

Guidelines for  
**commercial operators in the  
East Coast Inshore Finfish Fishery**



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This document has been prepared to provide commercial fishing licence holders and members of the public with a summary of the operations of the commercial East Coast Inshore Finfish Fishery. It is not a precise statement of fisheries law and should not be relied on as a complete or accurate representation of the legislative requirements that apply to the fishery. These legislative requirements are subject to change from time to time. It should also be noted that the operation of the fishery may be subject to legislative requirements other than those that apply under the *Fisheries Act 1994*, such as state and Commonwealth marine parks legislation and local government requirements (e.g. beach access permits).

Copies of the *Fisheries Act 1994* and the Fisheries Regulation 2008 may be accessed via the internet on [www.legislation.qld.gov.au](http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au) and users should seek their own legal advice.

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of this guide

This guide has been developed as a summary of the management framework for Queensland's commercial East Coast Inshore Finfish Fishery, both for people who operate within the fishery and for anyone else who has an interest in the way in which it is managed. This framework involves a complex series of broader species- and apparatus-based restrictions, as well as variations on these restrictions on the basis of the area of operation and/or time of use.

Because of the complexity of the issues involved, it is impossible to produce a simple guide that is guaranteed to fully explain every aspect of the law. The law is also subject to change, so anyone who wishes to fully understand all elements of these management arrangements must consult the legislation and cannot rely solely on this guide.

The legislation that establishes the management framework for the fishery is the *Fisheries Act 1994* (the Act) and the Fisheries Regulation 2008 (the Regulation). Copies of the Act and the Regulation may be accessed via the internet on [www.legislation.qld.gov.au](http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au)

It should also be noted that the operation of the fishery is often subject to legislative requirements other than those that apply under the Act and Regulation. These additional requirements include such things as state and Commonwealth marine parks legislation and local government requirements in the form of beach access permits. This guide does not deal with issues such as any fishing restrictions that are imposed under marine parks zoning plans. Fishers operating within a marine park should also consult the relevant zoning plan and associated regulations to determine if any additional restrictions apply.

The Queensland East Coast Inshore Finfish Fishery is predominately a net-based fishery, so this guide is largely focused on the commercial netting arrangements. Details of the general management arrangements that apply to the line fishery are not discussed and comments on the management of the line fishery are restricted to where they relate to a species that is also a component of the net fishery. There are also a small number of netting arrangements in the Regulation that provide specifically for the take of prawns. While these species are not 'finfish', these arrangements are dealt with in this guide for the sake of completeness because they are part of the same regulatory provisions that allow the take of finfish by net.

Please note that this guide does not relate to the net fishery that operates in the Gulf of Carpentaria. While many of the management arrangements are similar, the Gulf finfish fisheries are generally managed separately to the east coast fishery.

## 1.2 Description of the fishery

The Queensland East Coast Inshore Finfish Fishery is a multi-species, multi-sector fishery. Commercial operators primarily target a range of finfish species using a variety of netting methods; however, the majority of these species can also be taken by line. The method used to harvest the fish is determined by a range of factors, including regulatory restrictions, fishing efficiency, gear effectiveness and product quality.

Most of the harvest is taken from inshore waters, including from within rivers and creeks; however, some species—such as sharks and grey mackerel—are also taken in more offshore waters. The total area of the fishery includes all the tidal waters along Queensland’s east coast from the tip of Cape York to the Queensland – New South Wales border. The fishery therefore spans over 5300 km of coastal foreshores and encompasses around 75 major river systems and numerous smaller waterways.

While the species targeted vary significantly between the northern and the southern regions of the fishery, there is also significant regional overlap for a number of these species. North of Baffle Creek (24°30'S) more tropical species are generally harvested, including threadfin salmon, barramundi, sharks and grey mackerel. In the south more subtropical species are generally taken, including tailor, mullet, school mackerel, various whiting species, bream, flathead and gar.

Overall, the fish species (by common name and scientific name) that dominate the catch in the commercial fishery include:

- mullet (*Mugilidae* spp.);
- shark (primarily of the order Carcharhiniformes);
- whiting (*Sillago* spp.);
- barramundi (*Lates calcarifer*);
- bream (*Acanthopagrus australis*, *A. berda*);
- tailor (*Pomatomus saltatrix*);
- grey mackerel (*Scomberomorus semifasciatus*);
- blue threadfin (*Eleutheronema tetradactylum*); and
- king threadfin (*Polydactylus macrochir*).

In terms of its gross value of production (GVP), the net fishery is the third largest Queensland-managed commercial fishery, behind the east coast trawl and reef line fisheries. The GVP of the east coast commercial net fishery is valued at approximately \$27 million per year. Most of the catch from the fishery is sold on the domestic market in Queensland or interstate; however, valuable export markets exist for some parts of the harvest, particularly mullet roe and various shark products.

## **1.3 Restrictions on commercial netting**

Commercial net fishing operations are restricted in a number of ways, including:

- limited access through licensing;
- maximum net length, and sometimes drop;
- maximum and minimum mesh sizes of nets;
- restrictions on the types or ways nets may be used;
- restrictions on the number of nets that may be used;
- restrictions on the areas and/or times where netting may occur;
- net attendance requirements;
- requirements to mark nets;
- restrictions on length of primary fishing boats; and
- restrictions on length of tender fishing boats.

### **1.3.1 Limiting access**

To participate in the East Coast Inshore Finfish Fishery, commercial fishers must hold a valid authority to operate in one of the components of the fishery. The authority to fish in Queensland commercial fisheries is generally given in the form of a ‘fishery symbol’ that is written onto the primary commercial fishing boat licence.

The legislative requirements in the Regulation that apply to these symbols dictate the area that can be fished, the species that can be caught, the apparatus that can be used and a range of other relevant restrictions. Fishery symbols that allow the use of net apparatus in the fishery are: N1, N2, N4, N10, N11, K1, K2, K3, K4, K5, K6, K7 and K8. Table 1 shows a brief description of these symbols and the number that can be operated in the fishery. Under the Regulation there are also a number of fishery symbols that authorise only the take of particular species. The only one of these relevant to the inshore finfish fishery is the ‘S’ symbol, which authorises target fishing for sharks and rays in east coast waters.

As mentioned previously, Queensland's commercial fisheries are limited entry; that is, no new symbols to enter existing components of the fishery will be issued. All current Queensland fisheries are considered fully utilised; therefore, Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries (QPIF) normally considers that any expansion of fishing capacity in commercial fisheries is contrary to the sustainable management of fisheries resources. Preventing such an expansion of fishing capacity is an application of the precautionary principle—namely, that measures to prevent overfishing should be considered where there is a lack of scientific certainty about the capacity of fisheries resources to sustain additional fishing pressure.

Separate fishery symbols can generally be transferred from one existing commercial fishing boat licence to another; symbols and whole licence packages (i.e. a commercial fishing boat licence and associated symbols) are freely and regularly traded between operators.

If you want to run a commercial fishing operation, you must also hold a Queensland commercial fishers licence. This licence is for the individual and therefore cannot be bought or sold. To obtain it requires certain qualifications. For further information on this, and other general aspects of commercial fishing licensing, see the QPIF website at [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au) (click on 'Fisheries' > 'Commercial fisheries' > 'Getting started in commercial fishing' > 'An overview of licences, authorities and permits for commercial fishing in Queensland'). A commercial fisher may also require a vessel operators certificate if they will be driving the boat. For more information, contact Maritime Safety Queensland on (07) 3120 7470.

Many commercial fishing boat licences have more than one net symbol as well as other fishery symbols written on them. Many of these net symbols authorise common types of apparatus, as the majority allow the use of nets that are described under the N1 symbol. Each of the other symbols is in some way unique in the apparatus or area authorised. For example, all the symbols except N11 authorise the use of a general purpose mesh net, but only the N2 symbol allows you to use set mesh nets in nearshore and estuarine areas to target barramundi. These permitted activities and restrictions are set out in detail in the sections of this guide dealing with each of the fishery symbols.

Other restrictions on fishing activity can be imposed through a licence condition that is written onto the primary commercial fishing boat licence. One example of a restriction through licence condition is the area restriction under which you can use a tunnel net, as authorised by an N10 symbol (see section 3.4).

**Table 1: Brief description of relevant symbols in the fishery**

Symbols	General description	Number <sup>1</sup>		Annual fee <sup>2</sup>	
				09/10	10/11
N1	Net fishing using various nets along the east coast	150		\$250	\$290
N2	Set mesh netting in nearshore areas and waterways from Kauri Creek to Cape York (can also use N1 nets)	160		\$500	\$580
N4	Mesh netting in 20 m deep offshore waters from Double Island Point to Cape York (can also use majority of N1 nets)	5		\$2200	
N10	Tunnel net fishery in parts of Moreton Bay and the Great Sandy region (can also use N1 nets)	30		\$850	
N11	Small mesh nets (usually to take bait) on the east coast and in Gulf of Carpentaria	350		\$150	
K1 to K8	Beach seine netting along ocean beaches from the New South Wales border to the northern tip of Fraser Island (see Figure 3) (can also use N1 nets)	K1	2	\$500	\$580
		K2	3		
		K3	4		
		K4	1		
		K5	6		
		K6	3		
		K7	5		
		K8	15		
S	Target fishing for sharks and rays	150		\$580	

<sup>1</sup> Currently an estimate; allocation of new symbols not finalised at time of publication.

