



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Coral Sea Fishery

**Management Arrangement
Booklet 2019**



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AFMA Coral Sea Fishery

Edited and revised in 2019 by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA).

Important Note:

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this booklet is correct and accurate at the time of printing. However, the information provided is intended to serve as a guide only, and therefore AFMA will not be liable for any loss caused, whether due to negligence or otherwise, arising from the use of or reliance upon this booklet. The booklet is not intended to replace any conditions or requirements of an operator's concession of the *Fisheries Management Act 1991* and *Fisheries Management Regulations 1992*. Some of the items in this booklet may not apply to a particular fishing operation. Operators should refer to the key documents listed in this booklet.

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1 Introduction

This Coral Sea Fishery (CSF) Management Arrangements Booklet is a guide to the management arrangements that will apply to CSF concession holders in the fishing year from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.

The CSF is a relatively small but diverse fishery, targeting a wide range of species with methods including line, trap and hand collection. Entry to the CSF is limited to the existing 14 fishing permits. The CSF extends from Cape York to Sandy Cape, Queensland. It is bounded on the east by the Australian Fishing Zone and on the west by a boundary line 10 to 100 nm east of the western boundary of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Area of the Coral Sea Fishery

Spatial closures also apply within the Coral Sea Fishery under the Coral Sea Marine Park Management Plan 2018. More details on closures can be found on the Parks Australia Website www.parksaustralia.gov.au

2 Sectors of the Fishery

The CSF is a multi-sector, multi- species fishery. The species caught vary depending on the methods used as well as the areas and times fished. The fishery comprises of the following sectors:

1. Line and Trap
2. Aquarium
3. Lobster and Trochus
4. Sea Cucumber

Note that trawl has been removed from the Line, Trawl and Trap sector.

2.1 Line and Trap

Table 1 provides information on the requirements for the Line and Trap Sector, including target species, methods, permit conditions and reporting requirements. This is intended to be a guide only and operators should refer to their permit conditions for further information.

Table 1: Overview of requirements for the Line and Trap Sector

Summary of sector	Permit conditions	Reporting
<p>Number of permits: 4 line permits 4 line and trap permits</p> <p>Target species: Cartilaginous fishes (<i>Chondrichthys</i>) and bony fishes (<i>Osteichthyes</i>)</p> <p>Methods permitted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demersal longlines, trotlines, droplines, handlines, setlines and demersal finfish traps. Where authorised, automatic baiting is available for use with the longline method (subject to additional conditions) 	<p>Auto longline conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concession holders must use an AFMA approved baiting system. Approval must also be obtained from AFMA for the use of automatic baiting equipment on transfer of a permit or change of the nominated vessel. A maximum of 15 000 hooks may be used, stowed or secured on the boat. Every shot using the automatic baiting gear must be set in waters deeper than 200 metres. However, where a fisheries observer is on board the boat, only 50 per cent of all hooks using the automatic baiting gear must be set in waters deeper than 200 metres. Concession holders must use a bird scaring device as specified in permit conditions. Concession holders must comply with the <i>Threat Abatement Plan 2014</i> for the incidental catch (or bycatch) of seabirds during oceanic longline fishing operations. Boats must carry an AFMA approved observer for the first trip of the season (or after installing automatic baiting equipment) and every fourth trip thereafter if using a “Mustad” system or every third trip if using a “Best Fishing Gear” system thereafter). 	<p>Logbook (Line) Line Fishing Daily Fishing Log – LN01A or LN01B</p> <p>Logbook (Trap) Commonwealth Trap Fishing Daily Fishing Log (TR01)</p> <p>Catch Disposal Record Commonwealth Catch Disposal Record (SESSF2A or SESSF2B)</p>

Summary of sector	Permit conditions	Reporting
	<p>Other Line conditions:</p> <p>Boats must carry an AFMA observer on the first trip of the season and every fourth trip, thereafter.</p> <p>Trap conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traps must be constructed of metal only. • No more than 50 traps may be used on a boat. • Traps must be under the maximum size of 1.8 metres x 1.8 metres x 0.8 metres. • In case a trap is lost, all trap doors must be fitted with sacrificial anodes to allow trap doors to open once the anode disintegrates. • Traps must be set and hauled individually (not connected in a sequence) unless an exemption is provided by AFMA. • Boats must carry an AFMA observer on board for the first trip of every season and every fourth trip, thereafter. <p>Any species caught not belonging to the Class <i>Osteichthyes</i> (bony fish) must be released.</p>	

2.1.1 Line and Trap Species Identification Guide

Pygmy ruby snapper (*Etelis carbunculus*) and Giant ruby snapper (*Etelis* sp.) are two species caught in the Line and Trap Sector of the CSF. The species are very similar in appearance but need to be recorded separately in logbooks. Figures 2 and 3 provide further information on how to distinguish between the species for the purposes of logbook recording.

