



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Small Pelagic Fishery

**Management Arrangements
Booklet 2025-26**



AFMA Small Pelagic Fishery

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Table 1 Scientific names, Total Allowable Catches (TACs), Overcatch and Undercatch percentage (%), number of Statutory Fishing Rights (SFRs) and Conversion Factors (kg/SFR) for the Small Pelagic Fishery (SPF) quota species in the 2025-26 fishing season.

Quota Species	Scientific Name	TAC (tonnes)	Overcatch (%)	Undercatch (%)	Number of SFRs	Conversion Factor (kg/SFR)
Australian Sardine East	<i>Sardinops sagax</i>	8,100	10	10	3,000,001	2.6999999
Blue Mackerel East	<i>Scomber australasicus</i>	15,510	10	10	5,770,594	2.6877649
Blue Mackerel West	<i>Scomber australasicus</i>	4,320	10	10	9,724,000	0.4442616
Jack Mackerel East	<i>Trachurus declivis</i> , <i>T. murphyi</i>	13,000	10	10	11,170,217	1.1638091
Jack Mackerel West	<i>Trachurus declivis</i> , <i>T. murphyi</i>	8,490	10	10	11,396,002	0.7449981
Redbait East	<i>Emmelichthys nitidus</i>	6,470	10	10	11,756,133	0.5503510
Redbait West	<i>Emmelichthys nitidus</i>	4,010	10	10	8,007,251	0.5007960

1 Introduction

This 'Small Pelagic Fishery (SPF) Management Arrangements Booklet' is a guide to the management arrangements that will apply to SPF concession holders in the 2025-26 fishing season which runs from 1 May 2025 to 30 April 2026. This booklet is not a legislative instrument.

Legislative requirements for the SPF are detailed in several key documents which are listed at [Table 4](#). **It is your responsibility to familiarise yourselves with these documents.**

The SPF extends from the Queensland/ New South Wales border, typically outside 3 nm, around southern Australia to a line at latitude 31°00' South in Western Australia. The fishery is divided into two sub-areas, east and west of longitude 146°30' due to evidence of separate stocks both east and west of Tasmania.

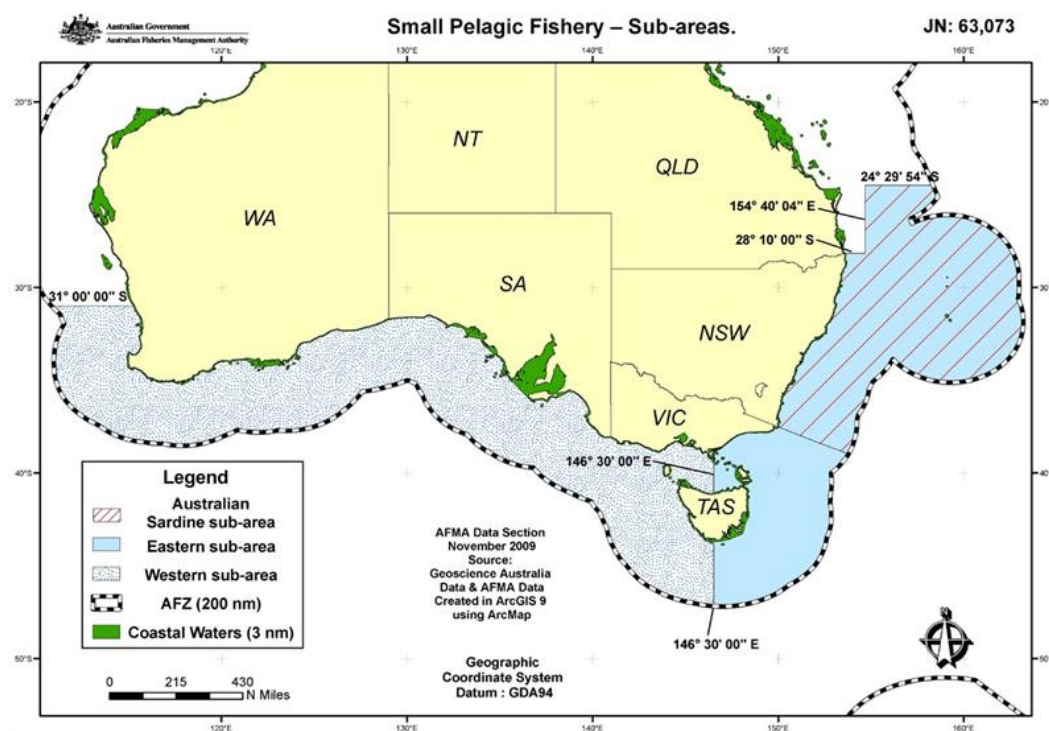


Figure 1: Sub-areas of the Small Pelagic Fishery

Further information on any of the SPF management arrangements can be found on [AFMA website](#) ('Fisheries' – Small Pelagic Fishery') or by contacting the SPF manager listed in [Section 9](#).

2 Management of the fishery

The SPF is managed in accordance with the [Small Pelagic Fishery Management Plan 2009](#) (the Management Plan). To fish in the SPF, operators must hold statutory fishing rights that allow them to catch the fish species that are under a quota. The target species for the SPF are:

Australian sardine (*Sardinops sagax*);

blue mackerel (*Scomber australasicus*);

Jack mackerel (*Trachurus declivis*, *T. murphyi*); and,

redbait (*Emmelichthys nitidus*).

A Total Allowable Catch (TAC) is set for each quota species within each zone (east and west) and is the total catch that may be taken by all concession holders in the SPF during a given fishing season.

The amount of catch each concession holder can catch in the 2025-26 fishing season will be determined for each quota species by the number of Statutory Fishing Rights (SFRs) you hold, and by the TAC that is set for the fishing season. Details of the SFR conversion factors and the TACs for the 2025-26 fishing season are provided in [Table 1](#).

2.1 Fishing Methods

Two fishing methods are currently permitted in the SPF:

- Purse seine
- Mid-water trawl

Purse seine and mid-water trawl methods are authorised under the Management Plan, which includes a provision that allows the AFMA Commission to determine additional fishing methods.

In March 2018, jigging and minor line methods were determined as approved methods in the SPF effective 1 May 2018 through the [Fisheries Management \(Small Pelagic Fishery\) Fishing Method Determination 2018](#). This determination was repealed in 2023 therefore jigging and minor line methods are no longer allowed in the SPF. There are no plans to redetermine jigging and minor line as approved methods in the SPF as these methods were not adopted by industry during the previous approved period (despite initial interest).

2.2 Statutory Fishing Right conditions

To fish in the SPF, you must hold uncaught quota SFRs that authorise fishing for quota species in the relevant sub-area of the fishery and use a boat that is nominated to the SFR. You must abide by all conditions of that concession. The SPF is a limited entry fishery which means that no new fishing concessions are created, and you must obtain an existing concession in order to fish.

Several areas overlap with the relevant sectors of the Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery (SESSF), including the Commonwealth South East Trawl Sector, Great Australian Bight Trawl Sector, Western Deep Water Trawl Sector, and the East Coast Deepwater Trawl Sector. Mid-water trawl boats nominated to SPF SFRs must also be nominated to a fishing concession that allows access to trawl in the SESSF.

Fishing is generally not permitted inside three nautical miles from any State coastline. However, this can vary depending on the State. Fishing inside State waters requires the relevant State licence.

2.3 Vessel Management Plans

Any holder of an SPF SFR must not fish using the mid-water trawl method unless a Vessel Management Plan (VMP) for the boat has been approved by AFMA. A VMP sets out additional rules that apply and includes measures primarily aimed at reducing interactions with protected species and reporting requirements.

If you intend to undertake mid-water trawl operations in the SPF, you should contact the SPF Manager on **08 8943 0320** to develop a VMP. You should allow at least six weeks for the development of an AFMA approved VMP.

2.4 Closures

The key piece of legislation that gives effect to spatial closures in the SPF, the [Fisheries Management \(Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery and Small Pelagic Fishery Closures\) Direction 2021](#) also

relates to the Commonwealth Trawl Sector (CTS) of the SESSF. Amendments to this direction were made in October 2024. The direction, closures and fishing areas are available on the [AFMA website](#) ('Fisheries' – 'Fishing closures' – 'Maps of directions, closures and fishing areas').

Note: [Fisheries Management \(Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery and Small Pelagic Fishery Closures\) Amendment Direction No. 1 2023](#) and [Amendment Direction No. 1 2022](#) are no longer in force.

To fish in the SPF, you must abide by the spatial and temporal arrangements that apply to the fishery. Closures are currently implemented via:

- *The Fisheries Management (Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery and Small Pelagic Fishery Closures) Direction 2021* which details the spatial closures that apply to the mid-water trawl methods in the SPF;
- VMPs.
- A map of all closures that apply to the mid-water trawl in the SPF is provided at [Attachment C](#).

2.5 Spatial Management Arrangements

Previously within the SPF a catch limit of 2,000 tonnes applied to the combined catch of quota species within any of the grids numbered G1 to G120 ([Attachment C](#)) over a 30 day period. This regional catch limit applied to all boats operating in the SPF (regardless of method). A request was made by Industry to AFMA to remove the catch limits, after consultation with the Small Pelagic Fishery Resources Assessment Group (SPFRAG) and South East Management Advisory Committee (SEMAC) regarding the ongoing need for these limits, given there appears to be no discernible trend in monthly catch rates but an economic impact on the fishing industry of having the rules in place. SPFRAG and SEMAC recommended the removal of the spatial catch limits noting the risk of localised depletion remains low and subject to ongoing monitoring of the fishery.

2.6 Jack Mackerel West catch limit

If Jack Mackerel West catch in the grids south of Kangaroo Island (G54 and G55) reach 20 per cent of the TAC (1,698 tonnes) the area will be closed to fishing for the rest of the fishing season. This is due to limited information on the stock structure of Jack Mackerel West.

Catch will continue to be restricted to 20 per cent of the TAC in these grids as a precautionary measure until more is known about the stock structure of Jack Mackerel West in this area.

2.7 Consultative arrangements

The Small Pelagic Fishery Resource Assessment Group (SPFRAG) provides advice and recommendations to the South East Management Advisory Committee (SEMAC), AFMA Management, the AFMA Commission and the AFMA Research Committee, on the status of fish stocks, substocks, species (target and non-target), fishery economics and on the impact of fishing on the marine environment. They also consider research priorities for the fishery.

