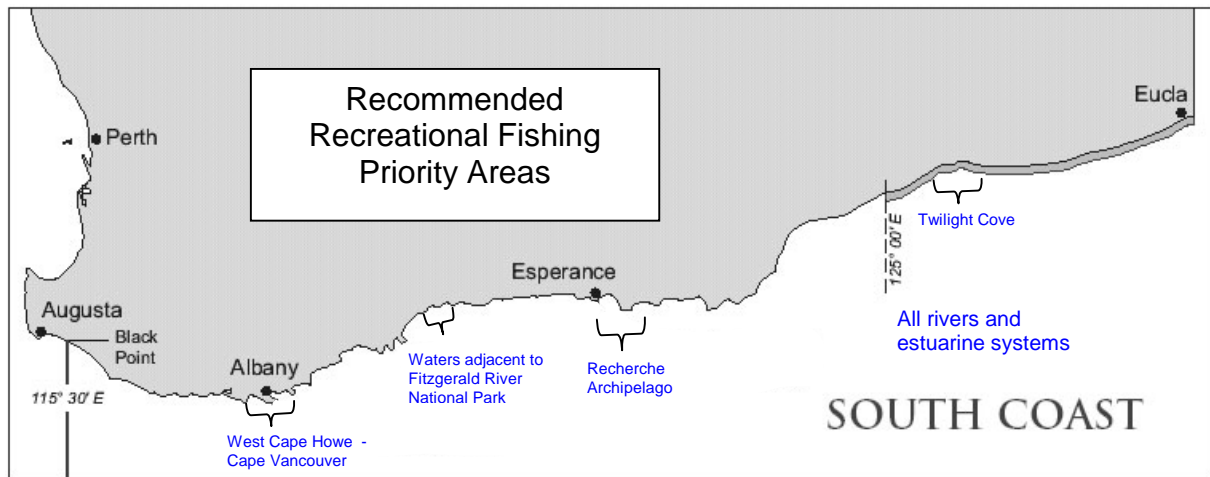
The Working Group reaffirmed that this initiative should be progressed through the Integrated Fisheries Management Planning Process for the South Coast Region.

Recommendation 11 – Recreational Fishing Priority Areas

The importance of recreational fishing as a component of tourism and lifestyle should be recognised in fisheries management and other planning processes that impact on fish habitat or fishing activity.

In particular, recreational fishing should be recognised as a priority activity in the following areas:

- All rivers and estuarine systems;
- Twilight Cove (Great Australian Bight – east of Esperance);
- Recherche Archipelago;
- Waters adjacent to Fitzgerald River National Park; and
- Cape Vancouver to West Cape Howe.



5.4.2 Access for Recreational Fishers

The Working Group's proposal for a code of conduct for accessing pastoral leases, nature reserves and Aboriginal land received very high support (86 per cent). Several people commented that as fires were often associated with camping and fishing on the South Coast, they should be permitted in accordance with local jurisdictional requirements. Taking these comments into account and given the strong level of community support, the Working Group endorsed this proposal.

Recommendation 12 – Code of Conduct for Accessing Pastoral Leases, Nature Reserves and Aboriginal Land

That a code of conduct should be developed for recreational fishers accessing fishing locations through pastoral leases, nature reserves and Aboriginal land. The code should be developed in consultation with landowners/leaseholders and should contain the following elements:

- No rubbish should be left behind.
- Any fish frames or offal should be removed.
- All gates which are shut must be left shut.
- Campfires to be permitted in accordance with local jurisdictional requirements.
- Under no circumstance should any fences be cut or interfered with.
- Any machinery or equipment should not be interfered with.
- Firearms or dogs should not be taken on to stations without the approval of the station owner.
- Aboriginal land should only be entered with the approval of the Aboriginal landowners.

5.4.3 Defined Access Routes

The Working Group's proposal for negotiations to be undertaken with owners/lease holders to define access route to fishing locations and that these routes and the code of conduct be promoted by the Department of Fisheries in advisory material a code of conduct received very high support (85 per cent). Based on the strong community support, the Working Group endorsed this proposal

Recommendation 13 – Access to Pastoral Leases and Aboriginal Land

Regional recreational fishing representatives in each region should enter into negotiations with owners/leaseholders to define access routes to fishing locations. These routes and the code of conduct should be promoted by the Department of Fisheries in advisory material.

5.4.4 Translocation and Restocking

The Working Group's proposed position statement for restocking as a stock enhancement strategy received very high support in submissions (89 per cent). Comments in submission highlighted the community's views that restocking should only be considered as a last resort following a thorough assessment process.

Recommendation 14 – Position Statement on Restocking as a Stock Enhancement Strategy

Management of wild fish stocks should be the primary focus for recreational fisheries management. Restocking should only be considered as a strategy to assist with the recovery of a stock where it can be identified that the stock has been significantly depleted, and its recovery is endangered or will be prolonged.

To minimise any ecological impacts, all stock enhancement projects should be assessed against disease risk, biodiversity and genetic diversity criteria. Any stock enhancement project should also be adequately monitored and evaluated.

5.5 Resource Sharing

The Working Group's proposal on resource sharing received high support (77 per cent). Comments in submissions and at the public meetings indicated that the recreational community supported the recent changes to the management of the recreational fishery which saw the introduction of a general state-wide possession limit for finfish and rules relating to filleting at sea. However, there was a strong desire to see management changes in the commercial fishery that will help protect recreational fishing quality in the region.

Comments in submissions raised particular concern that the commercial catch of finfish from inshore waters was directly affecting the abundance of fish available for recreational take, particularly near major population centres and key holiday destinations.

The Working Group also felt strongly that if 'resource sharing' is clearly carried out within the context of sustainable fisheries where the total catch is managed, the effective monitoring of recreational catch and effort within the region is of paramount importance.

After reviewing submissions the Working Group reiterated its position in the draft discussion paper (Fisheries Management Paper No.182) that resource sharing does not just relate to 'catch shares' but includes competition in space and time for access to specific areas or fish stocks by various user groups.