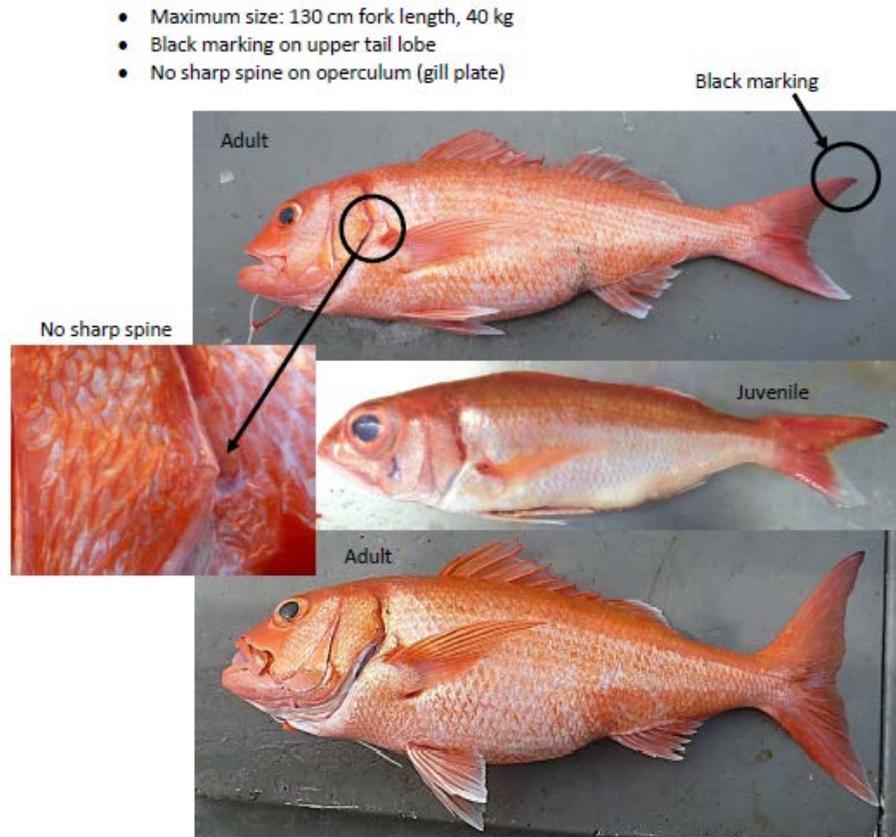


Figure 2: Identification guide for giant ruby snapper (*Etelis sp.*)

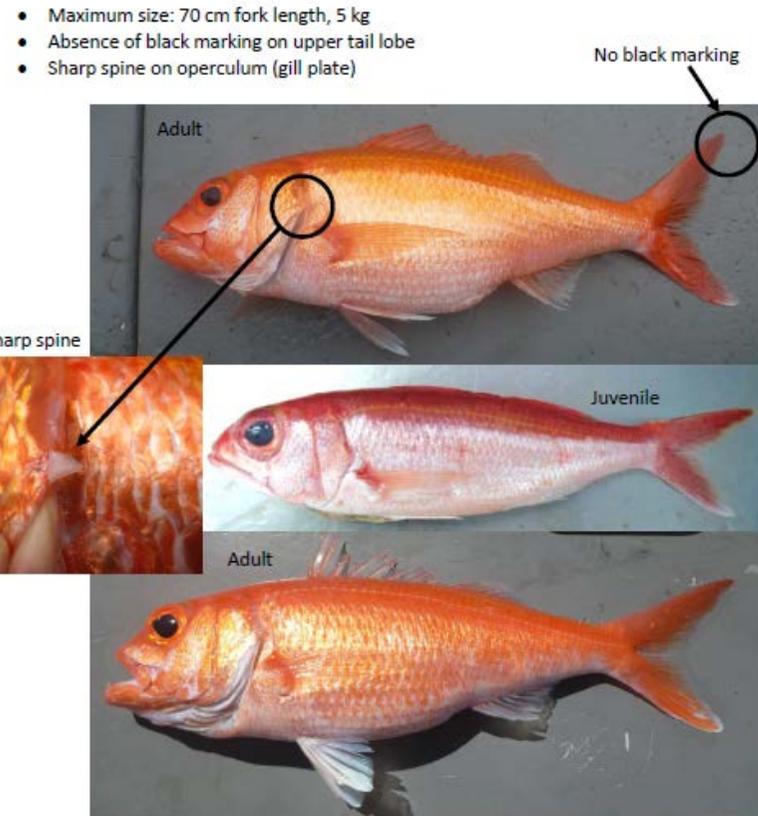


Figure 3: Identification Guide for pygmy ruby snapper (*Etelis carbunculus*)

2.2 Aquarium Sector

Table 2 provides information on the requirements for the Aquarium Sector, including target species, methods, permit conditions and reporting requirements. This is intended to be a guide only and operators should refer to their permit conditions for further information.