<sup>2</sup> Symbol and other commercial fishery licence fees are paid quarterly in arrears.

## **1.3.2 Other restrictions on commercial fishing**

### ***Codes of practice***

Fishing codes of practice can also be established to deal with issues that do not lend themselves to being controlled by regulation; QPIF anticipates that a greater number of such codes will be established in consultation with industry in the future. A number of Queensland commercial fishers abide by specific voluntary codes of practice, or environmental management systems. QPIF is also currently exploring possible mechanisms to allow a greater regional input into the management of fisheries. Commercial fishers will be engaged in this process as it is developed.

### ***Permitted species and bycatch***

The Regulation sets out for each fishery symbol the species that can be taken under that symbol. This is often stated in the form that ‘any fish may be taken, other than ...’ Under the Act the definition of ‘fish’ includes a range of invertebrate animals, including crustaceans, molluscs, sponges, annelid worms, and sea cucumbers.

Of course the majority of these ‘fish’ that are not finfish are not prone to capture in nets, and there are generally other more effective ways of taking them. However, unless it is specified under a Regulation that a species cannot be taken by a certain method, or that it can only be taken by a certain group of fishers, then net fishers are permitted to retain any that they take incidentally.

A good example of this is the mud crab; while this species is not targeted using nets, they do occasionally get entangled during estuarine netting operations. It is lawful for a net fisher to retain any legal-sized male mud crabs taken in this way. They cannot, however, use crab pots to commercially take mud crabs unless they also have a C1 crab fishery symbol written on their licence.

On the other hand, there are some species that cannot currently be retained even if they are only incidentally captured in nets. For example, coral reef finfish are excluded from the list of species that can be taken by every one of the net fishery symbols. Spanish mackerel are not excluded in this way; however, there is a separate regulation that states that Spanish mackerel may be taken only under a line fishery symbol by a commercial fisher who also holds an SM symbol.

The incidental capture of these other regulated species is currently under review (with the intention that a bycatch policy will be developed). Commercial fishers will be advised of the outcome of this review when it is completed.

## ***Catch limitations***

A number of species are subject either to take and in-possession limits, or to competitive total allowable commercial catches. These species and the restrictions that apply are discussed in sections 5.3 and 5.4 of this guide.

## ***Time and spatial ‘closures’***

There is an extensive list of areas where net fishing is restricted, either in total or in part. Partial closures may be in the form of a time closure or a restriction on the type and number of nets fishers can use, or the way in which fishers deploy their nets. These closures (or more correctly ‘regulated waters declarations’) may be for resource allocation or for sustainability reasons, such as protecting spawning fish (e.g. barramundi), or to reduce the potential for fishing to interact with protected species (e.g. dugong protection areas or DPAs).

These closures are summarised in Appendix A, with a reference to the relevant section of the Regulation for interested fishers to find out more details.

It is important to note that regulated waters declarations involve a restriction on fishing activity that is greater than would otherwise apply. Thus in regulated waters all general fishing restrictions apply that also apply outside the waters, unless a more restricted measure is put in place for the waters.

For example, a general restriction applies to the use of nearshore set mesh nets within 400 m of a jetty or wharf. Within some declared DPAs nearshore set mesh nets can be used but only if they fit within specific net lengths and other provisions. A net fisher must comply with these DPA-specific restrictions as well as continuing to comply with the general 400 m jetty restriction. The same comment is relevant to such things as requirements to mark nets and to be in attendance of nets (noting in particular that the attendance requirement of nearshore and river set mesh nets in DPAs is more restrictive than in areas outside the DPA).

## ***Attendance requirements***

Commercial fishers are generally required to be in attendance of their fishing nets when they are in use. Attendance requirements apply to all nets in the fishery, with the exception of set pocket nets that are used in some rivers to take prawns.

Generally, the requirement is for the commercial fisher to be within 100 m of a net; however, special rules apply to the N2 multiple set mesh net fishery, where

such a distance is impracticable, and for the use of offshore set mesh nets. In many cases attendance requires the commercial fisher to be 'on the water'; however, this is not relevant in cases where commercial fishers access nets from the shore, or haul nets onto a beach.

In all cases where net attendance rules apply, there is an expectation that the commercial fisher would have the capacity to reach the full length of the net(s) that are in use, throughout the fishing operation.

## 2. Important definitions

As mentioned previously, there are a number of netting restrictions that relate not only to where and when you use a net, but also to how you use a net. In order to understand these restrictions it is necessary to be familiar with some of the terms that are used. This section concentrates on some of the more general principles; a more comprehensive glossary of terms is provided in Appendix B.

### *Nearshore and offshore waters*

There are specific restrictions that relate to the use of nets in offshore waters, primarily related to the operation of the mesh net fishery that targets sharks and grey mackerel, and to the set mesh net fishery for barramundi that is based primarily in estuarine areas. Nearshore waters are defined as those waters outside a waterway that are less than 2 m deep at low water; offshore waters will therefore never be shallower than 2 m deep at any stage of the tide. It should be noted that the boundary between nearshore and offshore waters does not change with the tide—it is defined by reference to the water depth at low tide.

Generally, if none of the meshes of the net are in nearshore waters then the net must comply with any specific restrictions that apply to the use of offshore nets (i.e. the net is entirely in offshore waters). This recognises that the profile of the sea bottom is not uniform and that it is highly likely that closer to shore a net in use may be in both nearshore and offshore waters at the same time. If it is partly in nearshore waters, then the net in use is considered to be a nearshore net. The primary intent of these definitions is to restrict the use of larger mesh nets under an N2 in more offshore waters, while still allowing their use in nearshore/foreshore areas.

An example may help to illustrate this point. A fisher wishes to use a set mesh net in nearshore waters under an N2 to target threadfin, and at another time to use a set mesh net under the N1 and S provisions in adjacent offshore waters to target shark. The fisher must comply with the N2 regulations (i.e. they can use up to three nets of 100 mm to 215 mm mesh size with a maximum combined length of 600 m) as long as one part of every one of the nets in use is in nearshore waters at all times. As soon as the fishing operation no longer has part of every net positioned in nearshore waters, then the offshore set net provisions described under the N1 symbol apply (i.e. only one net can be used, with a maximum length of 600 m and a maximum mesh size of 165 mm).

It should be noted that nets cannot be used under more than one section of the Regulation at a time. This applies to using nets described under one fishery symbol (except in the N2 fishery where multiple nets are specifically provided for within a single section), or under two fishery symbols on the one licence. Thus the fisher in the above example, once they have one net operating in offshore waters, is restricted to the use of that net alone. Remember, the only provisions that allow the use of more than one net at one time are those that describe the use of set mesh nets in waterways and in nearshore waters under an N2.

It should also be noted that the preceding examples do not cover all aspects of the regulations that apply to nearshore, as opposed to offshore, waters—these are explained in greater detail under the relevant fishery symbol descriptions (N1 and N4).

### ***Waterway***

Specific restrictions sometimes apply to the use of nets in waterways, which are defined as including a river, creek, stream, watercourse or ‘inlet of the sea’. To meet this definition a water body described as an inlet must actually have the word ‘inlet’ in its official name; therefore, Tin Can Inlet is a waterway, but the Great Sandy Strait is not.

It is also often difficult to define where a waterway ends and nearshore and offshore waters begin. Unless otherwise provided under the Regulation, any reference to a waterway is a reference to all waters upstream of the shortest line between the waterway’s banks at their junction, **at low water**, with the body of water into which the waterway finally flows. This means that in some areas with extensive tidal ranges it can be difficult to determine whether fishing is occurring inside or outside of the waterway at high tide. If there is any doubt, then fishers should consult the local boating and fisheries patrol to determine if there are any local directions that clarify what type of activity is permitted in the area in question.

### ***Fixing and setting a net***

The act of attaching part of a net to something to stop that part of the net moving from position is called ‘fixing’ the net. The use of a ‘set mesh net’ involves fixing two parts (usually both ends) of the net to pull it tight and take the fish by gilling them. A set mesh net can be deployed either by anchoring or fixing both ends of the net or by anchoring one end and fixing the other end to a boat that is down-current or downwind in such a way as to pull the net tight.

This second practice is particularly relevant to the offshore set net fishery for sharks and grey mackerel, which may involve the use of a hydraulic reel to deploy and retrieve the net; this often means that the boat remains attached to the net when it is actively fishing.

