

East coast inshore fishery

Commercial fishing rules in Queensland

From **1 September 2021**, the east coast inshore fishery will be managed under the *Queensland east coast inshore fishery harvest strategy*.

General

- The east coast inshore fishery extends across all tidal waters along Queensland's east coast, eastward of longitude 142°31'49" east. The fishery is split into five management regions (Figure 1).
- The fishery is a multi-gear, multi-species fishery that harvests approximately 100 species using net and line gear.
- The following fishery symbols specify permitted gear and target species:
 - N1 – general purpose mesh netting
 - N2 – set mesh netting
 - N4 – offshore waters
 - N10 – tunnel netting
 - N11 – small mesh netting
 - K1-8 – ocean beach seine/haul netting
 - L1 – line fishery (other than in Great Barrier Reef)
 - L2 – line fishery (reef)
 - L3 – line fishery (reef)
 - S – shark and ray fishery (must also have another symbol).
- Management of the fishery is mainly through setting total allowable commercial catch (TACC) limits for key commercial species.
- Some TACCs are split into individual transferable quota units, which commercial fishers must hold to retain these species. Other TACCs are managed competitively.
- The fishing year runs from 1 January to 31 December.
- Measurements of vessels used in commercial fisheries are determined by national marine safety requirements under the National Standard for Commercial Vessels, refer to your certificate of survey and/or certificate of operation – for more information, visit amsa.gov.au.
- Other Australian Government requirements include displaying unique identifying numbers, safety management plans, safety equipment and licensing – for more information, visit amsa.gov.au.

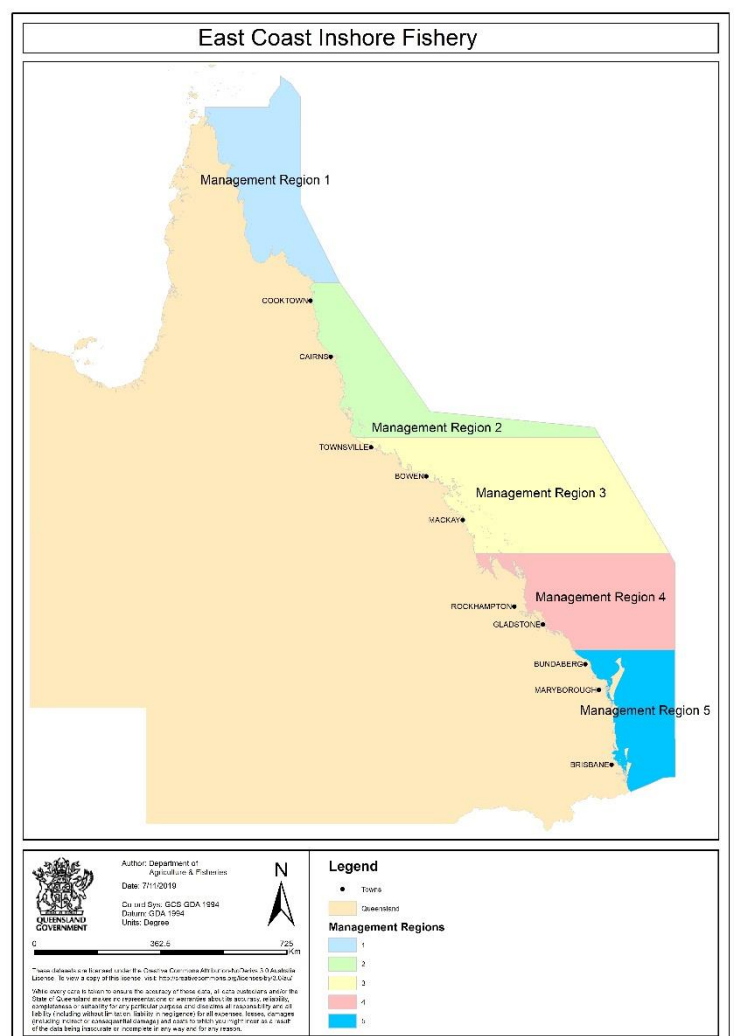


Figure 1: East coast inshore fishery management regions

Commercial species management

Target species are different across the regions of the fishery and are separated into three tiers:

- Tier 1 – key species that drive fishing behaviour in the fishery
- Tier 2 – other species of high commercial and recreational importance
- Tier 3 – all other species that will be monitored for changes in fishing pressure.

Tier 1 species

- The tier 1 species outlined below are subject to individual transferable quotas (ITQs), a total allowable commercial catch (TACC) and are managed regionally.