Table 2: Overview of requirements for the Aquarium Sector

Summary of sector	Permit conditions	Reporting
<p>Number of permits: 2</p> <p>Target Species:</p> <p>Cartilaginous fishes (<i>Chondrichthys</i>), bony fishes (<i>Osteichthyes</i>) corals (<i>Acroporidae</i>) and live rock.</p> <p>Methods permitted:</p> <p>Hand collection</p> <p>Cast, scoop and seine nets and handlines with barbless hooks may be used with or without the aid of an underwater breathing apparatus.</p>	<p>General conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fish collected must be for use in aquaria or broodstock and must not be sold for human consumption. Operators may collect live fish including, bony fish, sharks, rays, crustaceans, molluscs and other marine organisms including live rock but excluding mammals, reptiles, birds and specifically prohibited shark species. A maximum of two tender boats may be used with the nominated vessel. The use of chemicals (including anaesthetics) and explosives are prohibited. Operators must abide by net size restrictions, as specified in the permit conditions. Operators may undertake dual jurisdiction trips, but must notify AFMA and QDAF 72 hours prior to departing, and abide by specific permit conditions. <p>Species limitations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each concession holder must not take more than 20 tonnes of live rock and report the total weight collected to AFMA 2 hours prior to mooring or anchoring at port. Live rock may only be taken by hand or by using hand held non-mechanical implements. Each concession holder must not take more than 20 tonnes of coral belonging to the family <i>Acroporidae</i> (stony corals). The take of all other coral species is prohibited. Each concession holder must not take more than 25 live specimens of humphead Māori wrasse (<i>Cheilinus undulatus</i>) 	<p>Logbook (Aquarium)</p> <p>Aquarium Fish Trip Logbook (AQ04)</p> <p>Logbook (Coral, shell grit and star sand)</p> <p>Fisheries Logbook (CS03)</p> <p>*All logbooks must be submitted to QDAF within one month of fishing activity.</p>

Summary of sector	Permit conditions	Reporting
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take of the species above must be recorded in the 'comments' section of the logbook, including the number of specimens taken per trip, their size and location (lat/long). 	

2.2.1 Dual jurisdiction trips in the Aquarium Sector

Operators in the Aquarium Sector may undertake dual jurisdiction trips between Queensland State waters and Commonwealth waters. The following conditions apply to operators when undertaking a dual jurisdiction trip:

- Operators must notify AFMA and the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, that they are undertaking a dual jurisdiction trip at least 72 hours prior to departing. AFMA must be contacted either by email at monitoring@afma.gov.au or fax at (02) 6225 5440 (if email is not possible). Queensland State must be contacted at fisheriesmanagers@daf.qld.gov.au.
- When undertaking a dual jurisdiction trip, operators must not take any live rock, coral, oyster, pearl oyster, trochus or humphead maori wrasse.
- Operators must ensure that all species taken on dual jurisdiction trips are stored separately, and are clearly labelled to include the species name, time, date and specific location that the fish was taken (this may include the latitude and longitude if possible).

It is the responsibility of the operator to ensure they are familiar with the conditions required in both jurisdictions, when undertaking a dual jurisdiction trip.

2.3 Lobster and Trochus

Table 3 provides information on the requirements for the Lobster and Trochus Sector, including target species, methods, permit conditions and reporting requirements. This is intended to be a guide only and operators should refer to their permit conditions for further information.

Table 3: Overview of requirements for the Lobster and Trochus Sector

Summary of sector	Permit conditions	Reporting
<p>Number of permits: 2</p> <p>Target species:</p> <p>Trochus (<i>Tectus niloticus</i> and <i>Tectus pyramis</i>) and tropical spiny rock lobster (<i>Panulirus ornatus</i>).</p> <p>Methods permitted:</p> <p>Hand collection with or without underwater breathing apparatus.</p>	<p>General conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A holder may only register a maximum of two tender boats, with the nominated boat to hand collect trochus and/or lobster. <p>Species limitations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A concession holder may take up to 15 tonnes of unprocessed trochus and 15 tonnes of lobster tails during a fishing season. A holder must not take lobster with a tail length of less than 125 millimetres. A holder must not take trochus that are less than 80 millimetres or more than 125 millimetres, when measured after being taken at the widest part of the base of the shell. Once one and a half tonne of lobster tail or two and a half tonnes of trochus have been taken from any reef within the fishery, no further fishing may be undertaken within a 15 nautical mile anchorage during the fishing year. 	<p>Logbook (Lobster and Trochus)</p> <p>Hand collection Daily Fishing Log (HC01)</p> <p>Catch Disposal Record</p> <p>Hand collection Catch Disposal Record (HC02)</p>

2.4 Sea Cucumber

Table 4 provides information on the requirements for the Sea Cucumber Sector, including target species, methods, permit conditions and reporting requirements. This is intended to be a guide only and operators should refer to their permit conditions for further information.

Table 4: Overview of requirements for the Sea Cucumber Sector

Summary of sector	Permit conditions	Reporting
<p>Number of permits: 2</p> <p>Target species: sea cucumber, including but not limited to, amberfish, blackfish, black teatfish, white teatfish, prickly redfish, sandfish and surf redfish.</p> <p>Methods permitted: Hand collection with or without underwater breathing apparatus.</p>	<p>General conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A maximum of two tender boats registered with the nominated boat may be used. Operators must comply with the sea cucumber rotational zone plan (additional information available in permit conditions). Reefs have been divided into 21 zones with a total of 164 fishing days. These zones are to be fished in accordance with the fishing plan outlined in Tables 5 and 6. <p>Species limitations (per operator):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A concession holder must abide by the following catch limits (wet and gutted weight) in a fishing season: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> black teatfish – 500 kilograms white teatfish – 2 tonnes prickly redfish – 10 tonnes sandfish – 500 kilograms surf redfish – 5 tonnes any combination of greenfish and lollyfish – 5 tonnes any other species – 2.5 tonnes 	<p>Logbook (Sea Cucumber): Hand Collection Daily Fishing (HC01)</p> <p>Catch Disposal Record: Hand Collection Catch Disposal Record (HC02)</p>

Summary of sector	Permit conditions	Reporting
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the total allowable take of sea cucumber including the above limits is 5 tonnes). • Once five tonnes wet and gutted weight of any mixture of sea cucumber species has been taken from any reef within the fishery, no further fishing may be undertaken within a 15 nautical mile anchorage during the fishing year. 	