The Working Group strongly believed that resource sharing should be based on a clear set of principles and processes that have been established by Government under Integrated Fisheries Management, and a sound understanding and recognition of the relative social and economic values for each fish species, fishery or area in question.

The Working Group acknowledged that, given other priorities, it may be a number of years before finfish stocks in the region are managed under an integrated management framework. Despite this fact, the unmanaged component of the commercial finfish fishery or 'wetline' fishery on the South Coast is set to come under greater management in the foreseeable future.

In addition, in February 2004 the Minister for Fisheries appointed a Committees of Management (Committee), under the *Fisheries Adjustment Schemes Act 1987*, to provide advice on the desirability of establishing Voluntary Fisheries Adjustment Schemes (Adjustment Schemes) for the South West Coast Salmon and South Coast Herring fisheries.

An Adjustment Scheme was subsequently established for the South West Coast Salmon fishery and is currently in the process of considering offers. The Committee will reconvene in 2005 to further consider the desirability of establishing an Adjustment Scheme for the South Coast Herring fishery.

Representatives of the South Coast Estuarine Fishery have also requested that the fishery be considered for another Adjustment Scheme. However, the Minister for Fisheries' position is that an Adjustment Scheme would not be considered unless there is a material benefit to the recreational sector.

Recommendation 15 - Resource Sharing

The following species should be considered as a priority for total catch management under an integrated management framework:

- Australian salmon;
- Australian herring;
- Black bream;
- King George whiting; and
- Southern demersal species, including shark.

For each species, a forum should be held with key stakeholders, including from the recreational, commercial, indigenous and conservation sectors, to identify key issues that need to be taken into consideration in the development of an integrated management plan for the South Coast Region.

5.6 Protection of Fish Habitats

5.6.1 'Wilderness' Fishing Areas

The Working Group's proposal for a low impact 'wilderness' fishing experiences at Twilight Cove received only moderate support in public submissions (52 per cent). However, comments made in submissions generally supported the concept of low impact wilderness fishing areas as an alternative to marine park sanctuary zones or 'no take' areas.

Of the people that did not support this proposal, 30 per cent responded “don’t know”. Most of these people stated that they were either unaware of Twilight Cove’s location or had never visited the area so were unable to comment on the proposal. The Working Group highlighted that Twilight Cove was located towards the western end of the Great Australian Bight, east of Esperance.

After reviewing submissions, the Working Group endorsed this proposal, noting that any wilderness area would need to be supported with advisory material to raise community awareness of the concept.

Recommendation 16 – Low Impact Wilderness Fishing Experiences

Twilight Cove should be managed as a remote wilderness fishing area on a trial basis to provide an opportunity for high quality fishing experiences.

The following guiding principles should be used for the management of the wilderness area:

- Low take;
- Low environmental impact; and
- A code of practice should be developed for recreational fishing in the area.

5.7 Improving Community Stewardship - Education and Compliance

5.7.1 South Coast Community Education Plan

The Working Group’s proposal for a community education plan received very high support in submissions (about 80 per cent).

The Working Group believed an education plan for the region was essential for promoting awareness of fishing rules and encouraging recreational fishers to fish for the future. With recreational fishers fishing over such a diverse range of environments within the region, which are often located in remote areas, educating fishers to fish with a strong conservation ethic remains the primary strategy to ensuring compliance within the region.

Based on the strong community support and the need for the education plan, the Working Group supported the proposal.

Recommendation 17 – South Coast Region Community Education Plan

A recreational fisheries community education plan should be developed for the South Coast Region which focuses on the issues and species most important to the region. The plan should seek to keep the recreational fishing community informed of management decisions, give a clear lead on the values and attitudes which will assist in sustaining fish stocks, and develop a broad community recognition of the value of recreational fishing.

The plan should, at minimum, contain the following elements:

17(a) Regional Fishing Guide

A comprehensive regional guide to recreational fishing in the South Coast Region should be produced to inform and educate fishers about recreational fishing management arrangements, fishing ethics, research, conservation issues and promoting stewardship for fish stocks and the environment.

17(b) Educational Resource Materials

Adequate quantities of practical educational tools such as measuring gauges, fish rulers, adhesive bag limit guides and boat ramp and fishing venue signs should be produced to support the regional fishing guide.

17(c) Annual Media Campaign

An annual media campaign should be implemented to promote recreational fishing and fishing ethics in the region.

17(d) Volunteer Involvement in Education

Encourage the establishment and development of volunteer groups in structured fisheries education activities across the region.

5.7.2 Field Management and Compliance

There was a very high level of support for the Working Group's proposal to enhance the VFLO program (83 per cent) and providing additional compliance resources (78 per cent).

The Working Group noted that comments in submissions indicated that the level and strength of community support for fish stock conservation is linked to the frequency of a visible fisheries management presence, as well as an effective education program.

At every public meeting there were calls for an enhanced presence of Fisheries Officers in order to provide a more effective deterrent to illegal and irresponsible fishing behaviours, and also to strongly reinforce the positive community attitudes and behaviours needed to ensure fish for the future.

The Working Group received positive feedback on the mobile recreational fisheries patrols which have been established over the last two years, but South Coast communities all supported having additional fisheries compliance resources stationed in the region.

Based on the need to provide additional compliance and education resources within the region and the strong community support, the Working Group endorsed the field management and compliance proposals.

Recommendation 18 - Volunteer Fisheries Liaison Officers (VFLO) Program

The operation of the VFLO program should be enhanced on the South Coast by actively encouraging increased membership in all key regional centres.

Recommendation 19 – Additional Patrol Capacity

An additional two patrols (four fisheries officers), incorporating at least one Aboriginal Fisheries Liaison Officer, should be dedicated to recreational field compliance and education activities during peak fishing seasons in the South Coast Region.

