

# Fish and Fish Habitat Protection

## North Coast Bioregion

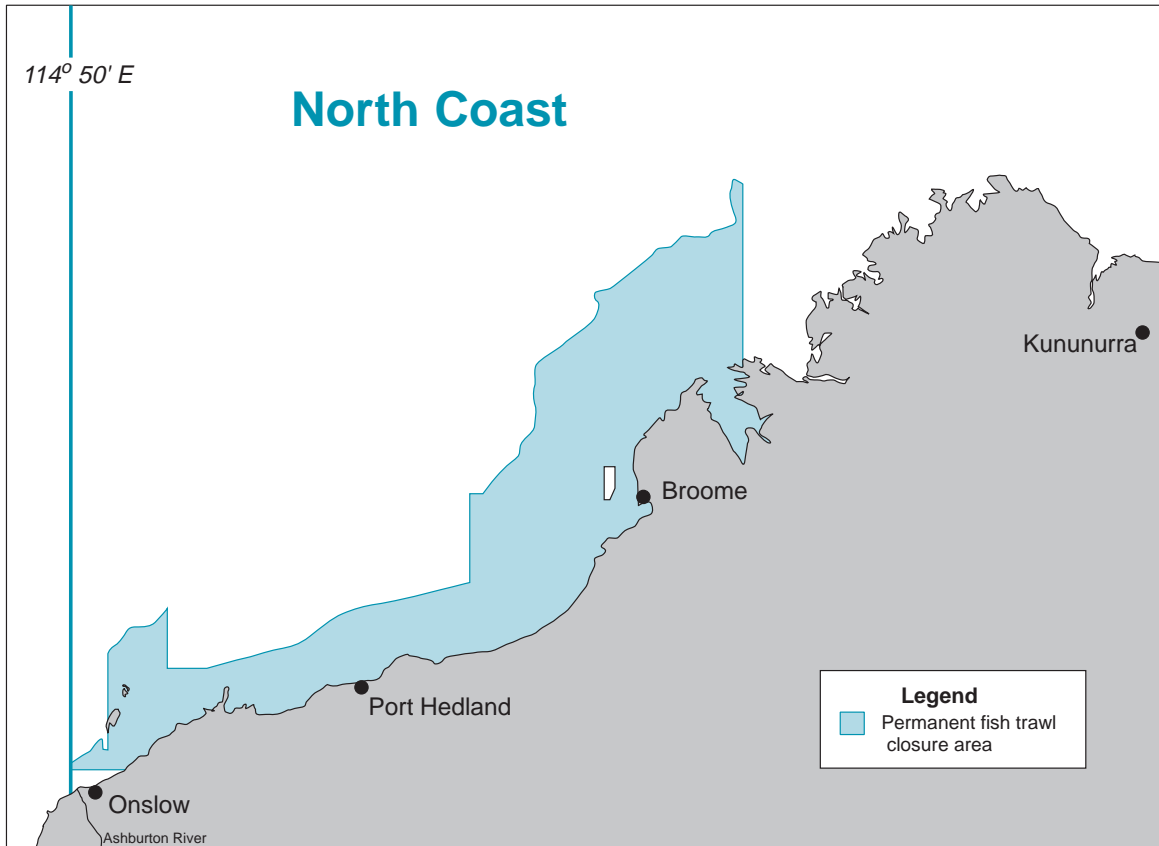
### Environmental Management Overview

During 2000/2001, Fisheries WA has worked with CALM in the further development of the management plan for the Rowley Shoals Marine Park. In addition, advice has been provided as part of the planning process for the Dampier Archipelago and Montebello marine park proposals. The agency has also been working with the Commonwealth in the preparation of a draft plan for the proposed Cartier Island Marine Park.

During the year, Fisheries WA staff worked with the Port Walcott Dive Club to establish a protected area around the *Kunmunya* and *Samson II* wreck sites (north of Point Samson). The protected area is expected to be declared in July 2001.

Work has commenced on a draft bycatch action plan for the Pilbara Fish Trawl Interim Managed Fishery.

The agency also participated in the preparation of a major environmental study of the North West Shelf which is being coordinated by the Department of Environmental Protection.