2.4.1 Sea Cucumber rotational zone plan

Reefs within the Sea Cucumber Sector have been divided into 21 zones with a total of 164 fishing days. These zones are to be fished in accordance with the rotational zone fishing plan outlined in Table 5.

The total 164 days allotted to all permit holders in the Sea Cucumber Sector of the CSF are to be fished on a competitive basis. It is the permit holder's responsibility to ensure that they do not exceed the number of days allotted. Each of the 21 zones within the CSF has a corresponding series of co-ordinates (Table 6).

For the purpose of deducting fishing days for each zone the following rules apply.

- A fishing day is defined as being in a zone between the hours of 0900 and 1500. If three or less hours are spent in the zone between the hours of 0900 and 1500 then a half fishing day must be recorded.
- If a strong wind warning (SWW) is issued the holder should write SWW in their logbook only if no fishing took place. No day will be deducted in this case.

Table 5: Sea Cucumber Sector rotational zone plan

2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
Days permitted	Zone	Days permitted	Zone	Days permitted	Zone
15	Flinders Reefs	15	Holmes Reefs	15	Wreck Reefs
15	Willis Islets	15	Diamond Islets	5	Tregrosse Reefs
30	Osprey Reef	10	Kenn Reefs	5	Moore Reefs
5	Diane Bank	5	Frederick Reefs	5	Mellish Reefs
2	Malay Reef	2	Bougainville	5	Cato Island Reef
2	Abington Reef	2	Flora Reef	5	McDermott Bank
				2	Dart Reef
				2	Heralds Surprise
				2	Shark Reef

Table 6: Sea Cucumber Sector rotational zone co-ordinates.

Reef name	Days	A (north)			B (south)			C (west)			D (east)			Chart
		Lat min			Lat max			Long min			Long max			
		dd	mm	ss	dd	mm	ss	dd	mm	ss	dd	mm	ss	
Abington Reef	2	18	2	0	18	7	30	149	34	30	149	39	0	4602
Bougainville Reef	2	15	28	30	15	31	30	147	5	0	147	8	30	616
Cato Island Reef	5	23	14	30	23	15	30	155	31	30	155	34	30	611
Dart Reef	2	17	23	0	17	25	30	148	10	0	148	13	0	615
Diamond Islets	15	17	24	0	17	41	0	150	47	0	151	7	0	614
Diane Bank	5	15	42	0	16	18	0	149	28	0	149	45	0	617
Flinders Reefs	15	17	22	30	17	53	30	148	16	0	148	36	0	615
Flora Reef	2	16	43	30	16	46	30	147	41	30	147	46	30	615
Frederick Reefs	5	20	55	0	21	2	0	154	20	30	154	24	30	612
Heralds Surprise	2	17	18	30	17	20	0	148	26	0	148	29	30	615
Holmes Reef	15	16	22	30	16	33	0	147	47	30	148	6	0	615

Kenn Reefs	10	21	5	30	21	17	0	155	42	0	155	48	0	611
Malay Reefs	2	17	54	0	18	0	0	149	17	0	149	23	30	4602
McDermott Bank	5	17	10	30	17	18	0	147	47	0	147	55	30	4602
Mellish Reef	5	17	20	30	17	26	30	155	50	0	155	53	0	611
Moore Reefs	5	16	0	0	16	3	30	149	7	30	149	11	0	4602
Osprey Reef	10	13	47	30	14	1	30	146	32	30	146	43	0	616
Shark Reef	2	14	4	0	14	12	0	146	45	30	146	52	30	616
Tregrosse Reefs	5	17	41	0	17	48	0	150	29	30	150	47	0	4602
Willis Islets	15	16	6	0	16	19	0	149	56	0	150	3	0	617
Wreck Reefs	15	22	9	30	22	13	30	155	9	0	155	29	30	611

Note: Column A is the northern boundary, Column B the southern, Column C the western and Column D the eastern.

3 Management Arrangements

The Coral Sea Fishery (CSF) is managed by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) in consultation with a range of stakeholders under the *Fisheries Management Act 1991* (the Act). Policies such as harvest strategies, bycatch and discard workplans and voluntary industry codes also contribute to the management of the fishery.

The CSF is managed through a combination of input and output controls as prescribed in the:

- [Fisheries Management Act 1991 \(the Act\)](#)
- [Fisheries Management Regulations 1992](#)
- *Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy 2018*
- Conditions on fishing permits

Participation in the CSF is limited to 14 fishing permits; this means that new entrants to the fishery must transfer an existing CSF fishing permit into their name before entering the fishery. A limited number of fishing permits are granted each year under the Act; these permits are subject to conditions set out in section 32(5) of the Act as well as conditions specified on the permits. Conditions depend on the sector and the particular permit may include limits on the number of persons able to fish under the permit at any time, gear restrictions, species size limits, catch trigger limits and total allowable catch limits (TAC) as well as spatial controls.

