



# Scorecard 2015/16

## Sustainability performance of Western Australia's fisheries

Western Australia's aquatic resources are important to our fishing, aquaculture and tourism industries and to many other aspects of life in our State.

With an expanding population, changing environmental conditions and advancing fishing technologies, there is an increasing challenge to ensure these resources are managed in a sustainable way.

Our Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management framework recognises the complex interplay of factors that can affect fish numbers and the health of aquatic environments, including interactions between different fish species, changing climate and the incidence of aquatic pests.

This enables us to assess the real impact that fishing is having on aquatic resources around the State and to develop management plans that not only build and maintain healthy fish breeding levels, but keep our aquatic ecosystems in good balance.

WA is one of the only fisheries jurisdictions in the world to have such a comprehensive and practical fisheries management framework in place. This responsible approach is being further strengthened by seeking independent sustainability certification via the highly regarded Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), to help ensure the activities of the State's commercial fisheries are sustainable over time.

The most recent review of Western Australia's aquatic resources offers a positive report card for the State's fisheries.



It reports that adverse environmental conditions, not fishing-related activity, pose the greatest risk to our marine, estuarine and freshwater ecosystems and the fishery resources they support. These adverse conditions include warmer ocean temperatures over which the Department has no control.

It shows that, environmental factors aside, 95 per cent of our fisheries are managed sustainably and operating within acceptable limits. And more than 90 per cent of the WA coastline is unaffected by fishing methods that interact with the seafloor, such as trawling.

Sustainability of resources remains the focus of the Department's management practices, with adjustments continuing to be made to fishing activities even when they have not been the cause of declines within particular fish stocks.

Both the commercial and recreational fishing sectors will benefit in the long term from this careful protection of breeding stocks.

More detailed information, including assessments of habitats and ecosystems, can be found at [www.fish.wa.gov.au/sustainability](http://www.fish.wa.gov.au/sustainability)

The tables on the following pages summarise the sustainability status of the resources that support the State's commercial and recreational fisheries.

## Status of stock levels by region

### Key

<b>1</b>	Sustainable stock levels
<b>2</b>	Additional actions have been undertaken, recovering
<b>3</b>	Inadequate stock levels due primarily to environmental conditions
<b>4</b>	Inadequate stock levels due to overfishing and other events
N/A	No assessment undertaken due to either no fishing occurring or fishery is under development/review

Catch in tonnes (t) unless otherwise indicated.

Note: All commercial information relates to the 2015 or 2014/15 seasons. All recreational information relates to the 2013/14 Statewide recreational boat fishing survey, unless otherwise indicated.

### West Coast Bioregion

	Major commercial fisheries		Major recreational fisheries	
	Allowable catch (t)	Reported catch (t)	Allowable catch (t)	Reported catch (t)
<b>1</b> West Coast Rock Lobster	6,090	6,086	404	267-394 (2015)
<b>2</b> Roe's Abalone	87	51	20	15-25 (2015)
<b>1</b> Octopus	50-250	274	Not developed	2
<b>3</b> Abrolhos Islands and Mid-West Trawl	No fishing occurred		Not applicable	
<b>3</b> Cockburn Sound Crab	Under revision	No fishing occurred	Under revision	No fishing occurred
<b>1</b> Peel-Harvey/West Coast Crabs	45-105 (Peel-Harvey)	95 (Peel-Harvey)	Not formal	50-66 (West Coast) 38-56 (Peel-Harvey)
<b>1</b> West Coast Purse Seine	0-3,000	1,253	Not applicable	
<b>1</b> West Coast Demersal Scalefish	< 450	283	<250	139-166
<b>1</b> West Coast Beach Bait and South West Beach Seine	60-275	97	Not applicable	Not applicable
<b>2</b> Nearshore and Estuarine – Australian herring <sup>1</sup>	Under review	72	Not developed	69-87
<b>4</b> Nearshore and Estuarine – southern garfish	Under review	2		
<b>1</b> Nearshore and Estuarine – mullet/whiting	75-220 (Peel-Harvey)	95 (Peel-Harvey)		

<sup>1</sup> Australian herring is a single fish stock that occurs across the West Coast and South Coast bioregions in WA (and as far east as Victoria) with differing levels of commercial and recreational fishing occurring in these two bioregions.

