



Department of  
Primary Industries and  
Regional Development

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# Frequently Asked Questions

FishCatchWA™ tool



# West Coast Demersal Scalefish Resource

## Digital catch reporting tool

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### What is the FishCatchWA™ tool?

The FishCatchWA™ tool has been added to the ServiceWA app to allow recreational fishers to voluntarily record their catch of demersal fish species in waters between Kalbarri and Augusta. The FishCatchWA™ tool is being delivered as part of the State Government's \$10 million support package to boost the recovery of West Coast demersal scalefish.

### Why are we being asked to report our West Coast demersal catches via the FishCatchWA™ tool?

The FishCatchWA™ tool allows for real-time data to be collected on key demersal scalefish species including pink snapper, WA dhufish, baldchin groper and breaksea cod caught in the West Coast Bioregion. This information will be used to track the recovery of the demersal scalefish resource and inform improvements to recreational fishing experiences.

### What are the benefits of a catch reporting tool?

The FishCatchWA™ tool provides a simple and convenient way for recreational fishers to voluntarily provide timely data on recreational West Coast demersal catches. You will also have access to your catch records and be able to track insights into your logged catches over time.

### Why should I contribute my catch data?

You can help contribute to the ongoing sustainability of WA's West Coast demersal stocks by providing correct and timely data to support the management of this prized resource.

### Will catch data be used to implement further restrictions?

By providing your West Coast demersal catch data you can directly contribute to the sustainability of this fishery. Improved timeliness of data allows fisheries scientists and managers to better inform management decisions to ensure stocks rebuild to support better fishing for the future.

### Do you have to report your catches?

Reporting your West Coast demersal catches using the FishCatchWA™ tool is voluntary. By doing so, you can directly contribute to the science supporting the recovery of highly valued demersal scalefish in the West Coast Bioregion.

### Is reporting of recreational catch in the West Coast Bioregion going to become mandatory?

No decision has been made to implement mandatory recreational catch reporting at this time. The service will complement the existing recreational catch monitoring program,

including the Statewide Recreational Fishing Survey, and provide more data for DPIRD to track the recovery of demersal scalefish to meet the 2030 target.

## **How do I know which fish species to report?**

The FishCatchWA™ tool is only for recording the main demersal species caught in the West Coast Bioregion, including WA dhufish, pink snapper, baldchin groper and breaksea cod. A list of the required species, with images, is available on the tool.

## **Do I report all fish that I catch, or just those I keep?**

All listed fish that are caught, whether kept or released, should be reported.

## **Why do I have to report the fish I release?**

A proportion of demersal fish do not survive being caught and released due to factors such as:

- barotrauma (damage to fishes' internal anatomy caused by water pressure changes when being reeled in);
- poor handling;
- hooking injuries; and
- being eaten by sharks when reeled in or soon after release.

This contributes to the overall fishing mortality and can impact on the recovery of the demersal stocks.

## **Do I need to report exact fishing locations?**

No, you do not need to share your favourite fishing spots. Fishing locations are only reported by zones (i.e., Kalbarri, Mid-west, Metro and South-west) within the West Coast Bioregion.

## **Does everyone on a boat have to report their catch individually?**

Recreational fishers can report their individual catch or one person can report the catch on behalf of everyone on the boat. This provides flexibility for recreational fishers who wish to view a dashboard summary of their personal catches, including what fish they caught and where and when they caught them.

## **Can I report a shark depredation incident?**

The FishCatchWA™ tool allows you to report any shark depredation incidents to find out what impact this issue has on fish stocks and recreational fishing.

## **Can I delete/edit a logged catch if I have made a mistake?**

No, a summary screen allows you to review your catches prior to submitting a catch report. Once you have submitted a catch report, it cannot be edited.

## **What if I don't have access to a mobile phone or internet, how do I report?**

If you're unable to record your catch using the FishCatchWA™ tool on the ServiceWA app, you can report your catch by phone 24/7 on 1300 FCATCH (1300 322 824).

## **Why is the tool part of ServiceWA and not a stand-alone app?**

The FishCatchWA™ tool is an important addition to the ServiceWA app, providing recfishers a streamlined way to support the sustainability of WA's demersal fish stocks.

More than 1.4 million users have downloaded the ServiceWA app, which plays a vital role in achieving the Cook Government's vision to deliver convenient, smart and secure services for all Western Australians.

The ServiceWA app continues to expand to provide Western Australians with a one-stop-app to interact with government.

## **Does the ServiceWA app identify me when I make a report?**

Prior to the launch of the FishCatchWA™ tool, the ServiceWA app was updated to give users the choice to either log in with a Digital Identity or proceed without a Digital Identity.

Recfishers will be required to provide their postcode to use the FishCatchWA™ tool in the ServiceWA app.

## **Is my catch information treated confidentially?**

Yes, your individual catch data will remain confidential. Catch information reported through the FishCatchWA™ tool will only ever be reported in aggregate form.

## **Is the FishCatchWA™ tool being used to record recreational catch in other regions within WA?**

At this stage the FishCatchWA™ tool is only for recreational fishers to record demersal scalefish caught in the West Coast Bioregion to provide additional data to support the recovery of the resource. Adding additional catch reporting options for other areas and other species of fish may be considered in future.

## **Are catch reporting apps used in other parts of the world?**

Many other jurisdictions within Australia and overseas have or are developing catch reporting apps to improve the management of recreational fisheries.

### **Important Disclaimer**

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