Through an approach known as ecosystem based fisheries management (EBFM), AFMA aims to minimise the impacts of Commonwealth managed fisheries on the marine ecosystem. AFMA's adoption of EBFM is a significant departure from traditional fisheries management; with the focus shifting from the direct management of target species to also considering the impacts on bycatch species, protected species, habitats, and communities. This approach is supported through a range of policies such as harvest strategies, bycatch and discard workplans and voluntary industry codes of practice. Management of the fishery is designed to be precautionary, recognising the low effort and diverse nature of the fishery, but balanced to allow for controlled development.

4 Harvest Strategies

There are four separate harvest strategies underpinning the management of the CSF:

- Line, Trawl and Trap Sector Harvest Strategy
- Aquarium Sector Harvest Strategy
- Lobster and Trochus Sector Harvest Strategy
- Sea Cucumber Harvest Strategy

These harvest strategies prescribe a range of reference points, or triggers, that allow for the controlled development of the fishery by requiring increased assessment and management actions with increasing fishing effort or catch. Triggers detect changes in the fishery based on catch composition, spatial distribution of catch and assessments of fishing catch and effort. The extent,

and therefore cost, of the management response to a trigger being reached is linked to the potential risk to the fishery and level of uncertainty it presents.

The current CSF harvest strategies can be found on the AFMA website at:
<http://www.afma.gov.au/sustainability-environment/harvest-strategies/>.

5 Consultative arrangements

AFMA consults with a range of stakeholders about any development, implementation and review of fisheries management arrangements in the CSF. The main avenue of consultation is the CSF Stakeholder Group which was established to seek advice on management and research in the fishery. The group consists of all concession holders and researchers directly involved in the fishery.

AFMA also consults with the Department of the Environment and Energy on any amendments to management arrangements as a condition of Wildlife Trade Operation (WTO) accreditation. Where there is an overlap in species and management issues with adjoining Queensland state fisheries AFMA will consult with Queensland state fisheries managers and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority managers in developing and implementing management arrangements for the CSF.

6 Licencing

6.1 Fishing permits

All CSF fishing permits are granted for the duration of the financial year (1 July – 30 June). Operators have three months to reapply for a permit following the expiration of their fishing permit. Operators must have a current fishing permit authorising their activity on board their boat.

To discuss licensing arrangements for the CSF please contact AFMA Licensing and Data Services during business hours on 02 6225 5555 or AFMA Direct 1300 723 621.

6.2 General conditions

6.2.1 Fishing activity limitations:

Concession holders must not fish outside the CSF if fishing activity has been undertaken in the CSF, unless prior approval has been granted by AFMA (also known as dual jurisdiction trips).

Concession holders must not transfer fish from one vessel to another while at sea, unless explicitly authorised (also known as transshipping)

6.2.2 Species limitations:

Concession holders must not take:

- Tuna or tuna like species, including fish of the family Scombridae (pomfrets or rays bream) but excluding mackerels of the genera *Scomberomorus*, *Scomber*, *Acanthorcybium*, *Grammatorcyrus* and *Rastrelliger*
- billfish of the families *Istiophoridae* and *Xiphiidae*
- any species listed under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- humphead Māori wrasse (*Cheilinus undulates*), except for Aquarium Sector permit holders who are authorised to take a total of 50 specimens during a fishing season (25 per concession holder)
- deepwater dogfishes of the following species – Harrison's dogfish (*Centrophorus harrissoni*), endeavour dogfish (*C. moluccensis*), southern dogfish (*C. zeehani*) and greeneye spurdog (*Squalus chloroculus*), unless explicitly authorised. In the event that deepwater dogfishes of the species specified are taken above, these species must be returned to the water carefully and quickly.

When operators are authorised to take sharks, specific landing requirements apply:

- Any shark (Class Chondrichthyes) dorsal, pectoral, caudal, pelvic or anal fins on board the boat nominated to this concession that are not attached to the shark's carcass
- Shark livers may not be carried, retained or landed without the carcass

6.3 Fish Receiver Permits

Operators in the CSF are required to unload their catch to a licensed Commonwealth fish receiver permit holder. Where this does not apply it is stipulated in CSF fishing permit conditions. Operators should refer to the relevant regulations for full details.

Fish receiver permits are granted for 12 months and cannot be transferred. An application fee must be paid to AFMA along with a completed application form. Fish receivers are required to complete the catch disposal record (CDR) as per the instructions printed on the CDR immediately upon receipt of the consignment.

6.4 Scientific Permits

Scientific permits are granted for the purpose of conducting scientific research in a specified 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 transferable.

For further information on obtaining a scientific permit you can refer to the Fisheries Management Paper 11 which is located here:

www.afma.gov.au/sites/default/files/uploads/2014/12/fmp11.pdf

or alternatively contact AFMA Licensing and Data Services on 1300 723 621.

6.5 Transfer of fishing permit

You may transfer fishing permits by filling out the appropriate application form and submitting it to AFMA.

AFMA must register the transfer of an permit unless:

- the owner of the permit (transferor) is being investigated for, or has been convicted of, a fisheries offence;
- the permit 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.