Further information on SPFRAG can be found on the [AFMA website](#) ('Fisheries management' – 'Fisheries Committees' – 'Small Pelagic Fishery Resource Assessment Group').

Management Advisory Committees provide management advice to AFMA on the scientific and economic status of fish stocks, sub stocks, species (target and non-target species) and the impacts of fishing on the marine environment. Members are from industry, economic, conservation, state and territory

governments, recreational and research fields. They provide a forum where management issues relating to a fishery are discussed and develop possible solutions and consider research priorities.

The South East MAC (SEMAC) is the overarching committee that provides management advice to AFMA for the following fisheries:

- SESSF (including the Great Australian Bight Trawl Sector)
- SPF
- Southern Squid Jig Fishery

Further information on SEMAC can be found on the [AFMA website](#) ('Fisheries management' – 'Fisheries Committees' – 'South East Management Advisory Committee').

2.8 Fishing in other Commonwealth fisheries

You must hold a valid fishing concession to fish in any Commonwealth fishery. For information on requirements in other Commonwealth fisheries please contact AFMA on **1300 723 621**.

If you catch species managed under quota in other Commonwealth Fishery Management Plans you will need to cover it with the relevant quota.

3 Licensing

3.1 Statutory Fishing Rights

Quota SFRs allow you to take a percentage weight of the TAC that has been set for each quota species. SFR's are granted under the Management Plan and may be transferred, leased, surrendered or cancelled.

To fish in the SPF, you must hold uncaught quota SFRs nominated to the boat that will fish the quota. Once the TAC for the fishing season is set by the AFMA Commission, the number of SFR's you hold will determine what percentage of the TAC, by weight, you can catch.

The conversion factors for kg/SFR are outlined in [Table 1](#).

For further information on fishing concessions, refer to the Management Plan or the SPF SFR conditions available on [AFMA's website](#) ('Commercial fishers' – 'Resources' - 'Concession holders and SFR conditions' - 'Small Pelagic Fishery').

3.2 Fish Receiver Permits

The [Fisheries Management Regulations 2019](#) require that Commonwealth operators dispose of landed fish to the holder of a Commonwealth Fish Receiver Permit (FRP).

FRPs are granted for 12 months and cannot be transferred. To obtain an FRP, you must submit a completed Fish Receiver (FR) application form to AFMA and pay an application fee. The FR application form can be found on [AFMA's Website](#) ('Commercial Fishers' – 'Forms' – 'Other licensing and quota management forms').

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) reminds fishers and fish receivers that e-log software should be used to submit electronic Catch Disposal Records (e-CDRs). Fish receivers are required to complete the e-CDR immediately upon receipt of the consignment, this can be done through the fish receiver portal within GoFish.

3.3 Scientific Permits

Scientific permits are granted for the purpose of conducting scientific research in a specific area of the AFZ or in a specified fishery.

AFMA will only grant a scientific permit if:

- the application is made using the approved form
- it provides sufficient information for the application to be assessed
- the proposed activity is for a scientific research purpose
- is supported by a specific scientific research project plan

Scientific permits are granted for a maximum duration of six months and are not transferrable.

For further information on obtaining a scientific permit you can refer to the Fisheries Management Paper 11 available on the [AFMA's Website](#) ('Commercial Fishers' – 'Forms' – 'Other licensing and quota management forms').

3.4 Where can I obtain a Licensing application form?

All AFMA forms for fishers are available on the [AFMA's website](#) ('Commercial Fishers' - 'Forms') or can be obtained by contacting AFMA on **1300 723 621**.

3.5 Permanent transfer of SFRs

You may permanently transfer quota SFRs through GoFish or by filling out the appropriate [application form](#) and submitting it to AFMA.

AFMA must register the transfer of an SFR unless:

- the owner of the right (transferor) is being investigated for, or has been convicted of a fisheries offence;
- the right has been suspended (including instances where the owner has requested a review of that suspension); or
- levies are due and not yet paid in full when transfer application is received.

3.6 Leasing of SFRs

SFRs may be temporarily leased to another operator and are only applicable for the fishing season in which the lease has taken place.

All quota transactions (i.e. nominations, denominations, seasonal leases), can be done by GoFish by registered users at NO COST. Any transactions, if done by AFMA from submitted paperwork, will incur a service fee.

4 Processing requirements

4.1 Processing at sea

Section 28 of the Management Plan imposes a general ‘carrying, transshipping or processing condition’ on all fishing concessions in the fishery unless AFMA grants a fishing permit allowing you to carry, tranship or process fish. If you hold a quota SFR to fish in the SPF you are authorised to carry fish in the fishery. If any bycatch is processed, the restrictions apply under the [Fisheries Management Regulations 2019](#).

Table 2 Prohibited ways of processing fish

Species	Must not be removed from the carcass before the fish is received by an authorised fish receiver
Tuna other than northern bluefin tuna or billfish	caudal keel
Billfish other than broadbill swordfish (<i>Xiphias gladius</i>)	caudal keel dorsal, pectoral or anal fin
Sharks of the class Chondrichthyes other than: angel sharks (family <i>Squatinidae</i>) rays, skates spurdogs (genus <i>Squalus</i>)	caudal lobe; dorsal, pectoral or caudal fin
Angel sharks (family <i>Squatinidae</i>) and Dogfish (family <i>Squalidae</i>)	dorsal or caudal fin
Skates and Rays	the skin, a fillet
Banjo shark (<i>Trygonorrhina</i> sp.)	the skin, a fillet, pectoral fin, tail
Elephant fish (families <i>Callorhynchidae</i> , <i>Chimaeridae</i> and <i>Rhinochimaeridae</i>)	second dorsal fin, tail

5 Data collection

5.1 Logbook and Catch Disposal Records

The collection of accurate and comprehensive fisheries data is important for stock assessment and TAC setting processes.

5.1.1 Electronic logbook return

Electronic logbook (e-logs) are mandatory across all commonwealth fisheries including the SPF for the completion and transmission of logbook returns.

E-logs must be submitted prior to the boat docking.

Concession holders and their authorised agents must ensure they have an AFMA user ID before they can participate in the electronic submission of logbooks. All holders or agents submitting the e-log MUST have their own AFMA user ID and password. For further information contact AFMA Licensing and Data Services on 1300 723 621.

To submit e-logs, a concession holder will need to purchase e-log software that is certified for the fishing method and fishery. A list of the vendors who offer e-log software for Commonwealth operators is on the [AFMA website](#) ('Fisheries Management' – 'Monitoring Tools' – 'Logbooks and eLogs' – 'E-logs information' – 'Getting Started').

Concession holders have access to their submitted e-log information in their GoFish account.

The following paper logbooks may be kept as back up and used in an emergency if e-logs are offline, the correct logbooks are;

Trawl: 'Eastern Finfish Trawl Daily Fishing Log' (EFT01B) or 'Southern and Western Finfish Trawl Daily Fishing Log' (SWT01B) (e-Logs are also available, for further details see below)

Purse seine: 'Daily Purse Seine Fishing Log' (PS01A)

All interactions with listed marine or threatened species must be recorded in the Listed Marine and Threatened Species Form at the back of the logbook and submitted with the relevant log page.

Further information can be obtained from the AFMA website under Services on the [AFMA website](#) ('Fisheries Management' – 'Monitoring Tools' - 'Logbooks and eLogs' – 'E-logs information' – 'Information for Fishers') or by contacting the AFMA Licensing and Data Services on 1300 723 621.

5.1.2 Catch Disposal Records

AFMA has developed electronic catch disposal records (e-CDRs) which is the preferred option for logging records. However, please note information below if using paper CDRs.

You must accurately record all the relevant information about each fishing operation and the information about fish taken in the SPF and submit it to AFMA in the following logbooks and CDRs (in accordance with general information and instructions for completion of that logbook):

The catch disposal record titled 'GAB Catch Disposal Record' (GAB2C) for trawl fishing and 'Daily Purse Seine Fishing Log' (SESS2B) for purse seiners.

The transit form titled 'Commonwealth Managed Fisheries Transit Form' (CTF) is required when landing fish inside the AFZ using multiple vehicles to transport the fish to one receiver.

The original white copy of the CDR is to be completed and returned to AFMA **within three days** of unloading the consignment.

Note: Each page of the CDR is numbered and therefore any spoiled or incorrectly completed pages must be clearly marked and returned to AFMA.

If you wish to nominate an authorised agent to complete logbooks, CDRs and/or transit forms on your behalf, you must complete the [Registered Authorised Agent \(RA\) nomination form](#) and return it to AFMA

Licensing and Data Services. Further information on RA forms can be obtained from AFMA Licensing and Data Services by contacting **1300 723 621**.

5.1.3 Electronic Catch Disposal Records (e-CDRs)

AFMA has developed a Fish Receiver portal to enable receivers to complete e-CDRs. This portal can be used by SPF operators that have an e-log system installed. To use this system your receiver must also participate in the e-CDR program.

For information about e-CDRs firstly contact your software provider, If you require further information contact AFMA on 1300 723 621 (option 2) or via email to licensing@afma.gov.au.

5.2 Fishery observers

5.2.1 Role of the observer

The observer's role is to collect independent, accurate and reliable data on Commonwealth fishing operations, catches and interactions with the environment by a boat and its fishing gear.

This is achieved through:

- collection of independent boat activity and catch data (that is not obtainable through official logbooks);
- collection of data and samples for research programs, supporting marine management and other issues relevant to environmental awareness and fisheries management; and,
- collection of environmental information such as seabird abundance and presence / absence of marine mammals.

The role of the observer is not one of a fisheries compliance officer. Observers have no authority to direct fishing operations of the boat or act in an enforcement role. However, observers are required to report their observations, including illegal fishing activity.

5.2.2 Observer obligations

If AFMA directs you to carry an observer, the master of the boat must provide the observer with food and accommodation that is at least the standard that is appropriate for a junior officer serving on the boat. The master must allow the observer to have access to the parts of the boat which the observer reasonably requires access to, use facilities, take samples as appropriate and operate equipment taken on board the boat in accordance with the request.

The master is also required to give the observer the information that is reasonably asked for in relation to the boat, its equipment and fish caught.