These resources should be allocated to:

- *Albany*: One additional patrol crew to service peak season fishing compliance needs between Walpole and Bremer Bay.
- *Esperance*: One additional patrol crew to service peak season fishing compliance needs between Hopetoun and the WA/SA border.

5.7.3 Implementing Management and Education Strategies

The Working Group's proposal that adequate resources be allocated to coordinate the implementation of the South Coast Regional Review and assist with the development of integrated fisheries management plans for the region received very high support (88 per cent).

The Working Group believed a specific person should be appointed to assist with the implementation of the plan, coordination of the Volunteer Fisheries Liaison Officer (VFLO) program and provide a point of contact for recreational fisheries management within the region.

Recommendation 20 – Regional Fishing Management Officer

A Recreational Fisheries Management Officer should be appointed to assist with the implementation of the South Coast review, assist with the development of integrated fisheries management plans for key fisheries in the region and coordinate the VFLO program.

APPENDIX A LEVEL OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR PROPOSALS IN INITIAL DISCUSSION PAPER (FMP NO. 182)

Proposal 1 – Key Principles for Management

- a) Government should ensure adequate funding is available for comprehensive research and management necessary for the effective management of recreational fishing.

Proposal 1a	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	93	52
Agree	78	44
Don't Know	0	0
Disagree	5	3
Strongly Disagree	3	2

- b) A key aim should be to ensure that the biodiversity of fish communities and their habitats and sustainability of fish stocks are preserved.

Proposal 1b	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	81	46
Agree	91	51
Don't Know	3	2
Disagree	2	1
Strongly Disagree	0	0

- c) Fisheries management should incorporate controls and measures that cover and anticipate increasing numbers of recreational fishers and their impact on fish stocks.

Proposal 1c	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	61	35
Agree	81	47
Don't Know	9	5
Disagree	19	11
Strongly Disagree	4	2

- d) Management should be based on the best available information and where critical information is unavailable, a precautionary approach which seeks to minimise risk to fish stocks should be adopted.

Proposal 1d	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	52	30
Agree	74	43
Don't Know	10	6
Disagree	27	16
Strongly Disagree	10	6

- e) Fishing rules should acknowledge that equitable access to fishing opportunities across recreational user groups is important.

Proposal 1e	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	80	45
Agree	89	51
Don't Know	4	2
Disagree	2	1
Strongly Disagree	1	1

- f) The value of recreational fishing should be clearly recognised and given proper weight in all government and community planning processes, e.g. marine parks, industrial developments and any future development of the environment on the South Coast.

Proposal 1f	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	100	56
Agree	68	38
Don't Know	3	2
Disagree	7	4
Strongly Disagree	2	1

- g) Fishing rules should be kept simple and where possible and practical, made uniform across the region.

Proposal 1g	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	109	61
Agree	46	26
Don't Know	0	0
Disagree	10	6
Strongly Disagree	13	7

- h) Recreational fishing rules should be designed to protect the sustainability of stocks and manage the total recreational catch, as well as protect fish at vulnerable stages in their life cycle, e.g. spawning aggregations.

Proposal 1h	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	87	49
Agree	74	42
Don't Know	4	2
Disagree	6	3
Strongly Disagree	5	3

- i) The benefits from management of the total recreational catch should flow back to the recreational sector and be reflected in maintained or improved fishing quality and sustainability.

Proposal 1i	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	80	46
Agree	78	44
Don't Know	8	5
Disagree	8	4
Strongly Disagree	2	1

- j) Clear processes should exist to resolve resource sharing issues which support the integrated management of fish stocks.

Proposal 1j	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	75	44
Agree	83	49
Don't Know	11	6
Disagree	2	1
Strongly Disagree	0	0

Proposal 2 – Major Catch Survey

A major recreational catch survey be undertaken every three years to provide detailed information about the spatial and temporal distribution of recreational activity and catches on which to base management decisions.

As a subset on an annual basis information should be collected on indicator species and areas to monitor recreational fishing quality.

Proposal 2	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	58	33
Agree	94	53
Don't Know	7	4
Disagree	5	3
Strongly Disagree	12	7

Proposal 3 – Structured Logbook Program

The Department of Fisheries introduce a structured angler logbook program in the South Coast Region for key species in specific regional areas. The logbook program needs to be tightly controlled by the Department of Fisheries with regular feedback to logbook participants.

Proposal 3	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	47	27
Agree	72	41
Don't Know	17	10
Disagree	23	13
Strongly Disagree	18	10

Proposal 4 – Priority Species for Research

Research should be undertaken on the following key recreational species in the South Coast (in order of priority) to provide information on species biology and stock structure. Predictive fisheries stock assessment models and, where practical, indices of recruitment, are to then be developed for these key species:

Species	RESEARCH STATUS			
	Biology	Stock assessment	Exploitation status	Breeding stock level
Black bream	Wellstead and Walpole/Nornalup Inlets only.	Yes – Commercial catch data only.	Fully Exploited.	Considered adequate.
King George whiting	Yes	Yes – Commercial catch data only.	Fully Exploited.	Considered adequate.
Silver trevally	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
Queen snapper	Limited.	N/A	N/A	N/A
Red snapper	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
Breaksea cod	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pink snapper (South Coast)	Limited – research project currently being undertaken	N/A	N/A	N/A

(Note: N/A indicates where data in this table is not available)

Proposal 4	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	55	32
Agree	96	56
Don't Know	9	5
Disagree	9	5
Strongly Disagree	4	2

Proposal 5 – Fishing Quality Indicators

A range of ‘fishing quality indicators’ based on angler surveys should be developed to identify trends in fishing quality in the region and assist in the review of the effectiveness of this strategy.

These indicators should cover fishing quality, diversity and the value associated with the fishing experience.

It is proposed that the following species be used as key indicator species.