### ***Length of a net***

The length of a mesh net is the distance between the outer ends of the mesh of the net measured along the head or bottom rope, whichever rope is longer when taut.

### ***Mesh size of a net***

The mesh size of a net is taken to be the average distance, when the mesh of the net is closed, measured across the diagonal of each of 10 meshes at least 30 cm from each other. The mesh of the net is closed when the inner edges of two diagonally opposing knots or corners of the mesh are pulled by hand in opposite directions so that the sides of the mesh, when the knots or corners are pulled, are as close to touching each other as is reasonably practicable. Pulling the mesh applies no more force than is reasonably necessary to pull the net material to its natural length.

## 3. Net symbols and associated methods

The following is a description of the net symbols and the general restrictions that apply in the relevant fishery area. The use of these nets is, however, prohibited or further restricted under a number of regulated waters declarations (see Appendix A).

### 3.1 N<sub>1</sub> fishery symbol

The fishery area consists of all tidal waters east of longitude 142°31'49"E, other than tidal waters of waterways that flow to the sea west of that point. Only one net may be used at a time under the N<sub>1</sub> symbol, and only one net symbol may be used at a time. A 14 m primary boat size limit and 7 m tender size limit apply.

All nets described under the N<sub>1</sub> symbol may also be used by fishers who hold one of the following symbols: K<sub>1</sub> to K<sub>8</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>, and N<sub>10</sub>. In the case of the N<sub>4</sub> symbol all N<sub>1</sub> nets other than set pocket nets, prawn seine nets and Noosa Lakes mesh nets may be used (see below).

Any unregulated fish other than barramundi, Spanish mackerel or coral reef finfish may be taken, noting that some other species are subject to restricted or zero catch limits (such as sawfish and spartooth sharks; see sections 5.3 and 5.4).

#### ***General netting***

The majority of the nets used in Queensland's East Coast Inshore Finfish Fishery are described in the Regulation by the term 'mesh nets'. This term is sometimes used more specifically by fishers to describe the types of nets designed to entangle or gill fish; however, it is used within the Regulation as a more general term for the group of nets that are used to take finfish (including by gilling, ringing and seining). Since a mesh net under the N<sub>1</sub> symbol can be used in such a variety of ways, the net is generally referred to as a 'general purpose mesh net' or GP net.

A GP net must have a mesh size of 50 mm to 165 mm. The following maximum net lengths apply in nearshore and offshore waters:

- a. south of the northern bank of Baffle Creek—800 m; and
- b. north of the northern bank of Baffle Creek—400 m.

South of Baffle Creek a back net may be used in nearshore waters if it has a mesh size of 25 mm to 50 mm. In areas characterised by large, open and shallow

tidal flats, this back net can be erected using a maximum of 12 stakes to create an artificial foreshore. The balance of the net can then be shot around the fish and hauled back to the staked section. The back net counts towards the overall length of net that is used, and it may not exceed more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the total length of the net being used. A back net cannot be used north of Baffle Creek.

Both ends of a GP net may be fixed for up to two hours if the entire net is set in nearshore waters and a more restrictive maximum mesh size of 115 mm applies. The intent of this provision is **not** to allow a set mesh net to be used in the way that nets are often deployed to target threadfin and barramundi in these areas. Rather, the intent is to allow for a ‘partial drain-off’ of the inter-tidal region (that is not within a waterway) to target smaller species. In such an operation the commercial fisher must also be within 100 m of the net and on the water the entire time the net is being used.

If a net is used under an N1 in nearshore waters then it **must** be used as a GP net; however, a GP net can also be used in waterways and in offshore waters.

### ***River netting***

A GP net may be used in a waterway (e.g. river, creek or inlet) using the same mesh size as in nearshore waters; however, the following maximum lengths apply throughout the fishery area:

- a. if it is used as a seine net—200 m; or
- b. if it is used other than as a seine net—400 m.

There is also a general prohibition on blocking off more than half of any waterway, so this will often effectively determine the amount of net that can be deployed. A commercial fisher is required to stay within 100 m of their net and be on the water, unless the fisher is actively working the net (e.g. hauling a seine net onto the shore).

The following rules apply to fixing a GP net in a waterway:

- a. One end may be fixed south of Kauri Creek; or
- b. Both ends may be fixed between Baffle Creek and Kauri Creek inclusive; or
- c. No part may be fixed between Baffle Creek and the northern bank of St Lawrence Creek; or
- d. Both ends may be fixed for up to one hour if the mesh size is no more than 75 mm between the northern bank of St Lawrence Creek and Cape Gloucester; and
- e. No part may be fixed north of Cape Gloucester.

## ***Offshore netting***

While a GP net may be used in offshore waters (e.g. as a ring net or straight shot net fixed at one end), it cannot be used in these waters as either a set mesh net or a net that is neither fixed nor hauled. A mesh net used in offshore waters in either of these ways must comply with the specific provisions that apply to that type of net. A net is considered to be ‘used in offshore waters’ only if the entire net is within the offshore waters.

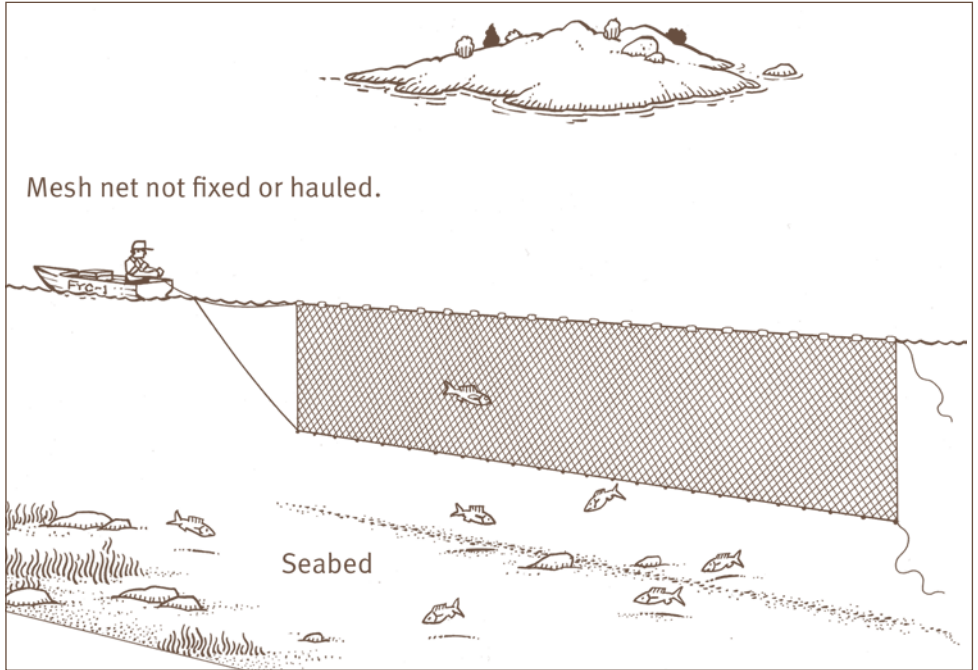
A set mesh net has been described previously. It is worth noting that the practice of setting the net by anchoring one end and fixing the other end to a boat that is down-current or downwind is particularly relevant in the N1 and N4 offshore set net fishery. Remember, a set mesh net under an N1 **cannot** have one end in nearshore waters and the other end in offshore waters; the net must be entirely within offshore waters. If both ends are fixed in nearshore waters then the net is a GP net and fishers must adhere to the two-hour limit and specific mesh size limitation.

A net that is neither fixed nor hauled is a mesh net that is allowed to move freely in the water, and is not fixed to a place or otherwise restricted in its movement by the person using the net. Attaching such a net to a freely floating boat does not stop it from being a ‘net that is neither fixed nor hauled’ (as the boat is free to move from position), so the net is not ‘fixed’ even though it is ‘attached’ (see Figure 1). As explained previously, if one end of the net is anchored and the other end is attached to a boat, then the net is being used as a set mesh net.

The use of nets that are neither fixed nor hauled and the use of set mesh nets in offshore waters are subject to the following specific requirements. In the case of a net that is neither fixed nor hauled, the net can be a maximum of 600 m long and must have a mesh size of between 160 mm and 165 mm. An offshore set mesh net can be a maximum of 600 m long, and the following mesh sizes apply:

- a. south of the northern bank of Baffle Creek—100 mm to 165 mm; and
- b. north of Baffle Creek—160 mm to 165 mm.

**Figure 1. Net that is neither fixed nor hauled**



***Set pocket netting***

A set pocket net is a bag-shaped set net placed across a current or tide to trap prawns. The net may be no longer than 10 m with a mesh size of at least 25 mm. Set pocket nets may only be used in the following places:

- a. Fitzroy River;
- b. Kolan River;
- c. Burnett River;
- d. Albert River;
- e. Logan River; or
- f. the following waters of the Mary River:
  - i. between longitude 152°46.22'E and the Old Bruce Highway Bridge; and
  - ii. between 'Tandora' and Crab Island.