The cost of observers is generally met by industry through levies, but some trips may be invoiced directly in line with AFMA's Fee for Service Policy.

Further information can be obtained by calling the Observer Manager whose contact details are in [section 9](#).

5.2.3 Observer coverage targets

The following observer level targets apply to monitor operations in the SPF:

Purse seine boats: observer coverage target of at least 10 per cent of effort. For new boats entering the fishery or existing boats moving into significantly new areas, observer coverage for at least the first five trips is required.

Mid-water trawl boats: observer coverage target of at least 10 per cent of effort. For new boats entering the fishery or existing boats moving into significantly new areas, observer coverage for at least the first 10 trips is required.

5.3 Electronic Monitoring

The AFMA electronic monitoring (e-monitoring) program uses video and sensor data to independently validate fishing operations and fishery logbook information. Cameras only record fishing activity, and the footage is analysed to verify catch records and protected species interactions that fishers are required to report in daily fishing logbooks.

When fishing in the midwater trawl sector of the SPF, a concession holder, or person acting on behalf of a concession holder, must have an AFMA approved e-monitoring system installed and operating on the nominated boat.

Further details concerning the direction to comply with e-monitoring regulations can be found in the [*Fisheries Management \(E-Monitoring Small Pelagic Fishery\) Determination 2021*](#).

6 Quota management

6.1 28 day quota reconciliation

Under the Management Plan, you cannot fish for an SPF quota species unless you hold sufficient quota SFRs to cover any catches of that species in that sub-area.

AFMA has implemented a 28 day quota reconciliation process if you exceed your quota holdings during the season. In this event you will have 28 days from the date of landing to cover the exceeded amount with quota. During this 28 day period you can still fish. If you go further over quota during this 28 day period, the second amount of overcatch must be reconciled within 28 days from when it is landed. This means that you have 28 days from the date of each landing to cover the overcatch from that landing, with quota.

If you are still over quota after the 28 day period for any landing you will be subject to compliance action and are still obligated to reconcile any overcatch. You must keep track of your catch and quota and ensure that you reconcile catch with quota before it is due. Note that you can still use the overcatch provisions on the last trip of the season (refer to the following page for undercatch and overcatch provisions).

If, due to exceptional circumstances you cannot reconcile your catch, you must contact AFMA prior to the 28 day due date. Further information on quota reconciliation can be obtained from the [AFMA website](#) ('Fisheries Management – '28-day within season quota reconciliation' – 'Small Pelagic Fishery').

You are responsible for monitoring your own catch versus quota holdings as the only over-quota notification you will receive from AFMA is via GoFish. When you are over quota for one or more species a screen will appear on GoFish like that shown in figure 2. You will be required to acknowledge the screen before you can proceed to any other area within GoFish.

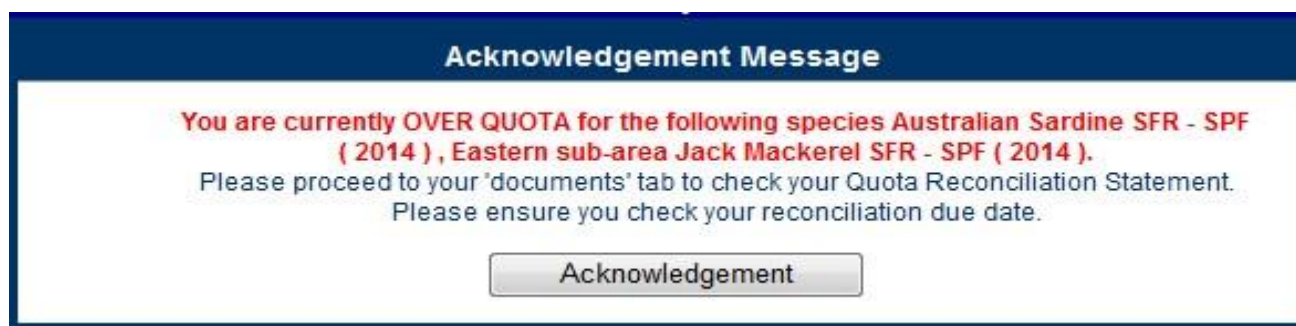


Figure 2: Concession over quota acknowledgement message

If you are not already registered for GoFish and wish to receive your statements and/or keep track of your quota holdings online, you can do so by completing the appropriate forms; or for assistance please call AFMA Licensing and Data Services on **1300 723 621**; or GoFish application forms are available on the [AFMA website](#) ('Fisheries Management' – 'GoFish Help').

6.2 Undercatch and overcatch

6.2.1 Undercatch

Undercatch is when you catch less than the quota allocated for a species in a season. When undercatch occurs you can carry over a percentage of undercatch kilos to use in the next season.

AFMA has set an undercatch percentage for all the SPF quota species of 10 per cent of quota holdings on the last day of the fishing season. This is the maximum amount of uncaught quota that you will be allowed to take into the following fishing season. AFMA will allow you to take the calculated percentage amount of your quota holdings or the uncaught fish amount whichever is the lower of the two amounts into the following fishing season.

Note: Undercatch kilos cannot be leased or transferred.

6.2.2 Undercatch example

If you hold 100,000 kg of Jack Mackerel quota (either owned or leased) for the 2025-26 season and only caught 80,000 kg in the season, the difference between your quota holdings and what was actually landed is 20,000kg, but you can only carry over up to a maximum of 10 per cent of your quota holdings – in this example that would be 10,000 kg (10 per cent of the 100,000 kg holdings) that would be available to carry over to the 2025-26 season.

If you land 95,000 kg on a quota holding of 100 000 kg for the 2025-26 season, then 5000 kg would be carried over, which is the difference between your quota holdings and actual catch as it is the lower amount.

6.2.3 Overcatch

Overcatch provisions are applied at the end of the season based on holdings on the last day of the fishing season. Overcatch is applied when you catch more than your allocated quota for a species in a season and that amount is deducted from your quota holdings in the next season.

AFMA has set an overcatch percentage for all the SPF quota species of 10 per cent of quota holdings on the last day of the fishing season. This means that you can catch up to 10 per cent over your quota holdings for each species in one fishing season without being penalised. AFMA will then deduct this amount from your quota holdings in the next season, provided you hold enough uncaught quota SFRs in the next season to cover the overcatch.

Note that AFMA may vary or amend quota entitlements in the current or subsequent seasons if overcatch is not balanced with uncaught quota, or where AFMA has reason to believe that catches were misreported.

6.2.4 Determined weight

The AFMA Commission has set a 'determined weight' of 2,000 kg for the 2025-26 season.

Determined weight allows you to take an additional 2,000 kg, in excess of the 10 per cent overcatch, without being prosecuted. However, the additional 2,000 kg is decremented against your quota allocation in the subsequent season at twice the rate (i.e. if 2,000 kg in excess was taken, 4,000 kg would be decremented in the subsequent season).

6.2.5 Overcatch and determined weight example

If you hold 100 000 kg of Jack Mackerel quota in the current season and go over your quota holdings by 12,000 kg at the end of the season, you are entitled to use:

- overcatch of up to 10,000 kg (10 per cent of your quota holdings) – which is deducted in the following season.
- determined weight of up to 2,000 kg – which is deducted at twice the rate in the following season.
- Therefore a total of 14,000 kg would be deducted from your quota in the following season ([10% x 100,000 kg = 10,000 kg overcatch] + [2 x 2,000 kg = 4,000 kg determined weight]).

Note: Any catch in excess of the overcatch percentage and determined amount would be an offence and will be subject to compliance action.

6.3 Quota deduction

Quota is deducted from your total quota allocation using the verified weights from both the boats and receivers e-CDR data. AFMA will use the information provided by the boat e-CDR for a given quota species as an interim weight until they receive the e-CDR from the receiver.

Paper Catch Disposal Records (CDR) may be kept as back up and used in an emergency if e-CDRs are offline. These are:

- **Trawl:** 'Great Australian Bight Trawl Fishery CDR (GAB2C) and,
- **Purse seine:** 'Daily Purse Seine Fishing Log' (SESS2B).

Parts A and B must be completed by the fishing concession holder (the holder) or an authorised agent. Part C must be completed by the fish receiver. If no Part C is submitted for a trip, AFMA will use the information provided on Part B of the CDR (your accurate estimate of catch weight) until the Part C has been received from the fish receiver.

Please note that you must record the form of landed fish (e.g. whole) and include all the quota species on your e-CDR/CDR. Quota species must not be recorded as mixed fish.

6.4 Keeping track of your quota

6.4.1 Quota statements

You can obtain free Quota Holding and Catch Summary and Quota Transaction Statements by registering for GoFish. Statements that need to be mailed out by AFMA Licensing and Data Services staff will incur a fee.

6.4.2 GoFish

You can use GoFish to:

- receive all correspondence (including levy) from AFMA (you need to notify AFMA if you wish to have this facility available);
- update contact information;
- view, export and print Quota Holding and Catch Summaries and Quota Transaction Statements;
- obtain Quota Reconciliation Statements;
- lease and permanently transfer Quota SFRs (you may also set up a lease to occur for multiple seasons to an individual client);
- nominate and denominate Quota SFRs to/from boats; and
- renew permits 'if applicable' (this facility is available two weeks prior to the commencement of any season).

Organisations (including companies and partnerships) must complete a Registered Agent form (RA) to authorise an individual (or individuals) to act on their behalf.

You and/or their agent must complete an Application for GoFish Registration form (AGR) to gain access to the GoFish system. The RA or AGR forms can be obtained from the AFMA website.

Information for GOFish is available on the [AFMA website](#) ('Fisheries-management' – 'Gofish Help')

For further assistance please call AFMA Licensing and Data Services area on **1300 723 621**.

6.5 Annual Management and Research Levies

Operators who own fishing concessions that attract a levy will receive three separate invoices. Each invoice will be one third of the total annual levy amount payable on the fishing concessions you own on the day of invoicing. Levy invoices are issued in January, March and May every year.

Note: Levies are issued by financial year, not fishing season.

Following consultation with concession holders during 2018, AFMA revised how the costs for Daily Egg Production Method (DEPM) surveys are allocated to SFRs for 2018-19 levies onwards. The costs of stock-specific research including DEPM surveys are now allocated to the SFRs relevant to that stock, rather than all SFRs for all stocks in the fishery. For example, the costs for conducting a DEPM survey for Jack Mackerel East are only allocated to Jack Mackerel East SFRs.