Indicator species	ENVIRONMENT WHERE SPECIES IS MOST OFTEN FOUND		
	Estuarine	Inshore	Offshore demersal
Black bream	King George whiting	Pink snapper	
King George whiting	Australian salmon	Breaksea cod	
Flathead	Pink snapper	Samson fish	
	Flathead	Red snapper	
	Blue groper	Queen snapper	
	Silver trevally	Harlequin fish	

Proposal 5	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	36	21
Agree	107	63
Don't Know	8	5
Disagree	13	8
Strongly Disagree	5	3

Proposal 6 – Bag and Size Limits

Category 1 Fish – total mixed daily bag limit of 7			
<p>Category 1 fish are considered to have the highest risk of overexploitation. Many fish in this category have low catch rates and levels of abundance, while others may be highly valued for their fishing and eating qualities. Many Category 1 fish are slow growing and mature at four years plus. For these reasons, Category 1 fish require a high degree of protection.</p> <p>(Note: *denotes proposed change to current management)</p>			
Species	Species bag limit	Size limit	Other controls
Billfish (sailfish, swordfish, marlins)	1*		Max 30 kg or 1.2 m
Boarfish	4*		
Cobbler	4*	430mm	
Cods – (inc breaksea and harlequin)	4	300mm*	
Dhufish, West Australian	2*	500mm	
Groper, western blue	1	600mm*	
Hapuku and trevalla	2*		
Mahi mahi	2*		
Mulloway	2*	700mm*	
Pink snapper	4*	410mm*	
Queen snapper (blue morwong)	4*	410mm	
Red snapper (Bight redfish/nannygai)	4*	300mm*	
Samson fish/amberjack/yellowtail kingfish	2*	600mm	
Sharks and rays	2*		
Trout, brown and rainbow (combined)	4	300 mm	
Tuna – southern bluefin, yellowfin, bigeye	2*		

Mixed Daily Bag of 7		
Proposal 6a1	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	42	24
Agree	58	33
Don't Know	7	4
Disagree	28	16
Strongly Disagree	39	22

Individual Species limit		
Proposal 6a2	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	31	18
Agree	51	30
Don't Know	7	4
Disagree	34	20
Strongly Disagree	46	27

Composition of Species		
Proposal 6a3	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	22	13
Agree	49	29
Don't Know	11	7
Disagree	42	25
Strongly Disagree	44	26

6(c) Category 3 Fish

Category 3 Fish – total mixed daily bag limit of 40		
<p>Category 3 fish have a lower risk of overexploitation. Fish in this category generally have higher catch rates and levels of abundance and are mainly found inshore. These fish have a widespread distribution and mature at two-plus years. Category 3 fish include all fish not listed in other categories except baitfish of the sardine, anchovy and hardyhead families (Clupeidae, Engraulididae and Atherinidae), redfin perch, gold fish, carp and tilapia.</p> <p>(Note: *denotes proposed change to current management)</p>		
Species	Species bag limit	Other controls
Australian herring Garfish Mackerel, blue Mullet, sea and yellow-eye Whiting – (other) Unlisted species - (All species not specified except baitfish and feral freshwater species)	40 combined	

Mixed bag limit of 40		
Proposal 6c1	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	41	23
Agree	99	57
Don't Know	1	1
Disagree	25	14
Strongly Disagree	9	5

Composition of species		
Proposal 6c2	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	40	24
Agree	105	64
Don't Know	6	4
Disagree	7	4
Strongly Disagree	6	4

6(d) Crustaceans

Crustaceans			
(Note: *denotes proposed change to current management)			
Species	Bag limit	Size limits	Other controls
Crab, blue swimmer (manna)	20*	127 mm	Boat limit of 40*
Crab, mud (green and brown)	5*	150 mm*	Boat limit of 10*
Marron	10	76 mm	Recreational licence. Closed season
Prawns, school and king	9 litres		
Rock lobster	8	76mm – 77mm WRL 98mm Southern RL	Boat limit of 16 - Recreational licence Closed season.

Bag limit blue manna crabs		
Proposal 6d1	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	55	32
Agree	82	47
Don't Know	13	8
Disagree	15	9
Strongly Disagree	9	5

Bag limit mud crabs		
Proposal 6d2	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	48	28
Agree	82	48
Don't Know	22	13
Disagree	8	5
Strongly Disagree	10	6

6(e) Molluscs and other reef fish

Molluscs and other reef animals				
(Note: *denotes proposed change to current management)				
Species	Bag limit	Boat Limit	Possession Limit	Other Controls
Abalone, brownlip	5 combined	10 combined	10 (20 at place of residence)	Licence & Season
Abalone, greenlip				
Abalone, Roe's and all other abalone species not specifically mentioned (combined)	20	-	20 (80 at place of residence)	Licence & Season
Cockles and pipis [#]	2 litres			
All other species of edible mollusc not specifically mentioned (combined)				
Mussels	9 litres			
Oysters [#]	20*			
Razorfish [#]	20*			
Scallops	20*			
Sea urchins [#]	20*			
Squid, cuttlefish and octopus (combined)	15	30		

Bag limit Molluscs and other		
Proposal 6e	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	48	28
Agree	87	51
Don't Know	11	6
Disagree	15	9
Strongly Disagree	10	6

Proposal 7 – Proposed Changes to the Current Legal Size Limits

Species	Old Size (mm)	New Size (mm)	Size when 50% of the stock reach maturity (mm)
Cods	-	300	change sex size varies between species
Groper, western blue	500	600	change sex size unknown
Mulloway	500	700	750
Pink snapper (Wilson Inlet)	280	410	400
Red snapper (Bight redfish/nannygai)	230	300	not known
Swallowtail	230	280	not known
Sweep	-	250	not known

Cods		
Proposal 7a	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	67	44
Agree	59	39
Don't Know	13	9
Disagree	9	6
Strongly Disagree	5	3

Groper, Western Blue		
Proposal 7b	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	70	45
Agree	55	35
Don't Know	8	5
Disagree	10	6
Strongly Disagree	14	9

Mulloway		
Proposal 7c	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	50	32
Agree	53	34
Don't Know	19	12
Disagree	19	12
Strongly Disagree	17	11

Pink Snapper (Wilson's Inlet)		
Proposal 7d	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	60	38
Agree	45	29
Don't Know	24	15
Disagree	14	9
Strongly Disagree	14	9

Red Snapper		
Proposal 7e	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	61	39
Agree	55	35
Don't Know	15	10
Disagree	11	7
Strongly Disagree	15	10

Swallowtail		
Proposal 7f	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	40	26
Agree	54	35
Don't Know	21	14
Disagree	21	14
Strongly Disagree	17	11

Sweep		
Proposal 7g	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	53	35
Agree	70	46
Don't Know	19	12
Disagree	5	3
Strongly Disagree	6	4

Proposal 8 – Increased Protection for Certain Species

- 8(a)** Spear fishing exclusion zones or a total spear fishing prohibition be introduced for western blue groper (*Achoerodus gouldii*) on the South Coast due to their ease of capture and vulnerability to over fishing.