7 Levies

Operators who own fishing concessions that attract a levy will receive three separate management and research levy invoices. Each invoice being one third of your total annual levy amount payable on the fishing concession(s) you own on the date of invoicing. Levy invoices are issued in January, March and May every year.

It is important to note that levies are issued in line with the financial year, not fishing season.

7.1 Payment of levies

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

7.1.1 Need more time to pay your levy?

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 a penalty at the rate of 20 per cent per annum, which is calculated daily. AFMA will suspend and may cancel fishing concessions if 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 at www.afma.gov.au.

7.1.2 Fee for service arrangements

AFMA introduced revised fee for service arrangements for licensing and logbook services on 1 July 2013. The costs of providing these services are now charged directly to those using the service instead of through annual levies.

Licensing services will be charged at the time an application is lodged or a transaction is processed. Paper logbook submission charges will be invoiced in arrears in October, January, May and July every year.

In most cases, you can reduce the amount you pay for licensing services by using the electronic options available.

The licensing and logbook fee for service rates are available at www.afma.gov.au/fisheries-services/fees-payments.

8 Fishery Observers

A fishing operator **must** carry an AFMA observer upon request by AFMA. The cost of observers is met by industry through levies unless otherwise advised. CSF fishing operators must also comply with the following minimum observer coverage requirements as stated on their fishing permit.

The role of an observer is to collect independent, accurate and reliable data on Commonwealth fishing operations, catches and interactions with the environment by the boat and its fishing gear. This is achieved through:

- collection of 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

The role of the observer is not one of a fisheries 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.

Table 7: Details the observer requirements by gear type and sector in the CSF

Sector	Observer requirements by gear type
<i>Line and Trap Sector</i>	Autoline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boats must carry an AFMA approved observer for the first trip of the season (or after installing automatic baiting equipment) and every fourth trip thereafter if using a “Mustad” system or every third trip if using a “Best Fishing Gear” system thereafter). Other line: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boats must carry an AFMA observer on the first trip of the season and every fourth trip, thereafter.
<i>Sea Cucumber Sector</i>	There is no prescribed minimum observer coverage, with coverage being as directed by AFMA.
<i>Aquarium Sector</i>	There is no prescribed minimum observer coverage, with coverage being as directed by AFMA.
<i>Lobster and Trochus Sector</i>	There is no prescribed minimum observer coverage, with coverage being as directed by AFMA.

8.1 Requirements for Observer carriage

It is the responsibility of the concession holder to monitor their observer coverage and notify AFMA at least 72 hours prior to departure to arrange for an observer as necessary.

The master of the boat must provide the observer with safe passage, including adequate food and accommodation while the observer is on board the boat during the trip. 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, operate equipment and provide assistance to the observer to the extent that is reasonably necessary for them to perform his or her functions.

The master is also required to give the observer the information that is reasonably asked for in relation to:

- the boat; or
- its equipment; or
- fish taken using the boat.

Further information can be obtained by calling the Observer Manager on 0427 496 446.

9 Environmental management

9.1 Ecological Risk Management

AFMA's implementation of ecologically sustainable development includes the implementation of a Fisheries Management Strategy (FMS, formally Ecological Risk Management Strategy) which outline AFMA's approach to assess, analyse and respond to the ecological risks posed by Commonwealth managed fisheries. The Coral Sea Fishery FMS is yet to be developed, and is subject to the completion of Ecological Risk Assessments (ERAs). ERAs are the initial assessment stage that assesses the impact of fishing activities on the marine ecosystem.

ERA reports for the CSF were last completed in 2006. Due to low effort, low catch data and a lack of in-depth information about species abundance and distribution within the CSF, it was not practical to conduct a level 2 ERA for the effect of fishing. Instead, it was agreed that a qualitative risk analysis would be undertaken. Further risk assessment work was completed by CSIRO on all protected and chondrichthyan species. ABARES also assessed the risks that the CSF poses to target, bycatch and discarded species in the Aquarium Sector in the reducing uncertainty in stock status project.

Further information on the results of the ERA can be found on AFMA's website at:

<http://www.afma.gov.au/sustainability-environment/ecological-risk-management-strategies/>.

9.2 Bycatch and discarding workplans

CSF Bycatch and Discarding Workplans can be accessed via AFMA's website at:

www.afma.gov.au/sustainability-environment/bycatch-discarding/bycatch-discard-workplans.

The CSF Bycatch and Discarding Workplans were developed 2010 when the first round of Ecological Risk Assessments (ERAs) were completed. Considering the fishing methods used in the fishery and the low effort, the risks to bycatch and Protected species are considered to be low, and are dealt with on a case by case basis if they do arise.

AFMA expects the ERAs will be updated in the next two years, at which point the bycatch and discard workplans will be reviewed.

9.3 Bycatch handling

The 'Handling practices guide for commonly caught bycatch species' outlines the different species which fishers may encounter, and how best to return them to the water safely. A copy of the guide can be found at:

www.afma.gov.au/sites/default/files/uploads/2018/04/9853R-AFMA-Handling-Practices-Guide-Tagged.pdf

9.3.1 Shark and ray handling

In 2016, AFMA produced the “Shark and Ray Handling Practices” to guide commercial fishers on best practice for handling these species. The shark and ray species encountered in the CSF are different to those in the guide, however, they are subject to the same inherent biological risks. 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. This can be found on the AFMA website

(<http://www.afma.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Shark-Handling-Guide-2016-Update.pdf>).