6.5.1 How to pay your levies

You can make your payments by BPAY, direct deposit to the National Australia Bank, or by credit card (by sending in your card details or calling AFMA direct). All account details, biller code and contact details are included on the payment options page of your levy invoice. Please include the associated reference (invoice) number with your payment so AFMA can ensure your payment is attributed correctly.

It is important to note that while cheques are still accepted, the Australian Government is making changes to payment systems which will include winding back the use of cheques. If you currently use cheques to pay your levies and licensing fees, it would be advisable to familiarise yourself with the electronic payment options that AFMA offers.

6.5.2 Need more time to pay your levies?

A concession holder can request to enter into an arrangement to pay an overdue levy. To request an arrangement to pay, a concession holder must contact AFMA as soon as possible on **1300 723 621** to discuss payment options. There is a \$220 administration fee to enter into an arrangement and unpaid amounts attract the penalty charge of 20 per cent per annum, which is calculated daily. AFMA will suspend and may cancel fishing concessions if a levy remains unpaid and an arrangement has not been entered into.

For further information on levies, including invoice issue and due dates, please refer to the AFMA Levy Arrangements Guide for the year, available on the [AFMA website](#) ('Commercial Fishers' – 'Resources' – 'Commonwealth fisheries levy rates and arrangements').

Important dates

Table 3 Important dates for the 2025-26 fishing season

Date	Action
20 April 2025	Trading for the 2025-26 season is available.
Before 30 April 2025	TACs for the 2025-26 fishing season will be finalised.
30 April 2025	The end of the 2024-25 fishing season.
1 May 2025	The start of the 2025-26 fishing season. Continuous 28 day reconciliation will be in force during the season.

Date	Action
11 May 2025	<p>All 2024-25 CDRs logged through GoFish, AFMA will generate a final Quota Transaction Statement for the 2024-25 fishing season. If, upon checking off the final Quota Transaction Statement you feel that there is a discrepancy in the figures you should contact AFMA immediately to rectify the issue. If you are in an over-quota position, you must balance excess catch of quota species by leasing or transferring in 2025-26 uncaught quota.</p> <p>Note: <i>If you are unable to lodge through GoFish you should annotate the last page of the CDR (GAB2C or SESS2B) for the season as the 'last trip for 2024-25'. For leases or transfers, you should annotate the lease documentation with the season the lease will apply. A separate CDR must be used for any catches caught in the 2025-26 season.</i></p>
28 May 2025	All trading for the 2024-25 season, including that to cover any over-quota status closes. After this date AFMA will close off trading for the 2024-25 season.
1 June 2025	AFMA calculates undercatch and overcatch and posts a report for the 2024-25 season to concession holders.

Note: The 2024-25 fishing season runs for 12 months from 1 May 2025 to 30 April 2026.

7 Environment Management

7.1 Ecological Risk Management

AFMA's implementation of ecologically sustainable development includes the implementation of an Ecological Risk Management (ERM) framework. This framework outlines the process to assess, analyse and respond to the ecological risks posed by Commonwealth managed fisheries.

The initial assessment stage involves the development of an Ecological Risk Assessment (ERA) for the fishery that assesses the impact of fishing activities on the marine ecosystem.

ERA Reports for the SPF are prepared for both the mid-water trawl and purse seine sectors. The ERA for the mid-water trawl sector was updated in 2017 and identified no species as being at high risk from the impact of fishing. Fisheries Management paper 14, AFMA's approach to Ecological Risk Management, currently schedules the next ERA for the SPF midwater section **in 2024-25 however this has received funding to be completed in 2025-26. The SPF Purse Seine sub-fishery ERA assessment conducted in 2023 was based on analyses of data from 2017–2021 and will be finalised in 2025.**

A copy of the most recent ERAs for the SPF can be found on the [AFMA website](#) ('Fisheries management' - 'Management-Tools' - 'Ecological risk management strategies' - 'Small Pelagic Fishery').

7.2 SPF Dolphin Mitigation Strategy

The SPF Dolphin Strategy sets out the requirements for SPF trawl operations, including the management responses that each individual operator must comply with regarding interactions with dolphins.

Consistent with the approach taken in other Commonwealth fishery bycatch strategies, the [SPF Dolphin Strategy](#) ('Fisheries' – 'Small Pelagic Fishery' – 'Fishery publications') adopts an individual accountability approach which recognises that those who don't interact with dolphins should be able to continue to fish, while those who do interact with dolphins have increased management attention.

The Dolphin Strategy has been under review since December 2021. While the review is underway there are Interim Management Arrangements (IMA) in place which can be found in the SPF concession conditions on the [AFMA website](#) (or 'Commercial fishers' – 'Resources' – 'Concession holders and SFR conditions').

Under the IMA, the minimum management response requires the holder to immediately cease fishing and return to port until authorised by AFMA to recommence fishing using trawl gear. Additional management responses are triggered following subsequent dolphin interactions or if dolphin interactions continue over multiple Review Periods. These arrangements are outlined in concession conditions and include:

- Each fishing boat must have an AFMA approved Dolphin Mitigation Plan (DMP; a template is available on the [AFMA website](#)).
- In the event of any dolphin interaction event operators must follow the IMA outlined in the table below and as outlined in the SPF concession conditions 2025-26.

Performance Indicator	Criterion	Management Response
Interaction obligations applies in either the eastern or western sub area within a review period (1 May to 31 October or 1 November to 30 April)	Any dolphin interaction <i>in a single gear set</i>	a) complete a Dolphin Interaction Evaluation Report (Appendix A of the SPF Dolphin Mitigation Strategy) and submit it to AFMA within 48 hours of the end of a trip; and b) Complete the Listed Marine and Threatened Species form as part of the daily fishing logbook. (Refer to SFR condition 28)
	3 or more dolphins <i>across 3 or more gear sets</i>	In addition to the Listed Marine and Threatened Species Form and Dolphin Interaction Evaluation Report listed above: Immediately cease fishing and return to port. The holder must: a) review the Dolphin Mitigation Plan for the nominated boat; b) revise the Dolphin Mitigation Plan to mitigate dolphin interactions; c) obtain approval of the revised Dolphin Mitigation Plan from AFMA in writing; and d) obtain authorisation in writing by AFMA before recommencing fishing using trawl gear. (Refer to SFR condition 29)

Performance Indicator	Criterion	Management Response
	6 or more dolphins	<p>In addition to the Listed Marine and Threatened Species Form and Dolphin Interaction Evaluation Report listed above:</p> <p>Immediately cease fishing and return to port. The holder must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) review the Dolphin Mitigation Plan for the nominated boat; b) revise the Dolphin Mitigation Plan to mitigate dolphin interactions; c) obtain approval from AFMA in writing of the revised Dolphin Mitigation Plan; and d) obtain authorisation in writing by AFMA before recommencing fishing using trawl gear. <p>(Refer to SFR condition 30)</p>
	Further interactions during subsequent fishing trips within same review period	<p>In addition to the Listed Marine and Threatened Species Form and Dolphin Interaction Evaluation Report listed above:</p> <p>Immediately cease fishing and return to port. The holder must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) review the Dolphin Mitigation Plan for the nominated boat; b) revise the Dolphin Mitigation Plan to mitigate dolphin interactions; c) obtain approval from AFMA in writing of the revised Dolphin Mitigation Plan; and d) obtain authorisation in writing by AFMA before recommencing fishing using trawl gear. <p>(Refer to SFR condition 31)</p>
	6 or more dolphin interactions within two consecutive review periods (12 months)	<p>Immediately cease fishing and not permitted to fish for six (6) months. Before recommencing fishing the holder must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) conduct a further review of the Dolphin Mitigation Plan for the nominated boat; b) revise the Dolphin Mitigation Plan to mitigate dolphin interactions;

Performance Indicator	Criterion	Management Response
		c) obtain approval from AFMA in writing of the revised Dolphin Mitigation Plan; and d) obtain authorisation in writing by AFMA before recommencing fishing using trawl gear. (Refer to SFR condition 32)
	6 or more dolphins within a management grid during June, July or August	Immediately cease fishing in the grid and must not recommence fishing using trawl gear for a period of one (1) month from the date of the last dolphin interaction in that grid. (Refer to SFR condition 33)
	15 or more interactions in the Eastern Sub-area single review period	The holder must: a) the holder must cease fishing immediately and return to port; and b) the holder is not permitted to fish within the Eastern Sub-area for two (2) months from the date of the last dolphin interaction in the Eastern Sub-area. c) The holder must: I. review the Dolphin Mitigation Plan for the nominated boat, taking into account the above number of interactions; II. revise the Dolphin Mitigation Plan; and III. obtain written approval from AFMA of the revised Dolphin Mitigation Plan before recommencing fishing using trawl gear. (Refer to SFR conditions 34)

Further detail on the management responses are in the SPF Dolphin Strategy on the [AFMA website](#) ('Fisheries– 'Small Pelagic Fishery– 'Fishery publications').

7.3 Purse Seine Code of Practice

SPF industry has also developed a Purse Seine Code of Practice (CoP) which documents standard industry practice for boat operation and avoidance of environmental impacts. The code includes measures such as observing the presence and behaviour of protected species before deploying the net and outlines ways in which industry can effectively return any incidentally captured species to the water with minimal stress.

The CoP outlines specific arrangements to minimise impacts on protected species, including marine mammals:

- The presence of protected species is assessed prior to net deployment and during hauling;
- If a protected species is caught during the shot, then every reasonable effort will be made to release the animal alive while ensuring crew safety; and,
- If the captured animal cannot easily be released and exhibits unreasonable distress, the Master will terminate the shot and release one end of the net to enable release of the contents of the net.

Purse Seine CoP can be found on the [AFMA website](#) ('Commonwealth Fisheries' – 'Small Pelagic Fishery' – 'Fishery publications').

7.4 Bycatch management

The SPF Bycatch and Discard Workplan was updated in February 2022. It includes specific measures to address the risks highlighted by the ERA and to minimise the risk of further interactions with non-target species. A copy of the current SPF Bycatch and Discarding Workplan can be found on the [AFMA website](#) ('Commonwealth fisheries' – 'Small Pelagic Fishery' – 'fishery publications').

In addition, rules relating to protected species management are spread across several instruments including concession conditions, Vessel Management Plans and Dolphin Mitigation Plans.