A set pocket net must not be set within 20 m of a jetty or wharf or 100 m of another net that is in use.

### ***River and lake prawn netting***

A seine net may be used to take prawns in the following waters:

- a. Lake Weyba, if it is no longer than 25 m and has a mesh size of at least 25 mm; and
- b. tidal waters north of the northern bank of the Mary River, if the net is no longer than 100 m and has a mesh size of at least 31 mm in the pocket and at least 45 mm in the rest of the net.

### ***Noosa Lakes netting***

A mesh net may be used in Lake Cootharaba, Lake Cooroibah or Lake Weyba only if it is no longer than 1500 m and has a mesh size of between 50 mm and 175 mm. The net is used to take a variety of species, including mullet and sharks.

## **3.2 N2 fishery symbol**

The fishery area for the N2 set mesh net fishery consists of all tidal waters east of longitude 142°31'49"E and north of the southern bank of Kauri Creek, other than tidal waters of waterways that flow to the sea west of that point. Nets may also be used throughout the N1 fishery area of the type previously described for the N1 symbol. A 14 m primary boat size limit and 7 m tender size limit apply to the N2 fishery.

Any unregulated fish other than Spanish mackerel or coral reef finfish may be taken, noting that some other species are subject to restricted or zero catch limits (such as sawfish and spartooth sharks; see sections 5.3 and 5.4).

### ***General netting***

All of the nets that may be used under the N1 symbol may also be used under an N2; however, provisions relating to the use of nets under the N1 cannot be used at the same time as nets under the N2. While the N1 (and other net symbols) only allow the use of one net at a time, multiple nets may be used under the N2; however, every net that is in use must comply with the N2 provisions.

## ***Offshore netting***

Offshore nets may be used, but only as described under the N1 symbol, summarised as follows:

- a. set mesh nets:
  - i. south of Baffle Creek—100 mm to 165 mm mesh, up to 600 m long; and
  - ii. north of Baffle Creek—160 mm to 165 mm mesh, up to 600 m long; or
- b. nets that are neither fixed nor hauled—160 mm to 165 mm mesh, up to 600 m long.

## ***Nearshore set mesh nets***

Set mesh nets may be used in some nearshore waters under the N2 symbol. A nearshore set mesh net must have at least part of the net in nearshore waters, or on a foreshore, at all times. If all of the net is in water that is greater than 2 m deep at low water then the net is an offshore set net and it must comply with the provisions set out under the N1 symbol.

The intention of this measure is to restrict the potential to set these larger mesh nets in deeper waters to target big sharks. Reducing the take of larger breeding sharks is intended to support the sustainable management of this group of fish which globally have been shown to be more susceptible to overfishing than the majority of the more productive inshore finfish species.

North of Cape Flattery up to six nets may be used at a time in nearshore waters within a maximum spread of 1 nautical mile. From Cape Flattery to Baffle Creek a maximum of three nets can be used over the same distance. From Baffle Creek to the Burnett River only one net up to 120 m long may be used (and only in the time period February to August), and a maximum net drop of 50 meshes also applies. North of Baffle Creek the maximum length of net that can be used is 600 m, in any combination of net lengths across the maximum of either three or six nets. For example, from Cape Flattery to Baffle Creek a fisher could use one 600 m long net or three 200 m long nets; alternatively, they might choose to use one 300 m, one 200 m and one 100 m long net. Any combination is allowable as long as the total length of net does not exceed 600 m.

The mesh size that applies to nearshore set mesh nets is generally 100 mm to 215 mm. However, if a set mesh net is used in nearshore waters north of St Lawrence Creek during the barramundi seasonal closure (1 November to 1 February), the mesh size must not exceed 115 mm.

### ***River set mesh nets***

Set mesh nets may be used in some rivers and creeks under the N2 symbol. A river set mesh net must be entirely within the waterway in which it is used, noting that the waterway extends to where it joins the body of water into which it flows, at low water. Outside of this area the net must comply with either the nearshore or offshore set net provisions that apply.

A set mesh net must not be used during the barramundi seasonal closure (1 November to 1 February) in a river or creek north of the northern bank of Baffle Creek.

North of Cape Flattery up to six nets at a time may be used, within a maximum spread of 1 n-mile. From Cape Flattery to Baffle Creek a maximum of three nets can be used over the same distance. The mesh size that applies throughout is 150 mm to 215 mm, with a maximum mesh drop of 50 meshes. From May to August one of the nets in use throughout the fishery may be a minimum of 125 mm to allow the targeting of threadfin.

The maximum length for any one net is 120 m. There is also a general prohibition on blocking off more than half of any waterway, so this will often effectively determine the amount of net that can be deployed. The maximum length of net that can be used is 360 m, in any combination of net lengths across the maximum of either three or six nets. For example, north of Cape Flattery a fisher could use one 120 m long net, three 60 m long nets, and two 30 m long nets. Any combination is allowable as long as the total length of net does not exceed 360 m and the length of any one net does not exceed 120 m.

### **3.3 N4 fishery symbol**

A 16 m primary boat size limit and 7 m tender size limit apply to the N4 fishery. A Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) must be fitted to the boat and be in working order at all times the boat is operating in the fishery. The VMS is a satellite-based, near real time, positional tracking system for monitoring the location of vessels operating in a number of Queensland fisheries. Details on VMS requirements are described fully in Chapter 14 Part 7 of the Regulation and are explained on the QPIF website at [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au) (click on 'Fisheries' > 'Commercial fisheries' > 'Licensing, catch reporting and enforcement' and scroll down and click on 'Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)').

Any unregulated fish other than barramundi, Spanish mackerel or coral reef finfish may be taken, noting that some other species are subject to restricted or zero catch limits (such as sawfish and spartooth sharks; see sections 5.3 and 5.4).

### ***General netting***

All of the nets that may be used under the N1 symbol (other than the use of prawn nets in lakes and rivers) may also be used under an N4; however, provisions relating to the use of nets under the N1 cannot be used at the same time as nets under the N4.

### ***Offshore netting***

Offshore nets may be used throughout the fishery in waters greater than 2 m deep at low water as described under the N1 symbol, summarised as follows:

- a. set mesh nets:
  - i. south of Baffle Creek—100 mm to 165 mm mesh, up to 600 m long; and
  - ii. north of Baffle Creek—160 mm to 165 mm mesh, up to 600 m long; or
- b. nets that are neither fixed nor hauled—160 mm to 165 mm mesh, up to 600 m long.

In waters north of latitude 26°S and greater than 20 m deep, the net may be up to 1200 m long; however, the mesh size must be between 160 mm and 165 mm. The net may be used as either a set mesh net or as a net that is neither fixed nor hauled.

## **3.4 N10 fishery symbol**

A 14 m primary boat size limit and 7 m tender size limit apply to the N10 fishery. Any unregulated fish other than barramundi, Spanish mackerel or coral reef finfish may be taken, noting that some species are subject to catch limits (such as sawfish and spartooth sharks; see sections 5.3 and 5.4).

### ***General netting***

All of the nets that may be used under the N1 symbol may also be used under an N10; however, provisions relating to the use of nets under the N1 cannot be used at the same time as nets under the N10. The fishery area for the use of GP and offshore nets is the same as for the N1 symbol (see section 3.1).

### ***Offshore netting***

Offshore nets may be used, but only as described under the N1 symbol, summarised as follows:

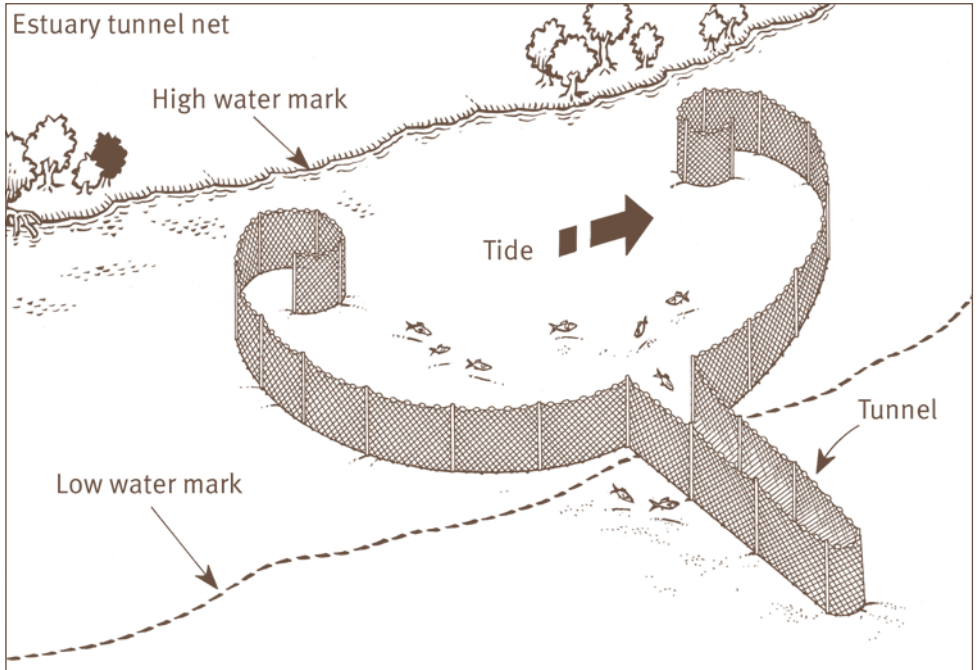
- a. set mesh nets:
  - i. south of Baffle Creek—100 mm to 165 mm mesh, up to 600 m long; and
  - ii. north of Baffle Creek—160 mm to 165 mm mesh, up to 600 m long; or
- b. nets that are neither fixed nor hauled—160 mm to 165 mm mesh, up to 600 m long.