**NORTH COAST HABITAT PROTECTION FIGURE 1**

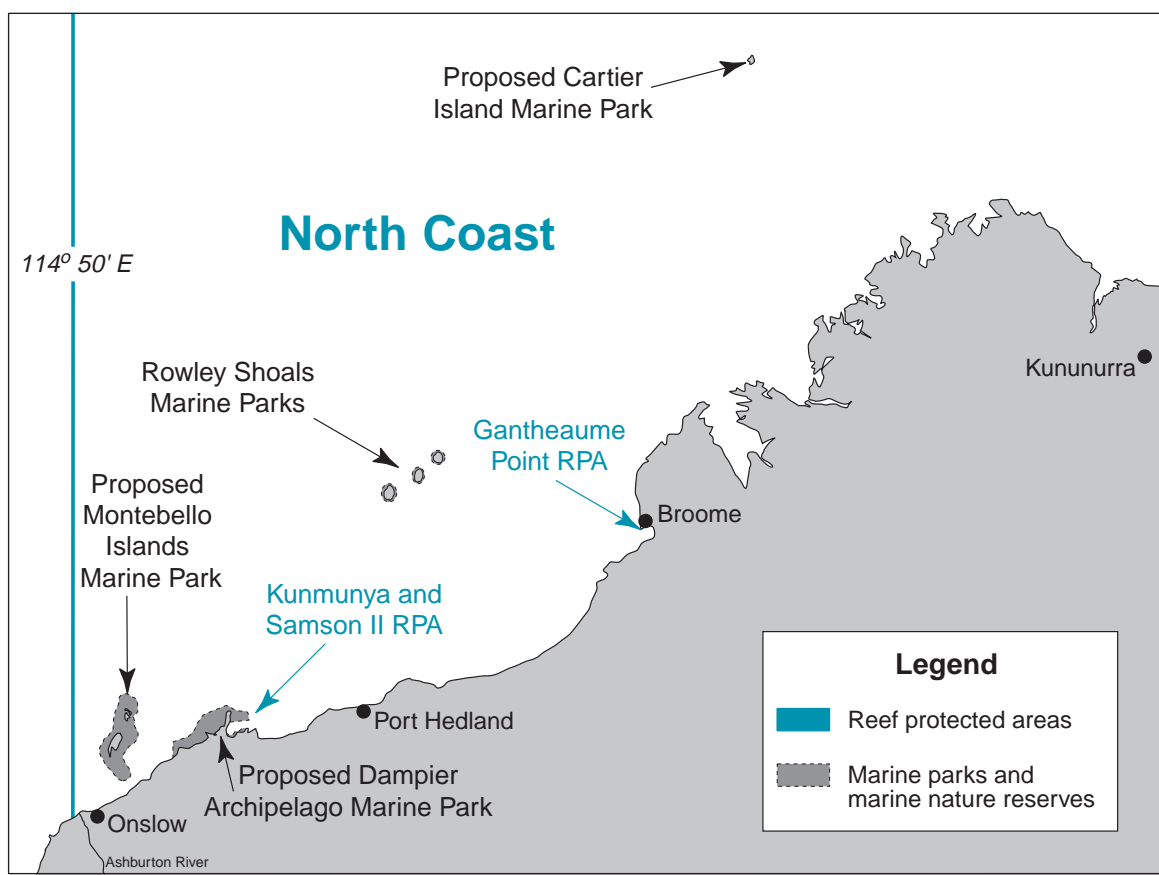
Map showing areas permanently closed to trawling for finfish in the north coast bioregion.

In 1999 there was an infestation of black-striped mussels in Darwin Harbour and there was concern that they may have translocated to the Kimberley region. Fisheries WA has been working with the WA Museum to monitor the ports of Broome, Derby and Wyndham in an attempt to identify possible infestations of this pest at an early stage. In December 2000, a seized illegal entry vessel was brought in to Broome, and on inspection was found to be infested with black-striped mussels. Fisheries WA worked with AQIS and other Commonwealth agencies to move the vessel out of Australian waters and have it destroyed.

### Fish Habitat Protection Overview

The north coast bioregion has extensive closures to fish trawling in all coastal waters west of longitude 120° E to protect inshore fish nurseries. Similarly, the coastal area off Eighty Mile Beach and north to King Sound, apart from a suitable prawn trawling habitat area, has been permanently closed to trawling to protect important pearl oyster habitats from exploratory trawling (North Coast Habitat Protection Figure 1).

The region also has RPAs at sensitive coastal locations, marine parks at the Rowley Shoals and proposed marine parks in the Dampier Archipelago, Montebello Islands and Cartier Island (North Coast Habitat Protection Figure 2).



**NORTH COAST HABITAT PROTECTION FIGURE 2**

Map showing current and proposed areas of protected fish habitat in the north coast bioregion.