7.5 Bycatch handling

7.5.1 General Bycatch Handling

AFMA is committed to improving handling practices for all bycatch species caught during fishing operations. To further ensure that fishers use best practice when handling bycatch, AFMA has introduced a condition to reinforce the need for fishers to correctly handle bycatch. The condition will allow for enforcement action to be taken against any operator not acting in accordance with bycatch handling requirements.

AFMA has developed the following six bycatch handling principles to assist fishers to comply with the bycatch handling condition. These are:

Principle 1: Safety of the boat and its crew are paramount

Mishandling does not include actions taken (or not taken), which are reasonably necessary¹ to ensure the safety of the boat and or its crew.

Principle 2: All reasonable steps should be taken

You are expected to take all reasonable steps to ensure that bycatch is returned to the water as quickly as practicable and in a manner which does not reduce its chance of survival.

¹ See principles 3 and 4.

Principle 3: Minor gear recovery is not ‘reasonably necessary’

Actions taken for the sole purpose of recovering minor² fishing gear, are not considered ‘reasonably necessary’.

Principle 4: Expediting removal from gear is not ‘reasonably necessary’

It is not ‘reasonably necessary’ to injure bycatch when removing it from fishing gear to save time.

Principle 5: Harm, injury or death caused during capture is not mishandling

Mishandling does not include where bycatch is already dead, injured or stressed when it is brought on-board³.

Principle 6: Compliance with approved bycatch management plans

Handling of bycatch in accordance with AFMA approved bycatch management plan(s) is not mishandling.

7.5.2 Shark and Ray Handling

A large part of the Australian shark catch is either as secondary catch in fisheries primarily targeting other species or they form part of multi-species fisheries targeting many species.

Improving handling practices can have a significant impact on the survival of sharks and rays that are released. Other benefits of improved handling practices include the reduced risk of injury to crew as sharks can bite and rays can sting in self-defence when threatened.

In 2016, AFMA produced the “Shark and Ray Handling Practices” to guide for commercial fishers in southern Australia on best practice for handling these species. This can be found on the [AFMA website](#) at (‘Research and Environment’ – ‘Protected Species’ - ‘Sharks’ – ‘Shark and ray handling practices’).

7.6 Protected species interactions

7.6.1 Protected species groups

The classification of a species as ‘protected’ provides for the recovery of populations and/or the long-term conservation of a species. The [Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999](#) (the EPBC Act) establishes four categories of protected species in Commonwealth managed areas:

1. **Listed threatened species or ecological community (this includes the categories threatened, vulnerable, endangered or critically endangered)** – species or communities whose survival is threatened, e.g. those with low population numbers or which have had a reduction in habitat or distribution.
2. **Listed migratory species** – listed to provide protection for species listed under the international Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species.
3. **Listed marine species** – listed to provide general protection to Australia’s native marine wildlife to reduce the likelihood of population decline.
4. **All cetaceans.**

² ‘Minor’ gear includes items such as hooks, which are unlikely to cause further harm to the bycatch, or marine pollution, if discharged/discarded attached to the bycatch.

³ Unless further deliberate action or inaction results in the death or further injury to the bycatch.

Commonwealth managed fishery operators should note that individuals from the following groups are protected:

All whales, dolphins, seabirds, seasnakes, turtles, seals and sea lions, syngnathids (seahorses, seadragons and pipefish), sawfishes (green, dwarf and freshwater), crocodiles, dugongs, sharks (great white, grey nurse, shortfin mako, longfin mako, porbeagle and silky shark) and other fish protected under the EPBC Act.

A full list of protected species is available on the [Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water website](#).

AFMA's Protected Species Identification Guide is available from the [AFMA website](#) ('Research and Environment' – 'Protected species' – 'Protected Species Management' – 'Protected species ID guide'). Further information on interactions with protected species can be obtained by contacting the SPF Manager as per the details in [section 9](#) of this document.

7.6.2 Interactions with protected species

The Memorandum of Understanding between AFMA and the (former) Department of Environment and Heritage defines an 'interaction' as any physical contact an individual has with a protected species. This includes all catching (hooked, netted, entangled) and collisions with an individual of these species. A copy of the MOU can be found on the [AFMA website](#) ('Research and Environment' – 'Protected Species' – 'Protected and Endangered Species Reporting').

Further information on interactions with protected species can be obtained by contacting AFMA on 1300 723 621, or on the [AFMA website](#) ('Research and Environment' – 'Protected species' – 'Protected Species Management').

Reporting an interaction

By law **all** interactions must be reported via Gofish, if possible, details should be recorded at species level.

If there is an observer present, they must be informed of the interaction immediately. You are still required to report the interaction through Gofish.

AFMA provides a protected species interaction summary report to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water on a quarterly basis on behalf of fishers who report interactions through the Gofish portal. These reports are published on [AFMA's website](#) ('Environment and Research' – 'Protected Species' – 'Threatened and endangered species reporting').

7.6.3 Porbeagle, shortfin mako, longfin mako sharks and silky shark

Porbeagle, shortfin mako and longfin mako sharks were listed as migratory species in 2010, and silky shark was listed in 2015. Any interaction with these species must be reported. However, provided you are fishing in accordance with the SPF Management Plan, you may retain and trade (domestic only) any of these species that are brought up dead. **Live sharks must be returned to the sea unharmed and a Listed Marine and Threatened Species entry completed through Gofish.**

You must report all interactions with these migratory sharks as outlined below.

If retained, catch must be reported in the commercial catch section of the e-log including species, weight and number of individuals.

If discarded, you must record all details in the e-log as a TEP Interaction (**instead** of reporting it in the catch section of the e-log).

7.7 Interactions with tagged wildlife

Researchers investigating wildlife species will periodically tag animals (or use bands, in the case of seabirds) to help improve the understanding of their biology and population.

If you capture a tagged animal, you should:

- (a) Record the details in the e-log as a TEP interaction, with the band or tag number inserted in the appropriate section;
- (b) Record the following details in the Comments section: tag or band number and colour (species identification or description; size; sex; and time, date and position of capture);
- (c) Take and submit photos if possible; and,
- (d) If captured alive, record as many details as possible about the animal then release it as carefully as possible, noting the condition in which it was released. AFMA will arrange to notify the appropriate researchers.

Further information on interactions with protected species can be obtained by contacting AFMA on **1300 723 621**, or on the [AFMA website](#) ('Research and Environment' – 'Protected Species' – 'Protected Species Management')

Remember: Don't get caught, just report!

8 Compliance

8.1 Compliance overview

AFMA's compliance and enforcement program is designed to maintain the integrity of fisheries management arrangements and protect Australia's fishing resources. AFMA seeks to achieve a level of compliance consistent with its legislative objectives by maximising voluntary compliance and creating effective deterrents to non-compliance.

The main functions of the compliance program include:

- ensuring compliance with AFMA's domestic fisheries management measures;
- ensuring licensed boats comply with fishing conditions within the AFZ;
- ensuring that there are no unlicensed foreign boats operating in the AFZ;
- managing port access for foreign boats; and
- surveillance and apprehension of foreign boats fishing illegally in the AFZ.

The National Compliance and Enforcement Program is conducted via the use of a risk-based approach, which enables AFMA's resources to be targeted to the areas where they are most needed and where they will prove most effective. It involves a series of steps to identify and assess non-compliance risks and then apply appropriate enforcement actions to mitigate these risks.

Risk-based compliance has a range of benefits⁴:

improved compliance outcomes – AFMA can tailor or target compliance measures to effectively deal with the most significant non-compliance risks;

efficiency gains – the target of compliance measures to the most significant risks ensures resources are concentrated in the areas where they are most likely to improve compliance outcomes; and

greater industry support for compliance programs/measures – risk management processes are widely understood by the fishing industry and the community.

In addition to the risk treatment model, it is essential that AFMA maintains a general deterrence program. By maintaining a presence at fishing ports (and at sea) AFMA discourages those members of the fishing community who do not wish to comply with the rules and regulations. It also reassures those who are complying that noncompliant activity is likely to be detected. Further, AFMA officers can assist those wishing to comply (but not knowing how) by providing advice and/or instructions on your responsibilities.

8.2 Navigation regulations

Additional regulations were introduced regarding navigation in closures in Part 9 of the [Fisheries Management Regulations 2019](#).

Under the regulations a boat must maintain a speed over 5 knots when navigating in a closure. If the closure is in effect for less than 24 hours (such as daylight closures) the boat must either be stationary or travelling faster than 5 knots. A breach of the regulations is an offence of strict liability equal to 25 penalty units, or \$7,825. Further information on fines and penalties is available on the [ASIC website](#).

Speed is calculated via the boat's vessel monitoring system. Therefore, it is recommended that the most direct route is taken when travelling through a closure, so the boat does not appear to be navigating at less than 5 knots. If the boat is stationary within a closure, the boat is required to remain in that closure for more than 30 minutes so its speed can be calculated.

If the master of a boat is unable to comply with any of the navigation requirements due to an unforeseen emergency (e.g. crew safety, breakdowns etc.) then the master must contact AFMA as soon as possible to request an exemption from the regulation.

8.3 Vessel Monitoring System

8.3.1 VMS reporting

It is your responsibility to ensure that any boat nominated to a SPF quota SFR is fitted with a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) of a category specified in the register of AFMA approved units.

Vessel monitoring systems help AFMA to monitor vessel position, course and speed, and to make sure Commonwealth fishing vessels are doing the right thing. Information relating to VMS operational requirements can be found on the [AFMA website](#) ('Fisheries Management' – 'Monitoring Tools' – 'Vessel Monitoring Systems').

⁴ Source: Risk-based Compliance information is available at The Better Regulation Office ([NSW Government Guide to Better Regulation](#)).

All VMS units installed on Commonwealth endorsed fishing vessels must meet AFMA type approved standards. Further details can be accessed via the [List of approved vessel monitoring system devices](#).

What you need to know

- All VMS units installed must meet AFMA approved standards.
- A VMS unit must be fitted and working on boats nominated to Commonwealth fishing concessions at all times.
- Your VMS must stay on at all times – even if the boat is tied up in port, or out fishing under a state fishing permit/concession, or if you are doing repairs on your boat.
- You can only switch off your VMS if you have prior written approval from AFMA.
- It is your responsibility to fit and maintain a working VMS.
- Failure to have a working VMS is an offence.