## Gascoyne Coast Bioregion

		Major commercial fisheries		Major recreational fisheries	
		Allowable catch (t)	Reported catch (t)	Allowable catch (t)	Reported catch (t)
1	Shark Bay Prawn	1,350-2,150	2,067	Not applicable	
1	Exmouth Gulf Prawn	771-1,276	463	Not applicable	
1	Shark Bay Scallop	500 (trial quota)	288	Not applicable	
1	Shark Bay Crabs	450	341	2.2	
1	Shark Bay Beach Seine and Mesh Net	235-335	164	Not applicable	
1	West Coast Deep Sea Crab	154	154	Not applicable	
1	Gascoyne Demersal Scalefish <sup>2</sup>	277	196	Not formal	86-110
1	Inner Shark Bay Demersal	Not applicable		27.8	11-14

<sup>2</sup> Pink snapper only – an updated stock assessment is underway due to catch rate falling below a set threshold.

## North Coast Bioregion

		Major commercial fisheries		Major recreational fisheries	
		Allowable catch (t)	Reported catch (t)	Allowable catch (t)	Reported catch (t)
1	Onslow Prawn	60-180	Minimal fishing occurred	Not applicable	
1	Nickol Bay Prawn	90-300	87	Not applicable	
1	Broome Prawn	55-260	Minimal fishing occurred	Not applicable	
1	Kimberley Prawn	240-500	175	Not applicable	
1	Northern Demersal Scalefish	Under revision	1,046	Not formal	48-64 Demersal scalefish
1	Pilbara Fish Trawl	Under revision	1,172		
1	Pilbara Demersal Trap and Line	400-600 (trap) 50-115 (line)	510 (trap) 97 (line)		
N/A	Northern Shark	No fishing occurred		Statewide estimates only for specific shark species groups	
1	Pearl Oyster	667,350 oysters	560,005 oysters	Not applicable	
1	Sea Cucumber	20-100 (sandfish) 40-150 (redfish)	37 (sandfish) No fishing (redfish)	Not applicable	
1	North Coast Nearshore and Estuarine	33-44	52	Not formal	11-19
1	Mackerel	246-410	302	Not formal	22-37

## South Coast Bioregion

		Major commercial fisheries		Major recreational fisheries	
		Allowable catch (t)	Reported catch (t)	Allowable catch (t)	Reported catch (t)
1	South Coast Crustaceans	50-80	44	Not formal	Not assessed
2	Abalone (greenlip/brownlip) <sup>3</sup>	170	152	Not formal	8 (2007)
1	Nearshore and Estuarine Finfish – WA salmon	1,200-2,800	157	Not formal	19-27 Includes nearshore finfish
4	Nearshore and Estuarine Finfish – other species <sup>4</sup>	200-500	230		
1	Albany/King George Sound Purse Seine	2,683	974	Not applicable	
1	Bremer Bay and Esperance Purse Seine	3,000	741	Not applicable	
2	Southern and West Coast Demersal Gillnet and Longline	725-1,095 (shark)	880	Statewide estimates only for specific shark species groups	

<sup>3</sup> Allowable catch has been reduced for 2017 as abundance has declined in some areas.

<sup>4</sup> Catch range of cobbler in Wilson Inlet will be reviewed as stock level is inadequate.

## Northern & Southern Inland bioregions

		Major commercial fisheries		Major recreational fisheries	
		Allowable catch (t)	Reported catch (t)	Allowable catch	Reported catch
1	Marron	Not applicable		96,000-136,000 marron	60,000-82,000 marron (2015)
1	Lake Argyle Catfish	93-180	91	Minimal recreational catch	