9.4 Protected species interactions

9.4.1 How and when do I fill out a TEP form?

As a general rule, a Listed Marine and Threatened Species form (TEP Form: located at the back of your logbook) must be completed for all protected species interactions.

9.4.2 Reporting an interaction

- All interactions must be reported according to the instructions in your Daily Fishing Logbook.
- This means you need to circle yes in the box at the bottom of the logsheet and complete the Listed Marine and Threatened Species form (located at the back of your logbook). Return the form to AFMA with the corresponding logsheets.
- If there is an observer present, immediately inform them of the interaction. You are still required to report the interaction in your logbook.
- **Silky shark** is now a protected species and all interactions must be reported.
- All interactions with seabirds must be reported in the same way

9.4.3 What is an interaction with a protected species?

The Memorandum of Understanding between AFMA and the Department of Environment and Energy, 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:

www.afma.gov.au/sites/g/files/net5531/f/uploads/2010/06/mou.pdf<http://www.afma.gov.au/sites/g/files/net5531/f/uploads/2010/06/mou.pdf>

9.4.4 Which species do I need to report?

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) establishes four categories of protected species in Commonwealth managed areas:

- **listed threatened species or ecological community** – species or communities whose survival is threatened, e.g. those with low population numbers or those which have had a reduction in habitat or distribution
- **listed migratory species** – to provide protection for species listed under the *International Convention on Migratory Species*
- **listed marine species** – listed to provide general protection to Australia’s native marine wildlife to reduce the likelihood of population decline
- **all cetaceans** i.e. whales, dolphins and porpoises.

All whales, dolphins, seasnakes, turtles, seals and sea lions, syngnathids (seahorses, seadragons and pipefish), sawfishes (green, dwarf and freshwater), crocodiles, dugongs, sharks (great white, grey nurse, silky shark, shortfin mako, longfin mako and porbeagle) and all seabirds are protected under the EPBC Act. You must report all interactions with these species under the EPBC Act.

A full listing of protected species is available online at the Department of the Environment and Energy (www.environment.gov.au). AFMA has also provided a Protected Species Identification Guide to all CSF operators. For a copy of the guide contact the Bycatch and Discards Program on (02) 6225 5555 or bycatchprogram@afma.gov.au.

9.4.5 AFMA assistance with reporting obligations

To assist operators in fulfilling their reporting obligations, AFMA provides a protected species interaction summary report to the Department of the Environment and Energy on a quarterly basis; on behalf of fishers who report interactions in their logbook. These reports are published on the AFMA website under Protected Species

www.afma.gov.au/sustainability-environment/protected-species-management/protected-species-interaction-reports

9.4.6 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.

Operators who capture a tagged animal should:

- record the details in the Listed Marine and Threatened Species form, with the band or tag number inserted in the appropriate section of the form.
- record the following details in the comments section: tag or band number and colour; species identification or description (photos are very useful); size; sex; and time, date and position of capture.
- if the tagged animal is captured alive, operators should 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.

Remember: Don't get caught, just report!

9.5 Management arrangement for protected species

The CSF automatic longline concession holders must abide by the Threat Abatement Plan 2014 for the incidental catch (or bycatch) of seabirds during oceanic longline fishing operations (TAP). A copy of the TAP can be found on the Australian Antarctic Division website at: www.antarctica.gov.au

In accordance with the TAP, all seabird mortalities on pelagic or demersal longlines in the AFZ must be:

- brought aboard the vessel if possible
- retained for scientific analysis on board the vessel in a manner which will limit decay of the specimen and meet the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources requirements (using a Department of Agriculture and Water Resources approved bird bag if available)
- reported in the Listed Marine and Threatened Species Form in the logbook
- reported to the AFMA upon return to port and appropriate arrangements are made to transport it to an analysis facility.

10 Compliance

10.1 Compliance overview

AFMA's compliance and enforcement program is ultimately 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
- 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 benefits :

- **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

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

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 non-compliant 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 operators responsibilities.

10.2 Navigation regulations

Additional regulations were introduced regarding navigation in closures through an amendment to Part 9A of the Fisheries Management Regulations 1992.

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 \$5250.

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 greater than 30 minutes.

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.

Source: Risk-based Compliance information is available at [The Better Regulation Office \(www.finance.nsw.gov.au/better-regulation\)](http://www.finance.nsw.gov.au/better-regulation).

10.3 Vessel monitoring system (VMS)

10.3.1 VMS reporting

It is the concession holder's responsibility to ensure that any boat nominated to their concession is fitted with a VMS of a category specified in the register of AFMA approved units. This register can be found on the AFMA website under List of approved units:

www.afma.gov.au/sites/default/files/uploads/2018/06/AFMA_VMS_Type_Approved_June2018.pdf

The VMS unit must remain switched on at all times that the boat is nominated to a Commonwealth concession, including when in port or engaged in State fishing. The concession holder must ensure the VMS is reporting correctly before going out to sea for the first time and that no interference occurs with the correct operation of the VMS unit. On becoming aware of a problem with the VMS functioning, the concession holder must advise AFMA as soon as practicable via:

Phone: (02) 6225 5369 (if prompted, follow instructions on the voice mail) or;

Mobile: 0419 205 329; or

Fax: (02) 6225 5440; or

Email: VMSreporting@afma.gov.au

If the VMS is not operating or is malfunctioning the boat must remain in port until the VMS is inspected, repaired if necessary and AFMA has received confirmation from an authorised technician that the automatic location communicator (ALC) is functioning normally.