### ***Tunnel netting***

Tunnel nets (Figure 2) are used in selected foreshore areas. They are usually set at high tide and are designed to capture fish as the tide subsides. The main wall of the net is open in the middle to provide entrapped fish with access to a blind tunnel that leads into deeper water. Once caught in the tunnel, the fish are usually removed by a scoop net and sorted (unwanted, undersize and other regulated fish are returned to the water alive).

The fishery area consists of foreshore waters other than in a river or creek in certain areas of either Moreton Bay or the Great Sandy region. The area in which a tunnel net may be used under a particular N10 symbol is restricted to only one of those two areas as described below. The accessible area is determined by which area the licence was primarily used in during the criteria period (12 April 1997 to 11 April 2008) when it was originally assessed for N10 eligibility. The area restriction is imposed by a condition written on the licence and is intended to ensure that the amount of tunnel netting effort in either of these areas does not increase above historical levels by shifting from one area to the other.

**Figure 2. Tunnel net**



**Moreton Bay tunnel net area**

Tunnel netting is restricted to within the following areas:

- a. mainland foreshores at the following places:
  - from Little Rocky Point to 800 m south of Point Talburpin;
  - 800 m either side of Moogurrapum Creek, Redland Bay;
  - from Point Halloran to 700 m south of Oyster Point;
  - from 800 m south of the southern bank of Hilliards Creek to 1 km south of Wellington Point;
  - the eastern shore of Fisherman Island to 800 m north of Wynnum Creek;
  - from Juno Point to the northern bank of Serpentine Creek;
  - from the western end of Sunnyside Road, Scarborough, to 100 m south of Seaview Parade, Deception Bay; and
  - from the boat ramp at the Fisheries Research Laboratory at Deception Bay to the southern bank of the Caboolture River.

- b. Moreton Bay island foreshores, other than the western foreshore of Cassim Island and the southern foreshore of King Island, north of the following lines:
- from Little Rocky Point;
  - to the southern tip of Russell Island; and
  - to the nearest point on the western shore of North Stradbroke Island.

### **Great Sandy region tunnel net area**

Tunnel netting is restricted to these areas:

- a. foreshores of Tin Can Inlet, Pelican Bay, and Tin Can Bay between the following lines:
- a line from the northern bank of Snapper Creek to the southern bank of Carlo Creek; and
  - a line from the southern bank of Kauri Creek to Inskip Point.
- b. foreshores of Great Sandy Strait and Wide Bay Harbour between the following lines:
- a line from the northern bank of Kauri Creek to Hook Point; and
  - a line from the northern bank of Pulgul Creek to the southern tip of Big Woody Island, and then to McKenzie’s Jetty, Fraser Island.

A tunnel net must not be longer than 1700 m, excluding the length of the tunnel. The tunnel must extend out to sea beyond low water for at least 30 m in water at least 30 cm deep and must be in place before the rest of the net is deployed.

A tunnel net must comply with the following requirements:

- a. a tunnel length of no more than 200 m;
- b. a tunnel entrance width of between 1.5 m and 4 m; and
- c. the following mesh sizes:
- i. in the tunnel—no more than 50 mm;
  - ii. for the part of the net within 400 m adjacent to each side of the tunnel—at least 25 mm; and
  - iii. for the rest of the net—at least 44 mm.

A commercial fisher and at least one other fisher must be within 100 m of the net while it is in use.

### **3.5 N11 fishery symbol**

Any unregulated fish other than barramundi, Spanish mackerel or coral reef finfish may be taken, noting that some species are subject to catch limits (see sections 5.3 and 5.4) and that different restrictions apply in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Mesh nets or cast nets may be used. A cast net must be no more than 3.7 m long and have a mesh size of no more than 28 mm.

#### **Offshore and nearshore netting**

A mesh net may be used in offshore and nearshore waters throughout the fishery only if the net has a mesh size of at least 12 mm but no more than 45 mm.

The net may be no longer than 400 m in the following areas:

- a. waters east of longitude 142°31'49"E and north of the northern bank of Baffle Creek;
- b. Moreton Bay (whole) waters; and
- c. the waters of Hervey Bay, Great Sandy Strait, Wide Bay Harbour, Pelican Bay, Tin Can Bay and Tin Can Inlet.

The net may be no longer than 600 m if it is used south of the northern bank of Baffle Creek, other than the waters mentioned in (b) and (c) above.

A back net may only be used in nearshore waters south of the northern bank of Baffle Creek.

A mesh net may be used in the ocean beach fishery (see section 3.6) only if the net is no longer than 200 m and has a mesh size of at least 12 mm but no more than 25 mm.

#### **Rivers and creeks**

A mesh net may be used in a river or creek only if the net is no longer than 200 m and has a mesh size of at least 25 mm but no more than 45 mm.

### **3.6 K1–K8 fishery symbols**

Any unregulated fish other than barramundi, coral reef finfish or Spanish mackerel may be taken, noting that some species are subject to catch limits (such as sawfish and spartooth sharks; see sections 5.3 and 5.4).

## General netting

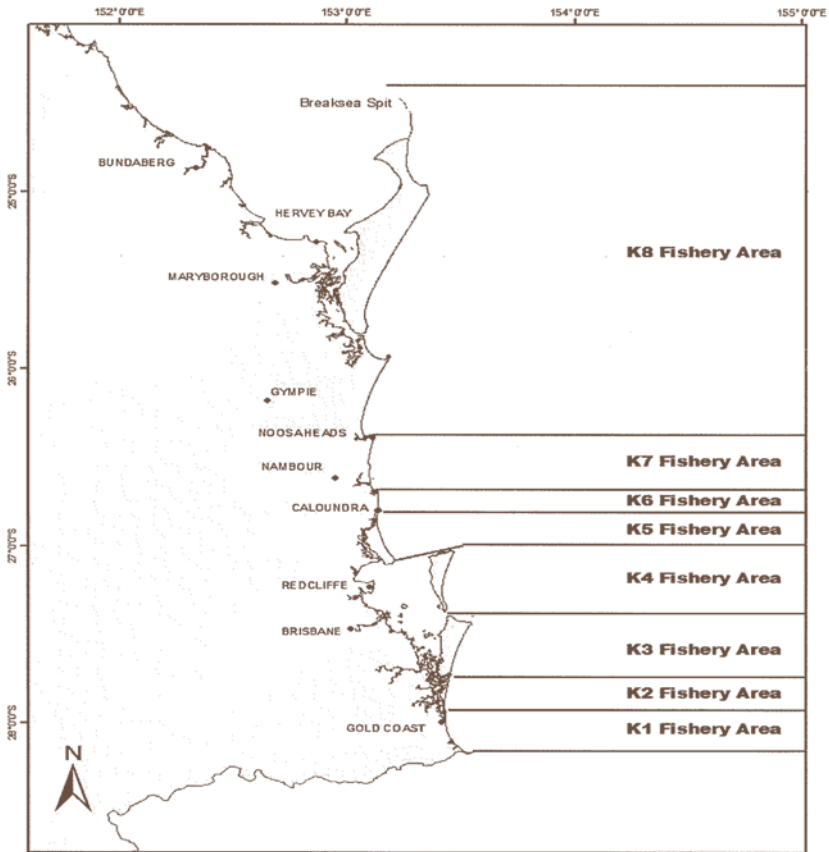
All of the nets that may be used under the N1 symbol may also be used under a K1 to K8 netting symbol; however, only one K symbol may be used at a time and provisions relating to the use of nets under the N1 cannot be used at the same time as nets under the K symbol.

The fishery area for the use of GP and offshore nets is the same as for the N1 symbol. The fishery areas for the use of ocean beach seine nets in each of the zones for the K1 to K8 symbols are shown in Figure 3 and described in Table 2.