Proposal 8a	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	93	51
Agree	39	21
Don't Know	8	4
Disagree	15	8
Strongly Disagree	27	15

- 8(b)** A slot limit of two black bream (*Acanthopagrus butcheri*) over 350mm be introduced to provide increased protection for mature fish.

Proposal 8b	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	42	24
Agree	73	42
Don't Know	13	8
Disagree	20	12
Strongly Disagree	24	14

- 8(c)** A slot limit of two tailor (*Pomatomus saltatrix*) over 600mm be introduced to provide increased protection for mature fish.

Proposal 8c	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	44	26
Agree	76	44
Don't Know	13	8
Disagree	18	10
Strongly Disagree	20	12

- 8(d)** Identifying areas where the take of species such as cockles, oysters, razorfish, and sea urchins should be prohibited due to conservation issues around the ongoing harvesting of these species.

Proposal 8d	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	45	27
Agree	58	36
Don't Know	34	21
Disagree	20	12
Strongly Disagree	6	4

Proposal 9 – Net Fishing

9(a) Recreational haul and set netting be phased out on the South Coast over a three to five year period.

OR

9(b) Recreational netting be allowed to continue on the South Coast in a restricted capacity with a set of standardised rules applying across the region.

Netting to be phased out		
Proposal 9a	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	75	45
Agree	29	18
Don't Know	2	1
Disagree	32	19
Strongly Disagree	28	17

Netting to continue		
Proposal 9b	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	28	17
Agree	32	19
Don't Know	2	1
Disagree	29	18
Strongly Disagree	75	45

The proposals aimed at standardising netting rules received the following support from submissions that did not support proposal 9(a):

(1) Haul netting be restricted to within 800m of the shore in all oceanic waters of the South Coast region not specifically closed to netting (*currently only applies to set netting*).

Proposal 9b1	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	7	16
Agree	25	57
Don't Know	6	14
Disagree	2	5
Strongly Disagree	4	9

(2) Throw netting be permitted in ocean waters only on the South Coast as a means to collect baitfish.

Proposal 9b2	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	17	40
Agree	21	49
Don't Know	2	5
Disagree	3	7
Strongly Disagree	0	0

(3) Set netting be prohibited from all ocean waters of the South Coast region.

Proposal 9b3	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	5	12
Agree	8	19
Don't Know	6	14
Disagree	15	35
Strongly Disagree	9	21

- (4) Set netting be prohibited in all inland waters except the Wilson, Beaufort, Wellstead, Gordon, Hamersley, Broke, Irwin and Stokes Inlets, Princess Royal Harbour and the Thomas River and the Gardiner River on Wednesday and Friday nights from one and a half hours before sunset to one and a half hours after sunrise.

Proposal 9b4	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	8	17
Agree	17	35
Don't Know	7	15
Disagree	10	21
Strongly Disagree	6	12

- (5) Set netting be prohibited in the Broke, Irwin and Stokes Inlets and the Gardiner River between 1 November and 31 April the following year.

Proposal 9b5	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	11	26
Agree	19	44
Don't Know	5	12
Disagree	4	9
Strongly Disagree	4	9

- (6) All recreational set nets must be attended at all times and an hourly 'check and clean' carried out.

Proposal 9b6	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	15	30
Agree	24	48
Don't Know	2	4
Disagree	6	12
Strongly Disagree	3	6

Proposal 10 – Fishing Competitions

10(a) All fishing competitions with greater than 50 participants must be formally registered in advance with the Department of Fisheries.

Proposal 10a	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	57	32
Agree	62	35
Don't Know	12	7
Disagree	15	8
Strongly Disagree	32	18

10(b) Competition organisers be required to keep an accurate record of the participation, catch and in each competition and forward catch returns to the Department of Fisheries for inclusion in the recreational fisheries database. The Department should develop standardised catch cards and data entry software with fishing clubs which are to be compatible with the recreational fishing database.

Proposal 10b	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	68	39
Agree	65	37
Don't Know	8	5
Disagree	12	7
Strongly Disagree	22	13

10(c) To ensure fishing competitions are conducted in line with recreational fishing ethics and meet requirements under the *Animal Welfare Act*, a formal code of conduct for fishing competitions should be developed by the Department of Fisheries, inline with the Code of Practice for Recreational Fishers, in consultation with fishing clubs and organising bodies.

Proposal 10c	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	57	34
Agree	65	38
Don't Know	11	7
Disagree	11	7
Strongly Disagree	26	15

Proposal 11 – Recreational Fishing Priority Areas

The importance of recreational fishing as a component of tourism and lifestyle should be recognised in the Integrated Management Planning Process and the Marine Reserves Planning Process.

Through this process the following areas should be considered for the priority management of recreational fishing:

- All estuarine systems;
- Twilight Cove;
- Recherche Archipelago;
- Waters adjacent to Fitzgerald River National Park; and
- Cape Vancouver to West Cape Howe.