10.3.2 Directions to return to port

Depending on the circumstances, and in accordance with its enforcement decision principles as outlined in the National Compliance and Enforcement Policy, if a nominated boat's VMS unit stops reporting, AFMA may require the boat to immediately return to, and/or remain in port until such a time as AFMA is satisfied the problems with the VMS unit have been rectified.

10.3.3 Manual reporting

If a nominated boat's VMS unit stops reporting, the concession holder must ensure that the operator manually reports the boat's position at a frequency specified by AFMA.

The manual position reports must include:

- the boat's name
- the boat's distinguishing symbol
- the boat's present latitude and longitude (in degrees and minutes)
- the date and time.

Manual position reports are to be made by:

Phone: (02) 6225 5369 (if prompted, follow instructions on the voice mail); or

Fax: (02) 6225 5440; or
Email: VMSreporting@afma.gov.au

10.3.4 Temporary switch off (TSO) arrangements

A TSO is a formal arrangement that allows a unit to be legitimately switched off. If a nominated vessel is undergoing maintenance, berthed for an extended period or in other exceptional circumstances that render VMS operation impractical, the concession holder can apply for a TSO by filling out an 'Application for VMS Temporary Switch Off' form. The request needs to be made prior to the VMS being switched off. A TSO is not automatically granted, and AFMA considers a variety of factors, including previous VMS non-compliance and whether the need is genuine before permission being granted.

Completed forms should be sent to AFMA via:

Fax: (02) 6225 5440
Email: VMSreporting@afma.gov.au
Mail: Data Processing
AFMA
PO Box 7051
CANBERRA BC ACT 2610

Further information can be found on the AFMA website under Vessel Monitoring Systems <https://www.afma.gov.au/fisheries-services/vessel-monitoring>

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

10.4 Illegal/suspicious fishing

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 vessels or vehicles whilst offering a reduced price, questionable landing sites etc.) you can either contact AFMA's Freecall CRIMFISH hotline on **1800 274 634 (1800 CRIMFISH)** or you can contact AFMA's Duty Officer on 0419 205 329 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) as soon as possible after you discover the event. More information is available on the CRIMFISH page on the AFMA website under CRIMFISH

www.afma.gov.au/monitoring-enforcement/report-illegal-fishing-activity

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
- any photographs and/or other evidence
- if you sight a vessel you believe may be involved in illegal fishing please contact the AFMA National Surveillance & Response Unit, based at Maritime Border Command

Operations on Freecall **1800 06 1800** (attended 24 hours a day, 7 days per week).
Again all information received will be treated as strictly confidential.

11 Contact details

Coral Sea Fishery- Management

Senior Manager – George Day	02 6225 5331
Manager- Sally Weekes	02 6225 5520

Bycatch

Manager- Nate Meulenberg	02 6225 5428
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Policy, Environment, Economics & Research

Senior Manager – Ryan Murphy	02 6225 5433
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Licensing and Data Services

Licensing, Quota Management and Logbook

Manager – Anne Shepherd	02 6225 5361
Licensing and Data Officers	1300 723 621
Licensing and Data facsimile	02 6225 5440
Licensing and Data email	licensing@afma.gov.au
Manager, Electronic Monitoring	1300 723 621

Levies

Senior Debt Recovery Officer – Simone Pont	02 6225 5343
Licensing Policy facsimile	02 6225 5440
Licensing and Policy email	licensing@afma.gov.au

Coral Sea Fishery- Management

Compliance

Compliance

Duty Officer	0419 205 329
Compliance email	domestic.compliance@afma.gov.au

Domestic Compliance

Senior Manager Compliance Operations – Tod Spencer	02 6225 5312
Manager National Compliance – Adam Wade	02 6225 5563

Intelligence

Senior Manager National Compliance Strategy – Tod Spencer	02 6225 5312
Acting Manager National Intelligence - Jeremy Thuell	02 6225 5474

State Fisheries

Queensland

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries	13 25 23 (within Queensland) or 07 3404 6999
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Attachment 1

Acronyms

ABARES	Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences
AFMA	Australian Fisheries Management Authority
AFZ	Australian Fishing Zone
CDR	Catch disposal record
CPUE	Catch per unit effort
CSF	Coral Sea Fishery
EBFM	Ecosystem based fishery management
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
ERA	Ecological risk assessment
ERM	Ecological risk management
ESD	Ecologically sustainable development fishing mortality
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
PEER	Policy, Environment, Economics and Research (AFMA)
TAC	Total allowable catch
TAP	<i>Threat Abatement Plan 2014 for the incidental catch (or bycatch) of seabirds during oceanic longline fishing operations</i>
TED	Turtle excluder device
the Act	<i>Fisheries Management Act 1991</i>
TSO	Temporary switch off
VMS	Vessel monitoring system
WTO	Wildlife trade operation