**Table 2. Description of ocean beach fishery areas**

<b>Zone</b>	<b>Fishery area—all tidal waters within 400 m of open beaches in the following</b>
K1	From the New South Wales border to 1 km north of the northern breakwater wall of the Gold Coast Seaway
K2	From 1 km south of the southern breakwater wall of the Gold Coast Seaway to the north eastern tip of South Stradbroke Island
K3	From North Stradbroke Island's south-eastern tip to the island's north-western tip
K4	From the southern tip of Moreton Island to Comboyuro Point
K5	From the southern end of South Esplanade, Bongaree, Bribie Island to 26°49.5'S
K6	From the groyne at the southern end of Kings Beach to the eastern tip of Point Cartwright
K7	From the eastern tip of Point Cartwright to the eastern tip of Noosa Heads
K8	From the eastern tip of Noosa Heads to the northern tip of Fraser Island

**Figure 3. Map of zones in the ocean beach seine net fishery**



***Offshore netting***

Offshore nets may be used, but only as described under the N1 symbol, summarised as follows:

- a. set mesh nets:
  - ii. south of Baffle Creek—100 mm to 165 mm mesh, up to 600 m long; and
  - iii. north of Baffle Creek—160 mm to 165 mm mesh, up to 600 m long; or
- b. nets that are neither fixed nor hauled—160 mm to 165 mm mesh, up to 600 m long.

## ***Ocean beach fishery***

Mesh nets are used to haul fish onto a beach or shoreline in the ocean beach net fishery. Mullet and tailor are the main species targeted with this gear. In these operations a boat is used to shoot the net around a school of fish in a semicircle from the beach. The ends of the net are then hauled from the water, usually using a four-wheel drive vehicle or a tractor until the pocket in the middle of the net is in shallow water. At this time, the fish are sorted and removed from the net (undersize and unwanted fish are returned to the water alive).

Ocean beach fishery zones are in effect from 1 April to 31 August. Within this period the only nets that can be used in the area are:

- a. beach seine nets under the K symbols; or
- b. a 200 m long net under the N11 symbol as long as it has a mesh size of no more than 25 mm (see section 3.5).

Fish may be taken only by a commercial fisher and at least two, but no more than four, assistant fishers per K symbol. Two or more commercial fishers who hold a K symbol for the same area can work jointly; four assistant fishers are allowed for each K symbol that is in use.

A beach seine net must comply with the following specifications:

- a. no longer than 500 m;
- b. mesh size of at least 12 mm but no more than 70 mm; and
- c. a drop of at least 150 meshes for at least half of its length.

## **3.7 S fishery symbol**

The S fishery symbol allows commercial fishers to target sharks and rays. The symbol does not regulate the apparatus that can be used—fishers must also have an appropriate net or line fishing symbol in order to use that apparatus. Without the S symbol a commercial fisher is restricted to a possession limit of 10 net-caught or 4 line-caught sharks. There is also a range of fish form and size restrictions that apply to S symbol holders.

These restrictions are different from those that apply to the majority of commercial fishers (see section 5); however, S symbol holders must fill out a specific shark logbook and comply with particular directions on how they report their catch, as this target fishery is subject to a competitive total allowable catch limit (see section 5.4).

### **3.8 Bait net fishery**

Any commercial fisher is allowed to use a bait net to collect bait *for their own use* under section 247 of the Regulation. The nets that may be used, and the areas in which they may be used, are the same as those described for the N11 symbol (see section 3.5); however, the fisher does not have to have the symbol written on their licence. Bait or other fish can only be taken for sale using this apparatus if the fisher has the N11 symbol on their licence. However, bait taken for own use must still be reported in the net and crab fishery logbook (see section 5.6).

## 4. Other requirements

### 4.1 Marking nets

All commercial fishing nets have minimum requirements for marking with floats, and some nets require lights at night. A commercial fisher may use more markings than is required by law, and a fisher would be expected to use the level of marking required to ensure that their nets do not pose an unacceptable risk to other water traffic. Minimum net marking requirements are summarised in Table 3 below.

**Table 3. Net marking requirements**

Net type	Floats	Lights
General purpose and small mesh (N11)	One float every 20 m 15 cm white float at one end with fisher's name written on it	Not applicable
Offshore mesh nets	Orange flag on 2 m pole at one end One float every 20 m (except on a bottom set net in deeper water) 15 cm white float at one end with fisher's name written on it	If under 50 m long, a white light and a reflector at opposite ends  If over 50 m long, a white light at both ends
Nearshore and river set net	One float every 20 m 15 cm white float at one end with fisher's name written on it	If under 50 m long, a white light and a reflector at opposite ends  If over 50 m long, a white light at both ends
Tunnel net	Not applicable	A white light at both ends of the net and on the end of the tunnel

## 4.2 Blocking waterways and navigation channels

There is a general prohibition on blocking off more than half of any waterway, so this will often effectively determine the amount of net that can be deployed.

A set mesh net or a net that is neither fixed nor hauled cannot be used within a marked navigation channel.

## 4.3 Using nets near jetties and wharves

A set mesh net or a net that is neither fixed nor hauled cannot be used within the following distances of these structures within the following waters:

- waterways—400 m;
- nearshore waters—200 m; and
- offshore waters—400 m.

## 4.4 Fishing priority

A fisher can only hold a shot for a maximum of six hours without attempting to take fish. The distance around the boat over which such priority to take fish can be held is the same as the maximum length of net that can be used in the fishery being operated in, other than in the ocean beach fishery (see below).

The order of fishing priority in all net fisheries is determined by the order in which commercial fishers become 'ready to fish'. To be ready to fish the fisher has to have a commercial fishing boat and net that are both allowed to be used to take fish in that area. Two commercial fishers working together can only hold priority on one shot.

In the case of the ocean beach fishery, holding shot also requires that at least the minimum number of assistant fishers are present (i.e. two for each licence involved in the fishing operation). The area over which priority is held is identified by two orange flags placed no more than 1 km apart, and extends 500 m out to sea. The flag must have an area of at least 1 m<sup>2</sup> and have the boat mark of the licence claiming priority written on it.

## 5. Commercial catch limits and reporting

Fish may be regulated (i.e. unable to be retained) because they are subject to a number of possible types of restrictions. It is not illegal for a fisher to take a regulated fish unintentionally as long as it is released immediately into water deep enough for it to escape. A fisher must not allow a net or other apparatus containing regulated fish to be out of the water other than to immediately remove the fish.

### 5.1 Size limits

In Queensland, there are limits on the size (length) of many fish species. There are minimum size limits and also some maximum size limits that apply. Size limits are typically, though not always, based on biological information on each species' reproductive cycles. Minimum size limits generally allow fish to spawn at least once so they can contribute to renewing the population before they are taken.

However, in some species larger individuals contribute significantly more to reproduction, which is why some maximum size limits also apply. For example, most barramundi begin their lives as males and later, as they grow larger, become females. A maximum size limit protects large females and allows them to spawn. In the case of sharks and rays, these species are generally slower growing and mature later than the majority of bony fish. This can make sharks and rays susceptible to overfishing; the protection of larger breeding individuals can therefore be an effective management tool.

Generally, commercial fishers are subject to the same fish size limits as recreational fishers. The incidental capture of other regulated species that have low survival rates (for released fish) is currently under review with the intention that a bycatch policy will be developed. Commercial fishers will be advised of the outcome of this review when it is completed.

The size limits that apply to fish in the fishery are shown in Appendix C.

### 5.2 Product form

There are product form regulations that apply to sharks and rays. Some of these regulations vary, depending on whether or not the commercial fisher has an S symbol written on their licence (see section 3.7).

The fins of a shark or ray may be retained, other than for those species that are totally protected (see section 5.3 below). The practice of ‘finning’ sharks (i.e. keeping the fins but throwing away the body of the animal) is prohibited for **all** shark and ray species in Queensland. It is an offence for a fisher to possess a shark or ray fin on a boat without also possessing the body of the same shark or ray.

Other specific fish form limits also apply for sharks and rays. Sharks or rays cannot be divided by any fisher in a way that does not allow the number in possession to be counted reasonably easily by an inspector. This is intended to support the anti-finning legislation (as a fisher should have a corresponding number of fins and bodies).

Fishers operating under an S fishery symbol may remove the head, tail and/or fins of the majority of species, so long as the body corresponding to each removed fin is retained, consistent with the general finning prohibition. The exception to this rule is that the following species must be landed with fins and tail naturally attached to the shark’s body, regardless of whether the fisher holds an S symbol or not:

- guitarfish;
- shovelnose rays;
- grey reef shark; and
- white tip reef shark.

In addition to these requirements, fishers without an S fishery symbol must also keep any fins or tails removed from any other species of shark or ray **together** with the body from which they were removed. This means that the fish may be processed, but the fins and tail must be kept with the processed fish until the product is unloaded from the boat.

