

# Harvest strategies for Queensland fisheries

## How harvest strategies work

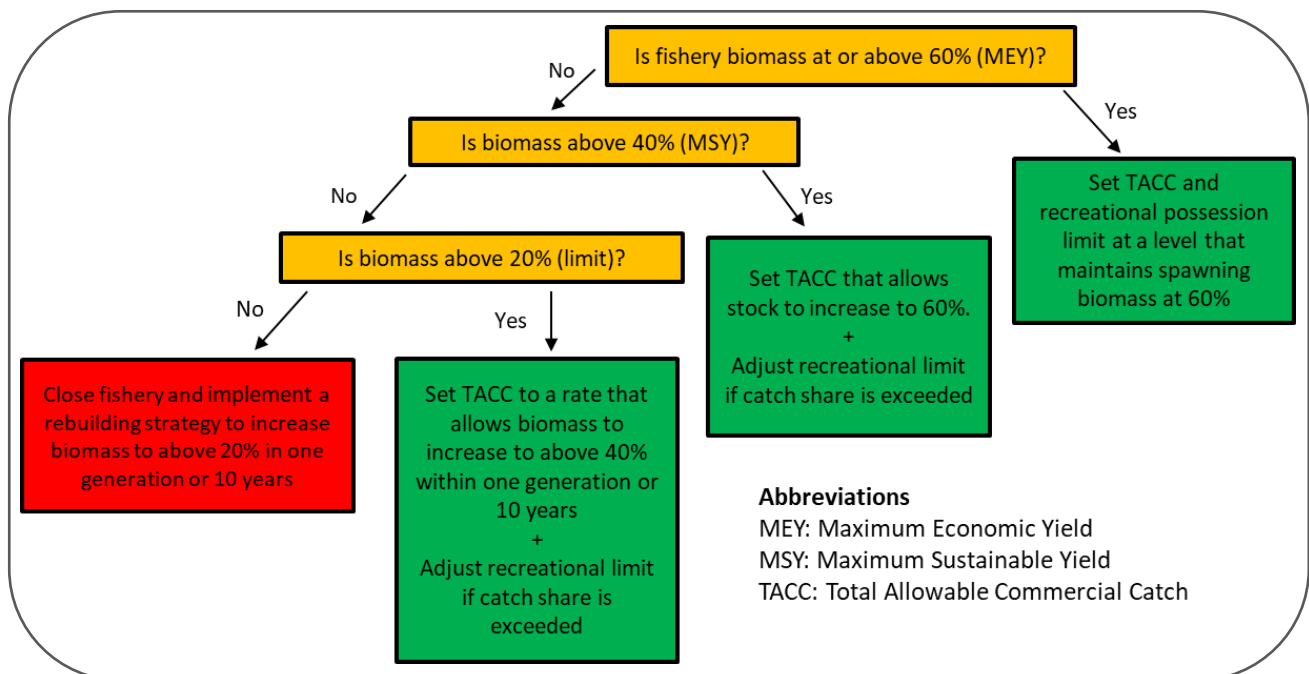
As part of the *Queensland Sustainable Fisheries Strategy: 2017–2027*, draft harvest strategies are being released to guide the future management of 13 Queensland fisheries.

A harvest strategy specifies pre-determined management actions necessary to achieve ecological, economic and/or social objectives of a fishery. Harvest strategies define the objectives for each fishery that apply to all fishing sectors. They set out the existing catch shares among all fishing sectors and aim to maintain those over time.

**The most important part of each harvest strategy is the decision rules**, which set the future management framework for target, byproduct and bycatch species in the fishery.

The final harvest strategies will underpin future decision-making for all of our fisheries (such as adjusting catch limits, recreational fishing rules etc. depending on the performance of fish stocks).

## Example of decision rules



## Management of target species

The decision rules in many of the harvest strategies aim to ensure that fishing occurs at levels that allow stocks to build towards, or be maintained at, a target biomass level of 60%. The harvest strategies also include rules that specify additional action that may be required if stocks fall below the trigger level of 40% biomass (maximum sustainable yield) or the 20% biomass limit. Harvest strategies that use stock biomass estimates (from stock assessments) to guide management include:

- inshore fishery
- mud crab fishery
- blue swimmer crab fishery
- tropical rock lobster fishery
- sea cucumber fishery
- stout whiting fishery
- southern offshore trawl region
- southern inshore trawl region
- Moreton Bay trawl region
- central trawl region
- northern trawl region.

