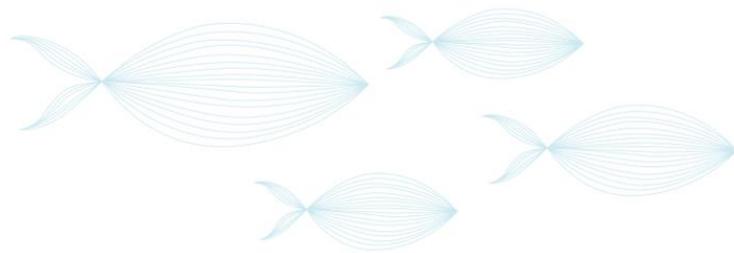


Changes to fishing rules in Queensland

September 2019



Why commercial fishing rules have changed

Queensland's fisheries are important to many different people in many different ways.

Commercial fishers and seafood suppliers depend on them for their livelihood. Recreational and charter fishers love to wet a line, and fishing tourism benefits local businesses and the economy. Traditional fishers have an enduring connection to their sea country, and our community wants to enjoy fresh Queensland seafood and know that our environment is being cared for.

Following extensive consultation over the last two years on proposed reforms, a number of changes have been made to recreational, charter and commercial fishing rules – these **new rules started on 1 September 2019** and aim to:

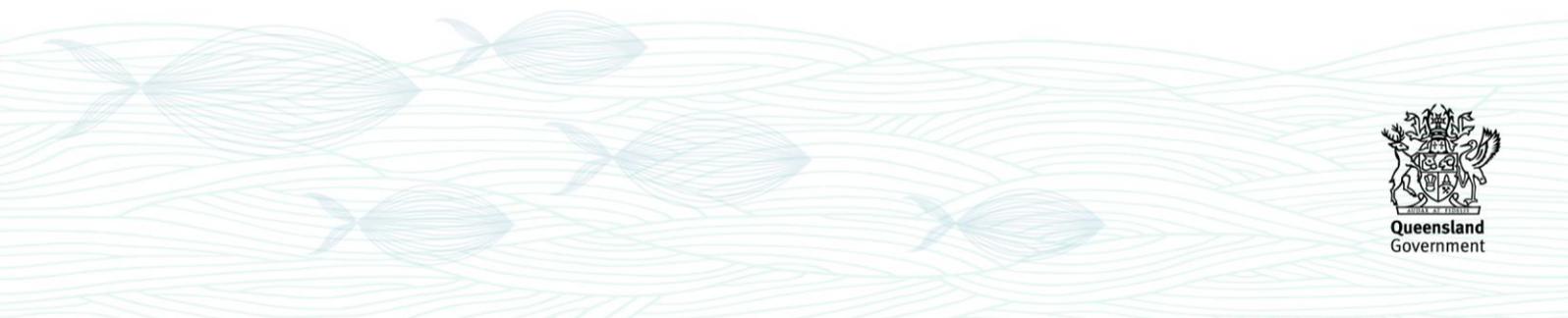
- protect the long-term sustainability of our fisheries
- rebuild depleted snapper, pearl perch and scallop stocks
- combat black-marketing of priority species
- standardise fishing rules and support compliance.

These new rules will provide you with more certainty and promote greater profitability, while making sure we have fish for the future.

Please note: Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol will not immediately issue fines for non-compliance with these changes. Over the first few months, the focus will be on education and awareness.

Snapper and pearl perch

New rule	Why?
Total allowable commercial catch limits established for snapper (42 tonnes) and pearl perch (15 tonnes)	Snapper and pearl perch stocks are depleted. These limits have been introduced to reduce fishing pressure and support the recovery of both species.
Take of snapper using commercial net gear is now prohibited	This will reduce fishing pressure in inshore areas where snapper are known to aggregate.
New seasonal closure for snapper and pearl perch – 15 July to 15 August each year *Applies to commercial, recreational and charter fishers	This 1-month closure aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce fishing pressure on both species • protect snapper stock during its spawning season when they are most vulnerable to being caught.
Snapper and pearl perch must be kept whole while on board a commercial vessel	Snapper and pearl perch must be kept whole while on a boat so the appropriate limits can be enforced.



Size limits

New rule	Why?
<p>Pearl perch minimum legal size limit increased from 35 cm to 38 cm</p> <p>*Applies to commercial, recreational and charter fishers</p>	<p>Increasing this size limit for these depleted stocks will allow more fish to reach maturity and reproduce.</p>
<p>King threadfin minimum legal size limit increased from 60 cm to 65 cm on the east coast</p> <p>*Applies to commercial, recreational and charter fishers</p>	<p>The size limit has been increased to allow more king threadfin to mature on the east coast.</p>
<p>Single minimum legal size limit of 60 cm for Mary River cod and Murray cod</p> <p>*Applies to commercial, recreational and charter fishers</p>	<p>Mary River cod is listed as 'endangered' under federal laws. The size limit has been increased to allow this species to reach maturity and reproduce.</p>
<p>Murray cod maximum size limit of 110 cm removed</p> <p>*Applies to commercial, recreational and charter fishers</p>	<p>Murray cod of this size are rare in Queensland rivers and are not likely to contribute to reproduction, and those caught and released in stocked impoundments often die several days after capture.</p>
<p>Clarified in the regulations that the size limit for giant queenfish in the Gulf of Carpentaria applies to all fishers</p>	<p>This size limit has always been in place, but has just been made clearer in the regulations.</p>