### 5.3 Take and possession limits

Take and possession limits apply to a number of species. The following fish cannot be taken and retained by any commercial or recreational fisher. If caught incidentally, these fish must be released with as little harm as possible.

- sawfish (Pristidae species)— for further information see QPIF’s *A guide to releasing sawfish* on the QPIF website at [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au) (click on ‘Fisheries’ > ‘Monitoring our fisheries’ > ‘Protected species’ > ‘Sawfish handling guide for commercial fishers’);
- spartooth shark (*Glyphis* species);

- sandtiger shark (*Odontaspis ferox*);
- grey nurse shark (*Carcharias taurus*); and
- great white shark (*Carcharodon carcharias*).

Reduced take and possession limits have also been introduced for a range of other species. These limits are shown in the table below. It should be noted that take and possession limits apply to some species once a calculated prescribed commercial catch has been triggered (as discussed in the following section).

Species	Limit	Applies to
Grey reef shark	1	All fishers
White tip reef shark	1	All fishers
Guitarfish and shovel-nosed rays	5	All fishers
Total permitted sharks and rays	10	Net fishers without the S fishery symbol
Note: These limits sometimes also apply to S fishery symbol holders—see below.	4	Line fishers without the S fishery symbol
Spotted mackerel	50 or 15	Net fishers  (possession limit depends on total catch level—see below)

QPIF has produced a shark identification guide to help fishers identify the various species. Fishers should contact QPIF if they require a copy of the guide, which can also be searched on the QPIF website at [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au) (click on ‘Fisheries’ > ‘Species identification’ > ‘Shark identification guide’).

## 5.4 Total allowable commercial catch limits

Total allowable commercial catch limits (competitive TACCs) exist for certain components of the fishery. The Regulation refers to these competitive TACCs in terms of a ‘prescribed commercial catch’, which is calculated using catch information provided to QPIF by commercial fishers in a way in which they are directed to do so. This information is generally provided through the commercial fisheries logbook system; however, in the case of the shark and ray (S symbol) fishery, the calculation is based on landing reports.

In all cases, commercial fishers are allowed to retain a reasonable byproduct limit of the TACC species once the prescribed commercial catch has been triggered. For simplicity this is also referred to in this guide as ‘when the fishery is closed’. The intention is to ensure that the total (including non-target) commercial catch does not exceed the limit set by the TACC. The reporting requirements and the level at which the total annual catch will be deemed to risk exceeding the prescribed limit are based on a level of precaution that is regarded as appropriate for the species in question. Thus the reporting requirements for shark, and the level at which the byproduct possession limits are triggered, are more prescriptive than for the other species in order to provide a lower probability that the TACC could be exceeded.

The Regulation requires QPIF to publish the status of the prescribed commercial catches in a form that is likely to be accessible for commercial fishers. This is achieved primarily through a recorded notice on the automated interactive voice recorded (AIVR) system, or ‘Quota Reporter’. Commercial fishers are required to ring the Quota Reporter to find out whether the Chief Executive has decided that the prescribed commercial catch has been triggered (i.e. will be exceeded if fishing activities are not restricted from a given date).

It is an important point to note that this system enables a commercial fisher to easily find out whether the relevant component of their fishery is still open. The Quota Reporter advises a date until which the fishery will be able to continue operating without the more restrictive byproduct provisions being activated. This date is a minimum of 14 days from the date on which the recorded message is posted, and the message is updated daily. This provides a degree of certainty for a fisher intending to undertake an extended fishing trip that the fishery will remain ‘open’ for at least two weeks.

Once the Chief Executive has decided that the prescribed commercial catch has been or will be exceeded, then the Quota Reporter notice is changed to provide advice on the date from which the relevant commercial fishery will be ‘closed’. Once closed, the notified byproduct provisions will apply until the commencement of the next quota year. There are no provisions for over-runs or under-runs of the prescribed commercial catch of any of the relevant species.

If a commercial fisher is on an extended trip and becomes aware that the target fishery will be closed before they can return to port, then that fisher must advise the Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol of their expected date of return. In the shark fishery the fisher must also use the Quota Reporter retained notice or prior landing report to advise the total catch of shark they have taken at the end of fishing the day before the fishery closes.

An overview of the limits and processes that apply for each of the competitive TACCs as at the time of publication are set out below. Commercial fishers will be advised of additional details and any subsequent change in reporting requirements in the form of a written direction from the Chief Executive administering the Act. All TACCs are expressed in terms of whole wet weight of fish; however, catches can generally be reported as either whole, trunked (or shark barrel), gilled and gutted (not sharks) or filleted.

### ***Sharks and rays***

Quantity	600 tonne prescribed commercial catch limit, divided at 24°30'S latitude (near Baffle Creek) into:  i. a 480 tonne northern component ('northern shark fishery'); and  ii. a 120 tonne southern component ('southern shark fishery').
Quota year	1 July to 30 June.
Species	The TACC applies to the take of all sharks and rays other than those regulated by species. Species to which individual possession limits apply (e.g. five for guitarfish) must also be counted against the TACC.
How it applies	<p>Sharks and rays can be targeted by S symbol holders either by net or by line; however, a 1.5 m maximum size limit applies to the line fishery. The 10 and 4 possession limit applies at all times to fishers operating without the S symbol. The catches of non-S symbol holders are also counted against the TACC.</p> <p>Operations of S symbol holders in the northern and southern areas are restricted to a combined possession limit (10 sharks or rays for net fishing, 4 for line fishing) once the prescribed commercial catch limit for that area is triggered. Fishing can continue in the other area until the prescribed commercial catch limit for that area is also triggered. All incidental catches taken after the target fishery is closed continue to be counted towards the TACC.</p>

Reporting	<p>Fishers operating under the S symbol:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. report in a ‘prior landing report’ using the Quota Reporter system the amount of target (i.e. greater than 10 or 4) shark and ray catches one hour prior to landing;</li> <li>ii. record all shark and ray catch (number and weight estimate) and who it was sold to in the S symbol logbook;</li> <li>iii. report in an ‘unloading report’ using the Quota Reporter system the actual weight of target shark and ray catches;</li> <li>iv. use the ‘retained notice’ in the Quota Reporter system to report target shark and ray catches if their fishing trip exceeds 14 days (with prior landing report at the end of the trip); and</li> <li>v. send the logsheet to QPIF monthly so as to reach the logbook section of QPIF not later than 15 days after the end of the calendar month.</li> </ol> <p>Fishers without an S symbol report catch in existing net and line fishery logbooks and send the logsheet to QPIF monthly so as to reach the logbook section of QPIF not later than 15 days after the end of the calendar month.</p>
Advisory mechanism	<p>S symbol holders call the Quota Reporter system to determine the status of the fishery (i.e. target fishery ‘open’ or ‘closed’) prior to fishing.</p>

### ***Grey mackerel***

Quantity	250 tonne prescribed commercial catch limit.
Quota year	1 July to 30 June.
How it applies	<p>Grey mackerel can be targeted either by net or by line. When the prescribed commercial catch limit is triggered, all commercial fishers are restricted to a byproduct limit of 15 grey mackerel. All catches count towards the TACC.</p>
Reporting	Report catch in existing net and line fishery logbooks.
Advisory mechanism	<p>Commercial fishers call the Quota Reporter system to determine the status of the fishery (i.e. target fishery ‘open’ or ‘closed’) prior to fishing.</p>

### ***Spotted mackerel***

Quantity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. 140 tonne total prescribed commercial catch limit; and</li><li>ii. 100 tonne prescribed commercial catch limit during which net fishers are allowed a 50 fish byproduct possession limit.</li></ul>
Quota year	1 July to 30 June.
How it applies	<p>All catches from net and line contribute to the catch that is measured against the prescribed limits.</p> <p>Spotted mackerel can only be targeted by line, with net fishers allowed a 50 fish byproduct possession limit from the start of the quota year. When the prescribed commercial catch reaches 100 tonne this byproduct limit is reduced from 50 to 15 fish.</p> <p>When the 140 tonne total prescribed commercial catch limit is triggered, commercial line fishers are also bound to the byproduct possession limit of 15 spotted mackerel.</p>
Reporting	Report catch in existing net and line fishery logbooks.
Advisory mechanism	<p>Commercial line fishers call the Quota Reporter system to determine the status of the target fishery prior to fishing.</p> <p>Commercial net fishers call the Quota Reporter system to determine the status of the byproduct fishery prior to fishing.</p>

### ***Tailor***

Quantity	120 tonne prescribed commercial catch limit.
Quota year	1 July to 30 June.
How it applies	Tailor can be targeted either by net or by line. When the prescribed commercial catch limit is triggered, all commercial fishers are bound to a byproduct limit of 30 kg of tailor.
Reporting	Report catch in existing net and line fishery logbooks.
Advisory mechanism	Commercial fishers call the Quota Reporter system to determine the status of the fishery prior to fishing.