The harvest strategies for coral fishery and marine aquarium fishery use either catch rates or risk assessments as an indicator.

## Management of other species

Each harvest strategy includes rules to ensure that byproduct and bycatch species are monitored and managed. For most fisheries this includes a catch trigger—a shift in fishing behaviour that represents an unacceptable risk to a species. For example, if catch increases to two times greater than past catch levels.

If triggered, the decision rules may indicate that an assessment is required to determine whether the impacts are unsustainable. They may even trigger interim measures (such as a total allowable catch) to ensure the catch does not increase further.

## Management of ecological risks

Harvest strategies aim to minimise and mitigate ecological risks arising from fishing-related activities. If species are identified as having a high or increased ecological risk, appropriate management action may be implemented to reduce this risk. For example, if a fishery represents a high risk to species of conservation interest.

## Initial annual catch limits for species in each fishery

Once implemented, changes to catch limits would be informed by the harvest strategy.

| Fishery                                | Current commercial limit | Commercial reported catch 2018 (tonnes) | Proposed TACC (tonnes) | Recreational limit     | Information considered   |
|--|--------------------------|---|------------------------|------------------------|--|
| Blue swimmer crab                      | No limit                 | 189                                     | 263                    | 20 crabs               | 2020 <a href="#">stock assessment</a>  |
| East coast mud crab                    | No limit                 | 863                                     | 770                    | 7 crabs<br>14 per boat | 2019 <a href="#">catch assessment</a>  |
| Gulf of Carpentaria mud crab           | No limit                 | 157                                     | 108                    |                        |  |
| Barramundi                             | No limit                 | 182                                     | 243                    | 5 fish<br>10 boat      | 2019 <a href="#">stock assessment</a> and 2013–17 commercial catch history                     |
| Grey mackerel                          | 250 tonnes               | 142                                     | 129                    | 5 fish                 | 2019 stock assessment (not yet published)  |
| School mackerel                        | No limit                 | 104                                     | 80.8                   | 10 fish                | 2019 <a href="#">stock assessment</a> and 2013–17 commercial catch history (not yet published) |
| King threadfin                         | No limit                 | 72                                      | 72                     | 5 fish                 | Precautionary TACC based on 2018 commercial catch  |
| Sand whiting                           | No limit                 | 175                                     | 162                    | 30 fish<br>combined    | 2019 <a href="#">stock assessment</a>  |
| Black jewfish                          | 20 tonnes                | 136                                     | 20                     | 1 fish<br>2 per boat   | Precautionary TACC based on historical catch (prior to 2017)                                   |
| Dusky flathead                         | No limit                 | 43                                      | 41                     | 5 fish                 | TACC informed by the 2019 <a href="#">stock assessment</a> and based on 2018 commercial catch  |
| Hammerhead shark*                      | 100 tonnes               | 17                                      | 100                    | No take                | <a href="#">Commonwealth's non-detriment finding</a>   |
| Sea mullet                             | No limit                 | 1416                                    | 1614                   | 20 fish                | 2018 <a href="#">stock assessment</a> and 2013–17 commercial catch                             |
| Shark and ray (excluding hammerheads)* | 500 tonnes               | 155                                     | 400                    | 1 fish<br>2 per boat   | Existing TACC with a precautionary 100 tonne reduction based on risk assessment                |
| Spotted mackerel                       | Catch limits             | 34                                      | 48                     | 5 fish                 | 2018 <a href="#">stock assessment</a>  |
| Tailor                                 | 120 tonnes               | 57                                      | 120                    | 20 fish                | Existing TACC and 2017 <a href="#">stock assessment</a>  |
| Yellowfin bream                        | No limit                 | 70                                      | 81                     | 30 fish<br>combined    | 2019 <a href="#">stock assessment</a>  |

\* Previously combined total allowable commercial catch (TACC).

## More information

For more information, visit [fisheries.qld.gov.au](https://fisheries.qld.gov.au) or call 13 25 23.