Proposal 11	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	43	25
Agree	59	35
Don't Know	28	16
Disagree	17	10
Strongly Disagree	24	14

Proposal 12 – Code of Conduct for Accessing Pastoral Leases, Nature Reserves and Aboriginal Land

That a code of conduct be developed for recreational fishers accessing fishing locations through pastoral leases and nature reserves. The code should be developed in consultation with land owners/lease holders and should contain the following elements:

- Leave no rubbish behind.
- Any fish frames or offal should be removed.
- All gates that are shut must be left shut.
- No lighting of fires.
- Under no circumstance should any fences be cut or interfered with.
- Any machinery or equipment that is the property of the station owner should not be interfered with.
- Firearms or dogs should not be taken onto stations without the approval of the station owner.
- Aboriginal land should only be entered with the approval of the Aboriginal landowners.

Proposal 12	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	72	41
Agree	79	45
Don't Know	6	3
Disagree	11	6
Strongly Disagree	8	5

Proposal 13 – Access to Fishing Locations through Private Land

The Regional RFACs in each region should enter into negotiations with owners/lease holders to define access routes to fishing locations and that these routes and the code of conduct be promoted by the Department of Fisheries in advisory material.

Proposal 13	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	62	35
Agree	86	49
Don't Know	11	6
Disagree	10	6
Strongly Disagree	6	3

Proposal 14 – Position Statement on Restocking as a Stock Enhancement Strategy

Management of wild fish stocks should be the primary focus for recreational fisheries management, and restocking should only be considered as a strategy to assist with the recovery of a stock where it can be identified that the stock has been significantly depleted and its recovery is endangered or will be prolonged.

To minimize any ecological impacts, all stock enhancement projects should be assessed against disease risk, biodiversity and genetic diversity criteria. Any stock enhancement project should also be adequately monitored and evaluated.

Proposal 14	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	58	33
Agree	99	56
Don't Know	10	6
Disagree	7	4
Strongly Disagree	3	2

Proposal 15 – Resource Sharing

As a priority the following species should be considered for total catch management under an integrated management framework:

- Australian salmon;
- Australian herring;
- Black bream;
- King George whiting; and
- Southern demersal species, including shark.

For each species a forum should be held with key stakeholders including recreational, commercial, indigenous and conservation to identify key issues which need to be taken into consideration in the development of an integrated management plan for the South Coast Region.

Proposal 15	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	47	27
Agree	86	50
Don't Know	15	9
Disagree	16	9
Strongly Disagree	9	5

Proposal 16 – Low Impact Wilderness Fishing Experiences

That consideration be given to managing Twilight Cove as a remote wilderness fishing area on a trial basis.

The following guiding principles should be used for the management of the wilderness area:

- Low take;
- Low environmental impact; and
- Code of practice should be developed for recreational fishing in the area.

The trial should determine the level of community support and potential for retaining wilderness fishing values in the area.

Proposal 16	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	14	9
Agree	65	43
Don't Know	46	30
Disagree	12	8
Strongly Disagree	16	11

Proposal 17 – South Coast Regional Community Education Plan

17(a) A comprehensive regional guide to recreational fishing in the South Coast Region be produced to inform and educate fishers about recreational fishing management arrangements, fishing ethics, research, conservation issues and promoting stewardship for fish stocks and the environment.

Proposal 17a	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	51	30
Agree	98	57
Don't Know	3	2
Disagree	15	9
Strongly Disagree	6	4

17(b) Adequate quantities of practical educational tools such as measuring gauges, fish rulers, adhesive bag limit guides and boat ramp and fishing venue signs should be produced to support the regional fishing guide.

Proposal 17b	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	62	36
Agree	100	5
Don't Know	2	1
Disagree	6	4
Strongly Disagree	3	2

17(c) An annual media campaign be implemented to promote recreational fishing and fishing ethics in the Region.

Proposal 17c	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	40	23
Agree	85	49
Don't Know	10	6
Disagree	20	12
Strongly Disagree	18	10

17(d) Encourage the establishment and development of volunteer groups in structured fisheries education activities across the region.

Proposal 17d	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	42	25
Agree	94	55
Don't Know	10	6
Disagree	17	10
Strongly Disagree	7	4

17(e) An education campaign promoting the recognition of customary fishing practices be developed through the Aboriginal Fishing Strategy.

Proposal 17e	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	28	17
Agree	47	28
Don't Know	34	20
Disagree	28	17
Strongly Disagree	32	19

Proposal 18 – Additional Patrol Capacity

That an additional two patrols (four Fisheries Officers), incorporating at least one Aboriginal Fisheries Liaison Officer, be dedicated to recreational field compliance and educational activities during peak fishing seasons in the South Coast Region.

These resources should be allocated to:

- *Albany*: One additional patrol crew to service peak season fishing compliance needs between Walpole and Bremer Bay.
- *Esperance*: One additional patrol crew to service peak season fishing compliance needs between Hopetoun and the WA/SA border.

Proposal 18	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	61	35
Agree	82	47
Don't Know	7	4
Disagree	15	9
Strongly Disagree	8	5

Proposal 19 – VFLO Program

That the operation of the Volunteer Fisheries Liaison Officer (VFLO) program be enhanced and developed on the South Coast in accordance with the VFLO strategic plan.

Proposal 19	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	36	22
Agree	91	56
Don't Know	22	14
Disagree	11	7
Strongly Disagree	3	2

Proposal 20 – Recreational Fishing Management Officer

That adequate resource be allocated to coordinate the implementation of the South Coast Regional Review and assist with the development of integrated fisheries management plans for the region.