Make sure you

- Seek approval from AFMA before switching of a VMS.
- Check with AFMA if you have any concerns with your VMS unit before you go fishing.
- Include your VMS unit in routine maintenance programs.

You must not

- Switch off your unit for any reason without prior approval from AFMA.
- Leave port if your VMS is not working.

On becoming aware of a problem with the VMS functioning, the concession holder must advise AFMA as soon as practicable via:

Phone (business hours):	(02) 6225 5369 (if prompted, follow instructions on the voice mail)
Phone (out of hours):	(02) 6275 5818
Fax:	(02) 6225 5440
Email:	mailto:ausvms@afma.gov.au

If the VMS is not operating or is malfunctioning the boat must remain in port until the VMS is repaired and you have contacted AFMA and have received confirmation the VMS is working properly.

Further information can be found on the [AFMA website](#) ('Fisheries Management' – 'Compliance' – 'Satellite monitoring of fishing boats').

8.3.2 Temporary switch off (TSO) arrangements

A TSO is a formal arrangement that allows a unit to be legitimately switched off. If a nominated boat is undergoing maintenance, berthed for an extended period or in other exceptional circumstances that render VMS operation impractical, you can apply for a TSO by completing the online VMS temporary switch off form

on the [AFMA website](#) ('Fisheries Management' – 'Monitoring Tools' – 'Vessel Monitoring Systems' – 'VMS temporary switch off form').

Completing a TSO application does not constitute approval to switch off the VMS unit. The following terms and conditions will only apply to a TSO issued by AFMA. If the VMS unit is not operating continuously without a TSO being issued, then the concession holder may be held liable for breaching their permit conditions.

The vessel must remain at the location specified for the duration of the TSO unless you have contacted AFMA (see contacting AFMA below) and received confirmation that the vessel is to be moved. This must be done prior to moving the vessel.

Your TSO will expire when one of the following occurs:

- the negotiated period expires
- the vessel leaves the specified location, or
- a new TSO is issued by AFMA in place of the current one.

Before the end of the TSO period, you must:

- switch the VMS unit back on and contact AFMA to verify that it is polling, or
- if more time is needed before the VMS unit is fully operational, submit a new TSO application.

Switching off a unit without first obtaining a TSO will constitute an offence. It is also an offence for a boat to be moved, from the place stipulated under the TSO, without approval from AFMA.

8.3.3 Directions to return to port

Under the National Compliance and Enforcement Policy, if a nominated boat's VMS unit stops reporting AFMA may request the boat to immediately return to and/or remain in port until the problem has been resolved.

8.3.4 Manual reporting

With its continuing focus on VMS compliance, AFMA recognises the fact that VMS units do suffer breakdowns from time to time. Often these breakdowns occur at sea making it necessary for AFMA to consider alternate arrangements. One of these arrangements is to allow 'manual reporting' for the remainder of a trip.

The main principle is that being allowed to 'Manually Report' is not an automatic right, it is a privilege afforded to operators on the basis that they comply with all of the requirements.

Manual reporting will generally only be permitted where:

- a unit has failed at-sea as the result of a mechanical failure, and
- AFMA considers the level of risk is low.

Manual reporting is only approved until the completion of the current trip. You must make immediate arrangements to have the unit repaired or replaced. You will not be allowed to depart port again until the VMS unit is operational.

If AFMA decides not to grant permission for an operator/vessel to manually report, and the VMS remains non-operational AFMA will order the vessel to return to, and remain in, port.

If you have been granted permission to Manually Report, you must

1. Record the vessels position every 4 hours and report these positions at the end of each day, and
2. Include in the report the vessel name, distinguishing symbol, time and date of position, and the vessel's position in latitude and longitude (in degrees, minutes, seconds).

Manual position reports are to be made by:	
Phone:	(02) 6225 5369 (if prompted, follow instructions on the voice mail)
Fax:	(02) 6225 5440
Email:	VMSreporting@afma.gov.au

8.4 Illegal/suspicious fishing - Call CRIMFISH: 1800 274 634

If you suspect illegal fishing operations are occurring or witness any suspicious activity involving fish or fishing type activity (e.g. selling fish off the back of boats or vehicles whilst offering a reduced price, questionable landing sites etc.) you can contact AFMA's Freecall CRIMFISH hotline on **1800 274 634** (1800 CRIMFISH), or AFMA's Duty Officer on **(02) 6275 5818** (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) or [submit an online form](#) as soon as possible after you discover the event. More information is available on the CRIMFISH page of the [AFMA website](#) ('Fisheries Management' – 'Compliance' – 'Report Illegal Fishing').

Reports may be made anonymously, and all information received will be treated in the strictest confidence. Ideally any information supplied should be as detailed as possible to assist AFMA to investigate the incident and should include the following:

- the date, time and location that the activity took place;
- the names of any verifying witnesses; and
- Any photographs and/or other evidence.

More information is available on the CRIMFISH page of the [AFMA website](#) ('Fisheries Management' – 'Compliance' – 'Report Illegal Fishing'). Important documents are listed in Table 4 overleaf.

Table 4. Important documents relating to the management of Commonwealth fisheries and the Small Pelagic Fishery

Title of document	Purpose
Commonwealth	
Fisheries Management Act 1991	Sets out AFMA's legislative responsibility for the efficient management and sustainable use of Commonwealth fish resources on behalf of the Australian community. Also sets out the legislative basis for SFR's, licenses and permits.

Title of document	Purpose
<i>Fisheries Management Regulations 2019</i>	<p>Prescribes detail on the management arrangements implemented in Commonwealth fisheries, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • penalties • licenses and permits • recovery of fees.
<i>Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy (CHSP) and Guidelines 2018</i>	<p>Manages key commercial species in Commonwealth waters.</p>
<i>Commonwealth Fisheries Bycatch Policy and Guidelines 2018</i>	<p>Developed to reduce bycatch, improve the protection of vulnerable and threatened species and minimise adverse impacts of fishing on the marine environment.</p>
<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (the EPBC Act)</i>	<p>Set outs the requirements for environmental assessment and accreditation of all Commonwealth fisheries under Part 10 and 13.</p>
<i>Offshore Constitutional Settlement (OCS) arrangements</i>	<p>Defines fishery management responsibilities for commercial fisheries.</p>
<i>Ecological risk assessment and management strategies</i>	<p>Aims to minimise the impact of commercial fisheries on all aspects of the marine environment. Manages bycatch species, TEP species, habitats and communities.</p>
SPF specific	
<i>Fisheries Management Plan for the Small Pelagic Fishery (SPF) 2009</i>	<p>Outlines the management requirements and procedures for the fishery including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific ecosystem requirements • TAC • Right to fish in the fishery • Availability of SFRs • Transfer and lease of SFRs • Obligations applying to holders of SFRs • Directions not to engage in fishing.
<i>Fisheries Management (Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery and</i>	<p>Prescribes the closures that SPF concession holders must abide by.</p>

Title of document	Purpose
<u>Small Pelagic Fishery Closures) Direction 2021</u>	
<u>Small Pelagic Fishery (Fishing Period) Determination 2021</u>	Legislates the fishing period for the SPF.
<u>Small Pelagic Fishery Statutory Fishing Right Conditions</u>	Authorises fishing for quota species in a sub-area of the fishery and authorises the use of a boat that is nominated to the SFR.
<u>Small Pelagic Fishery Harvest Strategy 2025)</u>	Describes arrangements for harvesting target species and some byproduct species. The SPF HS is developed in line with the Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy and Guidelines, ensuring the sustainable and profitable utilisation of the SPF.
<u>Small Pelagic Fishery Bycatch and Discard Workplan 2022-2025</u>	Ensures information is gathered about the impact of the SPF on bycatch species, that all reasonable steps are taken to minimise incidental interactions with TEP species, and that the ecological impacts of fishing on habitats are minimised. Established under the Plan and in accordance with the Commonwealth Policy on Fisheries Bycatch 2000.
<u>Small Pelagic Fishery Dolphin Strategy 2019</u>	Ensures consistency with the AFMA Commission principles and aims to minimise dolphin interactions in the trawl sector of the SPF by adopting an individual responsibility approach to create incentives for fishers to innovate and adopt best practices.
<u>Small Pelagic Fishery (Total Allowable Catch) Determination 2025</u>	Determines the amount of target species that can be caught in the 2025-26 season.
<u>Small Pelagic Fishery (Overcatch and Undercatch) Determination 2025</u>	Determines the amounts and percentages for each quota species for a sub-area in relation to undercatch and overcatch for the 2025-26 season.
Other (as required by SPF SFR conditions)	Purpose
Vessel Management Plans	Outlines day to day operational requirements the boat must adhere to.
<u>AFMA logbooks</u>	Facilitates the collection of accurate and comprehensive fisheries data.

