



Department of  
Primary Industries and  
Regional Development

# Fisheries and aquatic resources Scorecard 2016/17



## 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.

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

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)

## 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 2016 or 2015/16 seasons. All recreational information relates to the 2015/16 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	6,000	6,087	404	272-400
<b>2</b> Roe's Abalone	87	49	18 – 22 t Perth Metro Area	26 – 30 t Perth Metro Area; 14 t Other
<b>1</b> Octopus	200-500	252	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)	57 (Peel-Harvey)	Not formal	36-50 (West Coast)
<b>1</b> West Coast Purse Seine	0-3,000	1,177	Not applicable	
<b>1</b> West Coast Demersal Scalefish	< 450	256	<250	193-230
<b>1</b> West Coast Beach Bait and South West Beach Seine	60-275	34	Not applicable	Not applicable
<b>2</b> Nearshore and Estuarine – Australian herring <sup>1</sup>	Under review	72	Not developed	58-77
<b>4</b> Nearshore and Estuarine – southern garfish	Under review	10		
<b>1</b> Nearshore and Estuarine – mullet/whiting	45-166 (Peel-Harvey)	128 (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	1,524	Not applicable			
1	Exmouth Gulf Prawn	771-1,276	822	Not applicable			
1	Shark Bay Scallop	830 (trial quota)	372	Not applicable			
1	Shark Bay Crabs	450	372	1-2 (Gascoyne)			
1	Shark Bay Beach Seine and Mesh Net	235-335	178	Not applicable			
1	West Coast Deep Sea Crab	154	153.3	Not applicable			
1	Gascoyne Demersal Scalefish <sup>2</sup>	277 Snapper 227 Other demersals	150 Snapper 120 Other demersals	Not formal		87-118	
1	Inner Shark Bay Demersal	8	2	Eastern Gulf	12	Eastern Gulf	4-5
				Denham Sound	12	Denham Sound	6-7
				Freycinet Estuary	3.8	Freycinet Estuary	1-2

<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	17	Not applicable			
1	Broome Prawn	55-260	Minimal fishing occurred	Not applicable			
1	Kimberley Prawn	240-500	155	Not applicable			
1	Northern Demersal Scalefish	Under revision	1173	Not formal 34-47			
1	Pilbara Fish Trawl	Under revision	1529				
1	Pilbara Demersal Trap and Line	400-600 (trap) 50-115 (line)	495 (trap) 126 (line)				
N/A	Northern Shark	No fishing occurred		Statewide estimates only for specific shark species groups			
1	Pearl Oyster	612,550 oysters	541,260 oysters	Not applicable			
1	Sea Cucumber	0-100 (sandfish Kimberley) 0-80 (sandfish Pilbara) 0-150 (redfish)	21 (sandfish Kimberley) 70 (sandfish Pilbara) 2 (redfish)	Not applicable			
1	North Coast Nearshore and Estuarine	33-45 (barramundi)	51 (barramundi) 75 (total)	Not formal		20-35	
1	Mackerel	246-410	276	Not formal		21-31	

## 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	38	Not formal	Not assessed
2	Abalone (greenlip/brownlip) <sup>3</sup>	145	121	Not formal	8
1	Nearshore and Estuarine Finfish – WA salmon	Under review	103	Not formal	13-21
4	Nearshore and Estuarine Finfish – other species <sup>4</sup>	Under review	260		
1	Albany/King George Sound Purse Seine	2,683	1,515	Not applicable	
1	Bremer Bay and Esperance Purse Seine	3,000	632	Not applicable	
2	Southern and West Coast Demersal Gillnet and Longline	725-1,095 (shark)	823	Statewide estimates only for specific shark species groups	
2	South Coast Demersal Scalefish	Under development	180	Not formal	38-51

<sup>3</sup> Allowable catch has been further 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	52,669 marron (2016)
1	Lake Argyle Catfish	93-180	103	Minimal recreational catch	

### Important disclaimer

The Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development and the State of Western Australia accept no liability whatsoever by reason of negligence or otherwise arising from the use or release of this information or any part of it.

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