Proposal 20	Totals	%
Strongly Agree	50	29
Agree	100	59
Don't Know	7	4
Disagree	7	4
Strongly Disagree	6	4

APPENDIX B NAMES OF INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS WHO FORWARDED SUBMISSIONS TO THE SOUTH COAST RECREATIONAL FISHING WORKING GROUP

Ace, Graham	Crane, Ed	Great Southern RRFAC
Ace, Jeffrey	Crosby, Robert	Great Southern TAFE
Aggise, Wayne	Curti, Murray	Greatwood, Andy
Albany Angling Club	Danks, Colin	Green, Anne
Albany District Office	Davis, Dr Neville	Green, B
Dept of Fisheries WA	Dawson, Brian	Green, Peter
Albany Freediving Club	Dickinson, Alan	Hamersley, Mathew
Albany Spearfishing Club	Dowdell, Ken	Harland, R
Allan, J A	Duke Charters	Hart, James
Anderson, Terrence	Dumbrell, Alan	Harvey, Elizabeth
Anning, Ronald	Dumbrell, Wayne	Henderson, Leah
Apolonik, Sobik	Edmonds, John	Hogln, John
Arends, A W	Edwards, C J	Holtom, Kane
Australian Anglers	Elliott, Mark	Hopkinson, Kevin
Association of WA	Ellol, Raphael	Hudson, P
Baker, John	Esperance Goldfields	Hughes, Gerald
Barrow, Adrian	RRFAC	Hyde, Don
Bell, Ivor	Evans, Vincent	Ietto, Paul
Berger, Harry	Evans, W A	Ietto, Tanya
Bevan, Garry	Eyles, Stuart	James, Hart
Birch, Peter	Feltus, Leon	Jennings, J A
Bock, Darryl	Fernie, Geoffrey	Johnson, Andrew
Bourn, Ray	Flanagan, R	Johnson, Murray
Boyce, Wayne	Fletcher, Wayne	Johnson, Sue
Brittain, Greg	Flynn, Paul	Jones, Brad
Brown, Geoff	Fox, Wayne	Joynes, Brett
Brown, Roy	Gambrecht, Heinz	Keen, William
Burrow, Russell	Gault, K	Keogh, Allan
Bury, Geoff	Gilbert, Hugh	Kilpatrick, Fraser
Campbell, Andrew	Grace, David	Kitson Stanton, Anthony
Carnaby, Dean	Grainger, Chris	Koning, C D
Clements, Stuart	Grant, Les	Larard, Peter
Collins, Frank	Grant, Meryl	Leslie, Dave
Cooper, Graham	Great Southern	Lester, Brian
Court, Terry	Development	Lithgow, Donald
Cowap, D A	Commission	Lloyd, Bail

Love, Ernest
Manning, Howard
Marshall, David
McArtney, Peter
McCrea, John
McKenzie, S
McKerrow, Charlie
Meagher, R D
Meyer, Craig
Miller, Grace
Miller, H
Miller, Warren
Monaco, Pino
Monck, Kristi
Monck, Robbie
Morey, Owen
Morgan, N
Mortimen, Ken
Mortimer, Stephen
Mt Barker Offshore
Angling Club
Myers, John
Naylor, Walter
North, Bill
Northcott, Michael
Ogle, Michael
Osboine, Doug
Oversby, Joe
Pemberton, Richard
Penna, Brian
Penny, George
Peters, Garry
Powell, Peter
Prior, V M
Proctor, Ron
Quinn, Matt
Ramm, Doug
Recfishwest
Regan, Grant
Reitze, D J
Sawson, Peter
Scullin, Dan
Shales, R

Shanhan, Alan
Sharp, Alf
Sharp, Bev
Sharpe, John
Shenfield, Jennifer
Shepherd, Jason
Skalko, Lou
Slater, Sam
Smallwood, Alan
Smit, Jack
Smith, Keith
Smith, Lindsay
Smith, Mervyn
Stapely, Christine
South Coast Licensed
Fisherman's Association
South Coast Regional
Initiative Planning Team
Taylor, Steve
Thorp, Brett
Tiszauolgyi, Michelle
Tiszavolgyi, Gary
Tiszavolgyi, Rhiannon
Tiszavolgyi, Samuel
Tiszavolgyi, Steve
Treasure, Stephen
Tristram, Craig
Tunsell, Roy
Turley, Wayne
Turntall, Leo
Voigt, Doug
Walker, Bob
Walsh, Michael
Walton, Peter
Watts, Brendon
Watts, John
Wellstead, Karen
Wellstead, William
Western Australia Fishing
Industry Council
Wheatcroft, D K
Whitmore, Horward
Wilkes, Jenny

Wilkes, John
Wilmot, Rod
Williams, Micheal
Williamson, Brad
Williamson, Ross
Wilson, Paul
Wiseman, Alan
Wood, Peter
Woods, Alan
Woollett, J
Woollett, Lorraine
Woollett, Max

APPENDIX C CURRENT BAG AND SIZE LIMITS

PRIZE FISH			
Mixed daily bag limit – 8 per angler			
Prize fish are highly sought after for their catching or eating qualities and some are vulnerable to overfishing.			
Species	Scientific Name	Minimum Legal Size	Bag Limit
Billfish – sailfish, swordfish, and marlins combined	Families Istiophoridae and Xiphiidae	N/A	4
Cobia	<i>Rachycentron canadus</i>	N/A	4
Cods – combined (inc. breaksea and harlequin).	Family Serranidae	Fish over 1200mm or 30kg are protected. Breaksea – 300mm	4
Coral Trout	<i>Plectropomus spp</i>	500mm	4
Dhufish, West Australian	<i>Glaucosoma hebraicum</i>	500mm	4
Mackerel, shark	<i>Grammatorcynus bicarinatus</i>	500mm	4
Mackerel, Spanish broad-barred	<i>Scomberomorus semifasciatus</i>	750mm	4
Mackerel, Spanish narrow-barred	<i>Scomberomorus commerson</i>	900mm	4
Mackerel, spotted	<i>Scomberomorus spp</i>	500mm	4
Mackerel, school	<i>Scomberomorus spp</i>	500mm	4
Mackerel, wahoo	<i>Acanthocybium solandri</i>	900mm	4
Mahi mahi (dolphinfish)	<i>Coryphaena hippurus</i>		4
Mulloway and Northern mulloway	<i>Argyrosomus hololepidotus</i> and <i>Protonibea diacanthus</i>	500mm	4
Queenfish	<i>Scomberoides commersonianus</i>		4
Salmon, Australian	<i>Arripus truttaceus</i>	300mm	4
Samson fish	<i>Seriola hippos</i>	600mm	4
Sharks (all species except protected species)		N/A	4
Trout, brown & rainbow* - combined	<i>Salmo trutta</i> and <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>	300mm	4
Tuna, Southern bluefin	<i>Thunnus maccoyii</i>		4
Yellowtail kingfish	<i>Seriola lalandi</i>	600mm	4

* Licence required

REEF FISH

Mixed daily bag limit – 8 per angler
 Reef fish are usually resident species and are highly vulnerable to overfishing.