9 Contact Details

SPF Management	
Steve Hall – Acting Manager	(02) 6225 5341
Yvette Lamont – Senior Management Officer	(08) 8943 0320
SPF Email	SPFManagement@afma.gov.au
<u>Licensing and data services</u>	
Quota management and logbooks	
Karen Cullen – Acting Licensing Services and Data Manager	(02) 6225 5452
Licensing and Data Services Officers	1300 723 621
Licensing and Data Services email	licensing@afma.gov.au
Licensing and Data Services facsimile	(02) 6225 5440
Levy invoicing and payment queries	
Simone Pont – Senior Debt Recovery Officer	(02) 6225 5343
<u>Compliance</u>	
Duty Officer	(02) 6275 5818
Compliance email	domestic.compliance@afma.gov.au
Compliance facsimile	(02) 6225 5442
Tod Spencer - Senior Manager National Compliance Strategy	(02) 6225 5312
Josh Froggatt – Manager – National Compliance Operations	(02) 6225 5467
Observers	
Henry Oak - Observer Manager	(02) 6225 5344 or 0427 496 446

SPF Management	
Observer duty phone	0427 496 446
State Fisheries	
Tasmania	
Department of Natural Resources and Environment – Marine Resources	1300 720 647 Commercial Fishing - NRE TAS
South Australia	
Department of Primary Industries and Regions SA, Fisheries Division	1800 065 522 Commercial fishing – PIRSA
Victoria	
Victorian Fisheries Authority	136 186 Commercial - VFA
New South Wales	
Department of Primary Industries	1300 720 662 Commercial Fishing - DPI NSW
Western Australia	
Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development - Fisheries	1800 815 507 Department of Fisheries - WA
Queensland	
Department of Agriculture and Fisheries	13 25 23 (within Queensland) or (07) 3404 6999 Department of Agriculture and Fisheries - Queensland

Attachment A: Acronyms

Acronym	Details
AFMA	Australian Fisheries Management Authority
AFZ	Australian Fishing Zone
ALC	Automatic Location Communicator
CDR	Catch Disposal Record
CTF	Commonwealth Managed Fisheries Transit Form
CTS	Commonwealth Trawl Sector
DNID	Data Network Identification Number
EFT01B	Eastern Finfish Trawl Daily Fishing Logbook
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
ERA	Ecological Risk Assessment
ERM	Ecological Risk Management
FRDC	Fisheries Research and Development Corporation
FRP	Fish Receiver Permit
GAB2C	GAB Catch Disposal Record
ICVMS	Integrated Computer Vessel Monitoring System
ITQ	Individual Transferrable Quota
LN01B	Line Fishing Daily Fishing Log
MAC	Management Advisory Committee
MPA	Marine Protected Area
OCS	Offshore Constitutional Settlement
PS01A	Purse Seine Daily Fishing Log

Acronym	Details
QHS	Quota Holding and Catch Summary
QTS	Quota Transaction Statement
RAG	Resource Assessment Group
SPFRAG	Small Pelagic Fishery Resource Assessment Group
SPF	Small Pelagic Fishery
SEMAC	South East Management Advisory Committee
SESSF	Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery
SFR	Statutory Fishing Right
SQ05	Squid Jigging Daily Fishing Logbook
SWT01B	Southern and Western Finfish Trawl Daily Fishing Log
TAC	Total Allowable Catch
TEP	Threatened, Endangered and Protected species
TSO	Temporary Switch Off arrangement
the Management Plan	<i>Small Pelagic Fishery Management Plan 2009</i>
VMP	Vessel Management Plan
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System

Attachment B: Area closures outside AFMA's jurisdiction

Fishing in Marine Parks

There are Australian Marine Parks within the Commonwealth waters of the Small Pelagic Fishery (SPF). The marine parks of relevance to SPF fishers are within the Temperate East, South-east and South-west Networks. Fishers who are currently fishing, or intend to fish, should be aware that some fishing methods are not allowed in marine parks. Please make sure you understand which fishing methods are allowed in each of the marine park zones prior to fishing. Class approvals outline the areas where commercial fishing can occur, the fishing methods that can be used, and the conditions that need to be followed while operating or transiting through Australian Marine Parks. Remember that you need to keep a hard or electronic copy of the class approvals on board your boat.

Fish can only be processed or transhipped in marine parks where your fishing method is allowed. This is for compliance purposes so that it's clear to park surveillance officers where fish are being taken from. However, exceptions can be made for individual circumstances, where this rule creates operational constraints on normal fishing activities. Any exceptions need to be authorised by the Director of National Parks so please contact AFMA to discuss if this applies to you.

Transiting is allowed through all marine park zone types (except Sanctuary zones). When transiting a zone where your fishing method is not allowed, you are required to:

- keep all fishing gear stowed and secured, and
- travel at more than 5 knots.

More information about these marine parks can be found at the following links or by contacting marineparks@dcceew.gov.au.

Maps

Maps of marine park networks and individual marine parks are available, including Shapefiles, MIF files and KML files which can be downloaded to use on vessel hardware at:

<https://parksaustralia.gov.au/marine/maps/>.

Temperate East Network (between Bundaberg (QLD) and Bermagui (NSW))

- [Class approval](#)

[https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/222e53f4055738a4d233eab7cba23084/amp-document-Class Approval for Temperate East Marine Park Network.pdf](https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/222e53f4055738a4d233eab7cba23084/amp-document-Class%20Approval%20for%20Temperate%20East%20Marine%20Park%20Network.pdf)

South-east Network (between Bermagui (NSW) and eastern side of Kangaroo Island (SA))

- [Class approval](#)

<https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/1922cc1c99e94598259482031ff7b62b/southeast-marine-parks-network-structures-and-works-class-approval.pdf>

South-west Network (between eastern side of Kangaroo Island (SA) and Shark Bay (WA))

- [Class approval](#)

[amp-document-Sea Dumping Act Class Approval for South-west Marine Parks Network.pdf](#)

Your stewardship is important

If you witness or suspect there are illegal activities occurring within an Australian Marine Park, you are encouraged to report this activity. All reports are completely voluntary and anonymous, however, if you chose to include your personal details, you may be contacted to provide more information about your report.

You can report in one of two ways:

1. via the Australian Marine Parks reporting hotline on 1800 852 975 where you can talk to a Marine Parks Officer; or
2. via email to Marine.Compliance@dcceew.gov.au