Vessel tracking

New rule	Why?
<p>Vessel tracking requirements amended to apply to all commercial fishing vessels (not including charter) from 1 January 2020 – fisheries that require vessel tracking from 1 January 2020 are D, A1, A2, R, B1, J1, M2, T5, T6, T7, T8 and T9</p>	<p>This will bring all relevant commercial fisheries into line with vessel tracking requirements.</p>

Spanner crab

New rule	Why?
<p>Spanner crab dilly maximum limit increased from 45 to 75 if 2 crew are on board (all boats may carry up to 10 extra dillies on board to replace lost/damaged dillies during a trip)</p>	<p>The regulations have been updated to reflect current arrangements and remove the need for General Fisheries Permits to be issued for additional dillies.</p>
<p>Spanner crab fishery quota year adjusted to run from 1 July to 30 June each year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2020–2021 quota year will run from 1 June 2020 to 30 June 2021 all following quota years will run from 1 July to 30 June each year 	<p>This administrative change aligns the spanner crab fishery year with Queensland's other quota-managed fisheries.</p>
<p>Number of C2 fishery symbols limited to those currently in existence</p>	<p>This is consistent with the limited entry policy in all other Queensland fisheries.</p>

Trawl

New rule	Why?
<p>New management regions established in the East Coast Trawl Fishery (replacing the existing Northern and Southern Regional Waters):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southern Inshore Trawl Region • Southern Offshore Trawl Region • Central Trawl Region • Northern Trawl Region 	<p>This will allow management of fish stocks at a regional level.</p>
<p>Extended winter no-take of scallop by a month to 1 May and 30 November in the Southern Inshore and Southern Offshore trawl regions</p>	<p>Scallops have been overfished and stocks are depleted. The extended closure and new effort cap will help rebuild scallop stocks.</p>
<p>Introduced a scallop effort cap in the Southern Inshore Trawl Region of 118 635 units (if effort reaches the cap between 1 December and 24 April scallop will become no take)</p>	
<p>Introduced strip closures to protect small prawns in the Southern Offshore Trawl Region between 2 November and 1 March in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stradbroke Island • Caloundra to Moreton Island • Fraser Island 	<p>To prevent targeting of small prawns in the southern offshore region.</p>

Licensing

New rule	Why?
<p>Limited entry nature of commercial fisheries clarified in the regulations</p>	<p>New commercial fishing authorities will not be issued – fishers will only be able to enter a fishery by buying or leasing an existing authority. This will support the sustainability of our fisheries and allow a greater profit share for fishers.</p>
<p>Payment of commercial fishing fees amended from 'in arrears' to 'in advance' – no changes to fees as part of this administrative change (it will be just like paying your car or boat registration)</p>	<p>This is an administrative change to bring the payment of fees in line with standard government processes.</p>
<p>Clarified the purposes for which a General Fisheries Permit may be issued in the regulations.</p>	<p>The intent of General Fisheries Permits is to allow research, fish salvage and trials of alternative gears, and support education displays. Making this clear in the regulations will remove loopholes and ensure equitable access to our fisheries.</p>
<p>A tender vessel must be nominated as the primary vessel against a commercial fishing boat licence before the vessel can be used (i.e. tender operating solely) in any fishery</p>	<p>This administrative change will make sure it's clear which boat is fishing under which licence.</p>
<p>All commercial fishers must display details of their commercial fishing boat licence or commercial harvest fishing licence on a sign adjacent to their land-based commercial fishing operation</p>	<p>This will make it clear that it's an authorised commercial fishing operation.</p>
<p>A person applying for a commercial fisher licence must be at least 18 years of age and possess knowledge of fisheries legislation to the extent it applies to commercial fisheries</p>	<p>This will help to improve the knowledge, capacity and skill of commercial fishers entering the industry.</p>

Other

New rule	Why?
New closed waters that prohibit take of black jewfish within 200 m from the Hay Point and Dalrymple Bay coal terminals *Applies to commercial, recreational and charter fishers	There are serious concerns about the sustainability of black jewfish due to significant increases in catch and black-marketing. Closed waters have been introduced to protect areas where black jewfish are known to gather.
Black jewfish will become a no-take species for all sectors when the total allowable commercial catch is reached *Applies to commercial, recreational and charter fisheries	This rule has been introduced to manage fishing pressure on black jewfish.
Mulloway and scaly jewfish must be kept whole while on board a vessel *Applies to commercial, recreational and charter fishers	As these species can be misidentified as black jewfish, the fish must be kept whole while on a boat so the appropriate limits can be enforced.
Standardised start and end times for the majority of fishery closures – midnight to midnight	Consistent start and end times aim to simplify compliance with closures.
Clarified in the regulations that commercial fishers digging for bloodworms must put any disturbed or removed seagrass in an upright position back in the same location	This rule has always been in place, but has just been made clearer in the regulations.

Please note: As part of the fisheries reform process, further regulatory changes are expected to be considered before the end of the year.

More information

For more information, visit fisheries.qld.gov.au or call **13 25 23**.