ITQ species (tier 1)	Relevant management regions
Barramundi (<i>Lates calcarifer</i>)	MR 1–5
King threadfin (<i>Polydactylus macrochir</i>)	MR 1–5
Grey mackerel (<i>Scomberomorus semifasciatus</i>)	MR 1–5
School mackerel (<i>Scomberomorus queenslandicus</i>)	MR 5
Sand whiting (<i>Sillago</i> species)	MR 5

- ITQs allow a holder to take an amount of fish up to their kilogram limit for a particular quota species. Kilogram equivalents for each ITQ unit are calculated prior to each fishing year.
- Barramundi, king threadfin and grey mackerel are managed using ITQs in all management regions.
- School mackerel and whiting are only managed using ITQs in Management Region 5, with competitive TACC limits applying in other regions.

Tier 2 species

- The tier 2 species (and some tier 1 species) below are subject to competitive TACCs and are managed regionally.

Competitive TACC species (tier 1 and 2)	Relevant management regions
Black jewfish (<i>Protonibea diacanthus</i>)	MR 1-5
Sharks and rays (excl. hammerhead)	MR 1-5
Hammerhead shark	MR 1-5
Spotted mackerel (<i>Scomberomorus munroi</i>).	MR 1-5
School mackerel (<i>Scomberomorus queenslandicus</i>)	MR 1-4
Dusky flathead (<i>Platycephalus fuscus</i>)	MR 5
Yellowfin bream (<i>Acanthopagrus australis</i>)	MR 5
Sea mullet (<i>Mugil cephalus</i>)	MR 5
Tailor (<i>Pomatomus saltatrix</i>)	MR 5

- If a competitive TACC is reached, targeted fishing must cease, and those species can no longer be landed.

Tier 3 species

- Tier 3 species are all other fin fish that may be harvested in the fishery.
- No commercial catch limits are in place for these species; however, some species may be no-take or subject to possession and size limits.
- Commercial catch and effort data are monitored to ensure that increasing or shifting fishing pressure does not present an unacceptable risk.

Closures

- A number of closed seasons and waters apply to the fishery, including additional gear restrictions at different times of the year.
- Closures may be in place for resource allocation reasons (e.g. net free zones), for sustainability reasons (e.g. protecting spawning fish such as barramundi) or to reduce interactions with protected species (e.g. dugong protection areas).
- Barramundi is a no-take species between 1 November and 31 January each year. It is an offence to take barramundi during this time.
- Snapper and pearl perch are no-take species between 15 July and 15 August each year. It is an offence to take snapper or pearl perch during this time.

Equipment

- Permitted fishing equipment varies across fishing symbols and fishing areas and is outlined under the relevant symbol provisions listed in the Fisheries (Commercial Fisheries) Regulation 2019.

Fishing operation

- All primary commercial fishing boat authorities must have a nominated person in charge with a commercial fisher licence.
- An approved vessel tracking unit must be:
 - installed as per the department's *Vessel tracking installation and maintenance standard*
 - installed on vessel/s and confirmed working prior to commencement of a fishing trip.
- The licence holder must have a contract with an approved supplier for collection of vessel tracking positional data.
- Under Queensland fisheries legislation, an assistant fisher is no longer required to be within 800 m of a commercial fisher. However, Australian Maritime Safety Authority safety rules apply – visit amsa.gov.au for more information.
- Fishers must comply with marine park and go-slow zoning – for more information, visit gbrmpa.qld.gov.au and/or des.qld.gov.au.

Licensing

- Fishers must have a primary commercial fishing licence and at least one eligible net or line symbol to operate in the fishery.
- The person in charge of an operation must hold a commercial fisher licence to operate under the primary commercial fishing licence.
- ITQ units are required to retain the following tier 1 species:
 - barramundi
 - king threadfin
 - grey mackerel
 - whiting (Management Region 5 only)
 - school mackerel (Management Region 5 only).
- A range of transactions can be completed online using FishNet Secure (e.g. quota temporary transfers, registering vessel tracking units to primary commercial fishing licences, accessing quota activity statements and registering change of personal contact details).
- Fees for licences and quota are invoiced in advance (i.e. before the fishing season starts or before the licence can be used).
- The licence holder is responsible for keeping contact details up to date on FishNet Secure.
- You may require accreditation with Safe Food in order to legally sell or supply your product in Queensland – for more information, visit safefood.qld.gov.au.

Reporting requirements

In summary, fishers must:

- report trip/catch notices for all catch to which a TACC applies via approved means (e.g. Automated Integrated Voice Response system)
- complete catch and effort logbooks and the threatened, endangered and protected animal logbook
- complete catch disposal records for the disposal of all catch to which a TACC applies
- keep sale dockets for all wholesale sales for 5 years, including to businesses involved in the processing and storage of fisheries resources.

For more information on reporting requirements, visit fisheries.qld.gov.au.