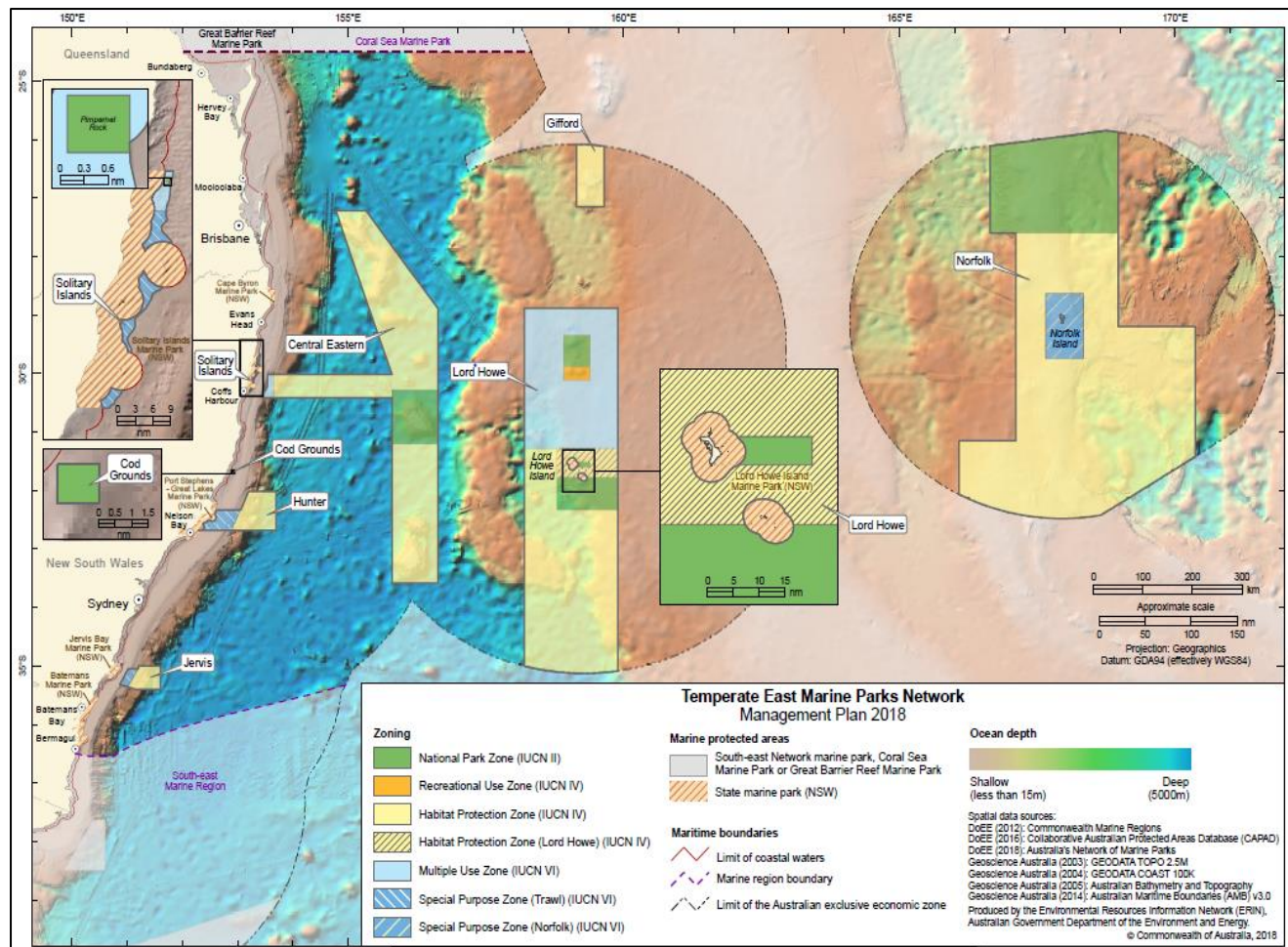


Figure 3: Map of the Temperate East Marine Parks Network

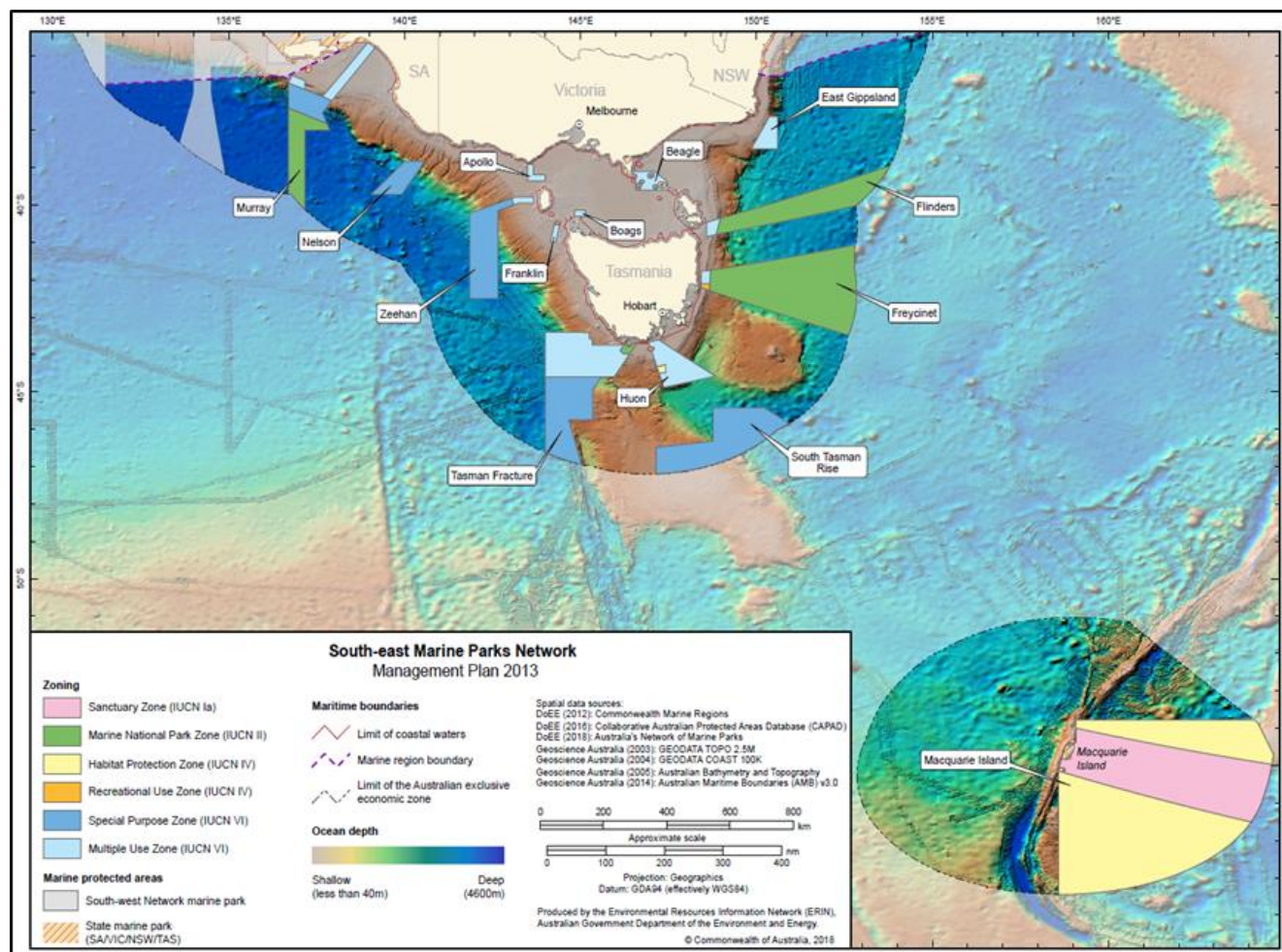


Figure 4: Map of the South-east Marine Parks Network

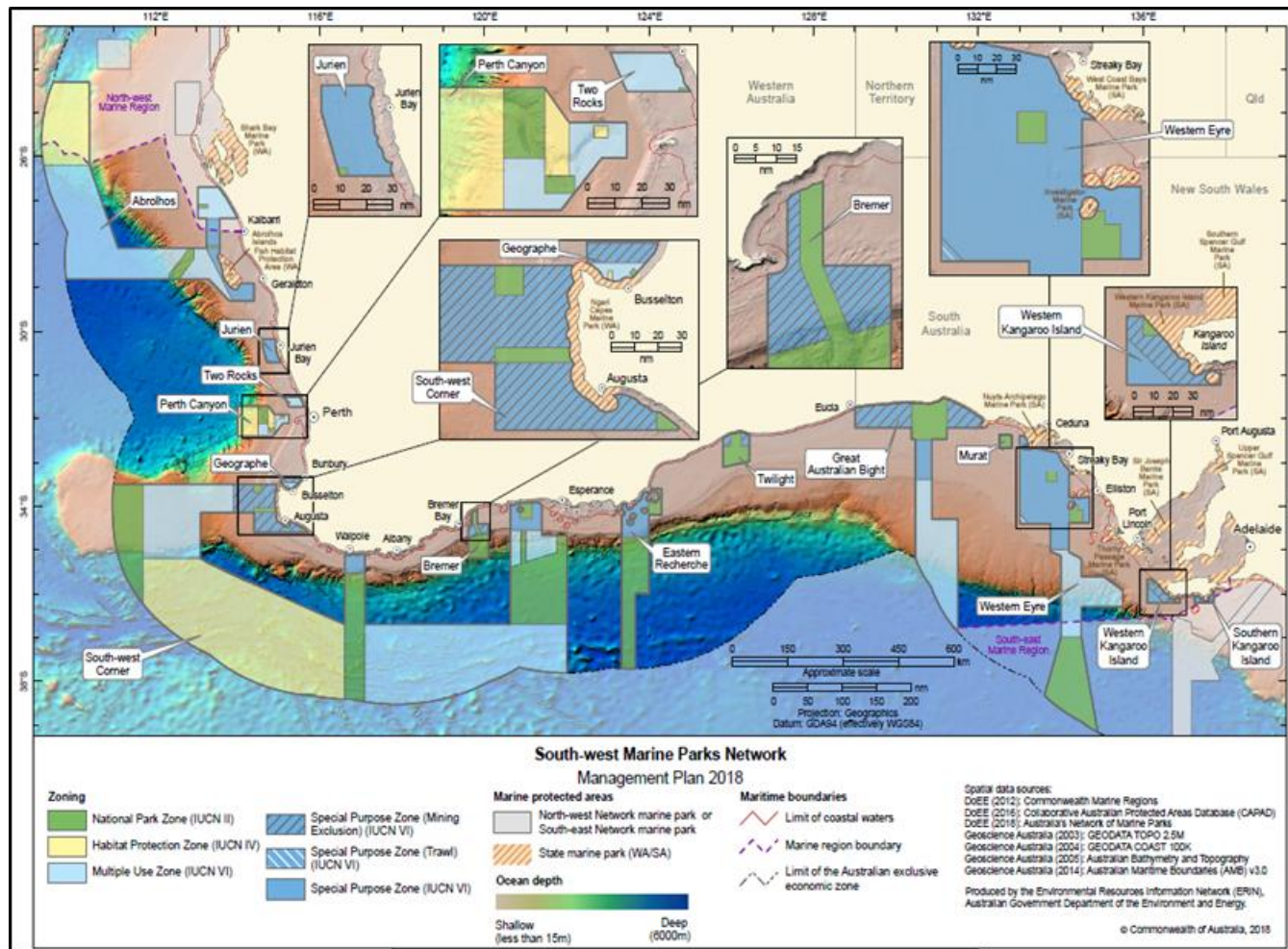


Figure 5: Map of the South-west Marine Parks Network

Attachment C: Areas closed to mid-water trawl in the Small Pelagic Fishery

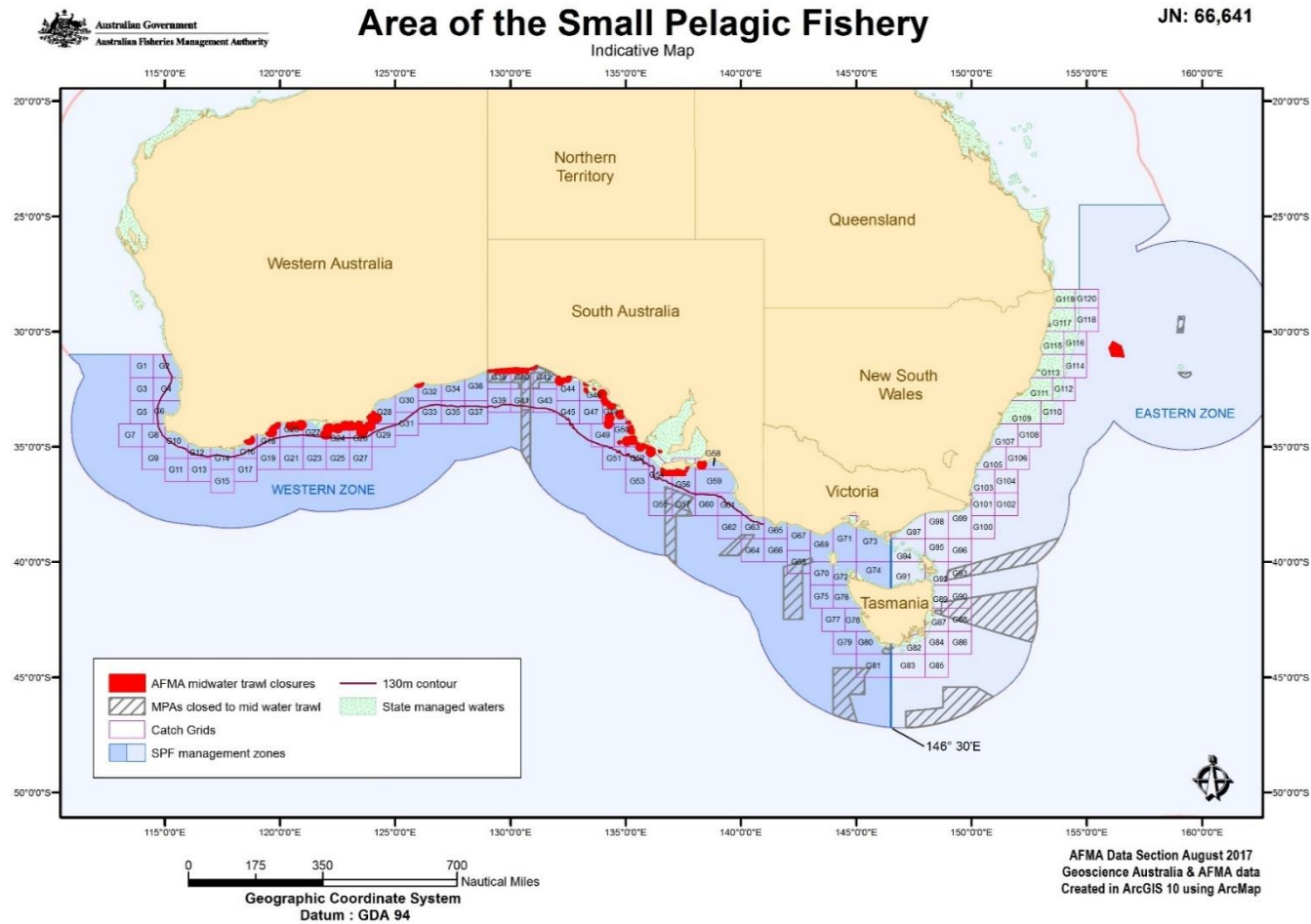


Figure 6. Areas closed to mid-water trawl in the Small Pelagic Fishery