Species	Scientific Name	Minimum Legal Size	Bag Limit (Combined)
Emperor, blue-lined	<i>Lethrinus laticaudis</i>	320mm	8
Emperor, red	<i>Lutjanus sebae</i>	410mm	
Emperor, spangled	<i>Lethrinus nebulosus</i>	410mm	
Groper, baldchin & tuskfish (excluding western blue groper)	<i>Choerodon rubescens, cyanodus</i> and <i>shoenleinii</i>	400mm	
Queen snapper (blue morwong)	<i>Nemadactylus valenciennesi</i>	410mm	
Snapper, pink	<i>Pagrus auratus</i>	410mm Wilson Inlet - 280mm	
Snapper, north-west (all other species)	<i>Lethrinus spp</i>	280mm	

KEY ANGLING & SPORT FISH

Daily bag limit – 8 per angler
 An important protection category – cobbler and tailor stocks have declined in recent years, with fish often caught before spawning.

Species	Scientific Name	Minimum Legal Size	Bag Limit
Bonito	<i>Sarda orientalis, Cybiosarda elegans</i>		8
Cobbler	<i>Cnidoglanis macrocephalus</i>	430mm	8
Tailor	<i>Pomatomus saltatrix</i>	300mm	8
Mangrove jack	<i>Lutjanus argentimaculatus</i>	300mm	8
Fingermark bream	<i>Lutjanus russelli</i>		8
Giant threadfin salmon	<i>Polydactylus macrochir</i>		8

TABLE FISH**Daily bag limit – 20 per angler**

This group contains many of WA's most popular angling species and bag limits are crucial for maintaining future stocks.

Species	Scientific Name	Minimum Legal Size	Bag Limit
Bream, black, northwest black and yellowfin	<i>Acanthopagrus</i> spp	250mm	20
Flathead and flounder – combined	Family <i>Platycephalidae</i> and <i>Pseudorhombus</i> spp	Flathead – 300mm Flounder – 250mm	20
Leatherjackets	Family <i>Monacanthidae</i>	250mm	20
Pike and snook - combined	<i>Sphyraena</i> spp and <i>Dinolestes</i> spp	300mm	20
Skipjack trevally	<i>Pseudocaranx</i> spp	250mm	20
Snapper, red	<i>Centroberyx</i> spp	230mm	20
Tarwhine	<i>Rhabdosargus sarba</i>	230mm	20
Threadfin,			
Whiting, King George	<i>Sillaginodes punctata</i>	280mm	20

BREAD AND BUTTER FISH**Daily bag limit – 40 per angler (No size limits apply)**

'Bread and butter' species are all fish not listed in other categories with the exception of baitfish of the sardine and anchovy families (*Clupeidae* and *Engraulididae* – mulies, whitebait, scaly mackerel, anchovies), redfin perch, goldfish, carp and tilapia.

Species	Scientific Name	Bag Limit
Australian herring	<i>Arripis georgianus</i>	40
Garfish	Family <i>Hemirhamphidae</i>	40
Mackerel, blue (common)	<i>Scomber australisicus</i>	40
Mullet, sea and yellow-eye	Family <i>Mugilidae</i>	40
Whiting, sand, school and yellowfin	<i>Sillago</i> spp	40
All other unlisted species		40 each

SPECIAL BAG LIMITS

Species	Scientific Name	Minimum Legal Size	Bag Limit
Barramundi (only one rod or handline to be used at any one time) – Special rules apply in the lower Ord River, Fitzroy River and Broome areas	<i>Lates calcarifer</i>	550mm	Possession limit 2
Groper, western blue	<i>Achoerodus gouldi</i>	500mm	1

CRUSTACEANS AND SHELLFISH

Species are often sedentary or resident in nature, but may have pelagic or migratory phases in their life cycle with larvae or eggs widely distributed by ocean currents. Specific regulations apply to each species, based on biological characteristics. Low catch limits apply to shellfish due to high risk of localised depletion.

Species	Scientific Name	Minimum Legal Size	Bag Limit	Boat Limit [#]
CRUSTACEANS				
Cherabin	<i>Macrobrachium</i> spp		9 litres	N/A
Crab, blue swimmer (manna)	<i>Portunus pelagicus</i>	127mm	24	40
Crab, mud – all species	<i>Scylla</i> spp	Green – 150mm Brown – 120mm	10	N/A
Marron*	<i>Cherax tenuimanus</i>	*	*	*
Prawns	Family Peneaidae	N/A	9 litres	N/A
Rock lobster* - all species combined	<i>Panulirus</i> and <i>Jasus</i> spp	*	8	16
Rock lobster* - Dampier Archipelago	<i>Panulirus</i> spp	*	4	8
MOLLUSCS & OTHER REEF ANIMALS				
Abalone, Roe's*	<i>Haliotis roei</i>	60mm	20	N/A
Abalone, greenlip and brownlip* - combined	<i>H. laevigata</i> and <i>H. conicopora</i>	140mm	5	10
Mussels	Family Myrtilidae	N/A	9 litres	N/A
Sea urchins	Class Echinoidae	N/A	40	N/A
Squid, cuttlefish and octopus – all species combined	Class Cephalopoda	N/A	15	30
All other species of edible molluscs		N/A	2 litres	N/A

* Licence required

Only applies when two or more fishers aboard.

N/A – Not applicable

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