## 5.5 Quota Reporter system

The Quota Reporter is used to give notices and obtain information on quota-managed fisheries. The system is used by commercial fishers to determine the status of each of the competitive quotas that apply in the fishery (i.e. whether byproduct limits apply) prior to commencing their fishing activities.

The Quota Reporter is normally available 24 hours by calling (07) 3017 0000. Access is restricted to holders of a four-digit personal identification number (PIN). The Quota Reporter answers a call and then requests the user to enter their licence number followed by the hash (#) key. The Quota Reporter then requests the user to enter their PIN followed by the hash (#) key. Once these details are entered, the user is then taken to the Quota Reporter main menu. It is then necessary to follow the prompts to the competitive TACC report for the specific fishery.

If the prescribed commercial catch for that species has not been triggered, then the following generic message is used:

‘The <fishery> is open for the <condition> until the <date>. To see if the fishery is open for <condition> past this date please check the quota reporter in the future.’

Using the example of the prescribed commercial catch of shark north of 24°30'S having not been triggered, the following message would be heard on 1 July 2009:

‘The <northern shark fishery> is open for the <commercial target of northern shark> until <15 July 2009>. To see if the fishery is open for the <commercial target of northern shark> past this date please check the quota reporter in the future.’

If the prescribed commercial catch for a species subject to a competitive TACC **has** been triggered, then the following generic message is used:

‘The Chief Executive of Queensland Fisheries has decided that the <condition> is closed from the <date>. The person in control of a boat must ensure they comply with the possession limits of <possession limits> in the <fishery> from the <date> up to and including the <end of season date>.’

Using the same example as above (i.e. if the prescribed commercial catch of shark north of 24°30'S will be triggered from 25 May 2009), the following message would be heard from 11 May 2009:

‘The Chief Executive of Queensland Fisheries has decided that the <commercial target of Northern Shark> is closed from <25 May 2009>. The person in control of a boat must ensure they comply with the possession limits of <10 net-caught sharks or 4 line-caught sharks> in the <northern shark fishery> from <25 May 2009> up to and including <30 June 2009>.’

## 5.6 Logbooks

Commercial fishers operating in any of Queensland’s net, crab or line fisheries are required to complete daily catch and effort logbooks. All retained catches must be recorded in the appropriate logbook for the fishery, even if the fish is not sold. For example, baitfish taken for a line symbol holder’s own use under section 247 of the Regulation must be logged in the net and crab fishery logbook. If such a licence holder does not have any net symbols written on their commercial fishing boat licence, then they may need to contact QPIF to have a net and crab fishery logbook sent to them.

Logsheets for all symbols written on the commercial fishing boat licence must be forwarded monthly so as to reach the logbook section of QPIF not later than 15 days after the end of the calendar month to which they relate. If a symbol holder is not engaged in fishing under that symbol within the calendar month, a nil return must be submitted. This requires fishers to fill in the top section—boat and fisher details (i.e. the ‘If not fishing for an extended period’ section with the appropriate dates)—and then sign and date the declaration at the bottom of the sheet. A nil return does **not** have to be submitted by a licence holder who sometimes takes bait under section 247 for any month when they have not taken bait.

As discussed previously, other reporting requirements may also apply in addition to logbooks. Logbooks detail where, when and how fishing took place, and what was caught. The Commercial Fisheries Information System (CFISH) is a database designed to store the fishing information from all licensed operators dating back to 1988 when the logbook system was introduced. Summaries of this catch and effort information are available on the Coastal Habitat Resources Information System (CHRIS) website at [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au) (click on ‘Services’ > ‘Fisheries services’ then scroll down to ‘Mapping and data services’).

By monitoring the information collected through the logbook program, CFISH helps QPIF to assess the condition of Queensland’s fisheries resources. This information is also valuable in developing fisheries management arrangements and helps determine the effectiveness of measures already in place. Reliable reports on the total catch of commercial net fisheries are important, helping QPIF to accurately assess the total impact of the fishery (see section 6.1).

## 6. Other relevant information

### 6.1 Sustainability accreditation

Publicly reporting on the status of Queensland's fisheries is an important aspect of managing fisheries on behalf of the Queensland community. QPIF provides annual reports on the status of our fisheries and ecological assessments showing the Australian Government that our fisheries meet sustainability guidelines.

Ecologically sustainable development (ESD) has become the international benchmark for natural resource management, including fisheries management. It is designed to balance the demands of modern development while sustaining natural resources for current and future generations. QPIF is responsible for managing the state's valuable fisheries resources, both commercial and recreational, and is committed to the principles and objectives of ESD.

The Australian Government's Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) also plays a role in overseeing the sustainable management of many fisheries by administering the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

The EPBC Act states that each Australian fishery must pass a rigorous environmental assessment and approval process if the fishery:

- exports product; or
- is conducted in World Heritage Areas (such as the Great Barrier Reef); or
- might interact with protected or threatened species in Commonwealth waters.

Sustainability guidelines have been developed by DEWHA, and Queensland-managed fisheries must comply with these guidelines to maintain export approval, and to negate offence provisions relating to the accidental interaction with protected species. The fishery has been accredited as meeting these guidelines subject to a number of recommendations and conditions.

Information can be found at [www.environment.gov.au](http://www.environment.gov.au) (scroll down to 'Environment' and click on 'Coasts and oceans' > 'Fisheries and the environment' > QLD managed fisheries' > 'East Coast Inshore Finfish Fishery'. Status reports on the fishery are completed annually and can be downloaded at [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au) (click on 'Fisheries' > 'Monitoring our fisheries' > 'Fisheries data & reports' > 'Sustainability reporting' > 'Annual status reports').

## 6.2 Performance management system

The fishery is subject to a performance management system (PMS). A PMS is not part of the regulatory framework; rather, it sets out how the sustainable use of fish stocks and acceptable fishery-related impacts on the broader ecosystem are to be achieved. A PMS provides detail about how the performance of a fishery can be measured and improved to meet the objectives set out in legislation or in policy. The PMS also provides a monitoring system that can trigger a review of the management arrangements. Should a trigger point be exceeded, the PMS may also set a particular response.

The PMS for the fishery is reviewed and updated regularly. It provides a guide to the sustainability criteria that are reported in publicly available annual status reports. Development of a PMS is also required under the recommendations attached to fishery approvals granted under the EPBC Act.

Performance measures developed for the fishery relate to:

- retained (target and byproduct species);
- bycatch;
- endangered, threatened and protected species; and
- the ecosystem.

The PMS explicitly states broad, whole-of-fishery objectives for commercial effort, recreational harvesting and shark management. It also outlines the methods by which fishery performance will be measured. Impacts on threatened, endangered and protected species and the ecosystem are dealt with on a whole-of-fishery basis.

A copy of the PMS can be obtained through the QPIF website at [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au) (click on 'Fisheries' > 'Monitoring our fisheries' > 'Fisheries data & reports' > 'Sustainability reporting' > 'Performance measurement systems').

## 6.3 Bycatch

A perception exists that mesh net fishing takes significant quantities of unwanted product, which must then be discarded (and therefore wasted). QPIF has undertaken significant research into this subject, documented through the project report *The effects of net fishing: addressing biodiversity and bycatch issues in Queensland inshore waters*. This research investigated fisheries for sea mullet, whiting, small mackerels, barramundi and mixed estuarine species

and made the following conclusions:

1. Inshore mesh netting has low bycatch rates. High proportions of the fish caught are marketed.
2. Released unwanted fish have variable rates of survival (e.g. 100% for bream and 33% for silver biddies).
3. There is no detectable difference in fish community structure between rivers open or closed to commercial netting, other than for reduced numbers of target fish in netted rivers.

Overall, this research indicates that the long-term impact on the fishery from net fishing is limited and that, appropriately managed, it does not compromise other management measures to ensure the sustainability of species taken in the fishery.

## 6.4 Protected species interactions

A variety of marine creatures are protected under non-fisheries legislation including the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (Queensland) and the EPBC Act (Commonwealth). These species must not be retained if they are taken in the fishery. Any interactions with threatened, endangered and protected species during fishing operations (including during down time, steaming, anchoring or drifting), whether or not the animal is harmed, must be recorded in a species of conservation interest (SOCI) logbook that is then submitted to QPIF.

Examples of species protected under conservation legislation include seahorses, seadragons and pipefish (in Commonwealth waters); sea snakes; crocodiles; marine turtles; dugongs; whales and dolphins; seals and birds.

## 6.5 Fisheries monitoring

In addition to the information gathered from commercial fisher logbooks, QPIF carries out a range of other fisheries monitoring programs to collect vital information to help scientists assess the status of fish stocks and help the sustainable management of the fisheries.

For example, QPIF established a Fisheries Observer Program in 2004 that collects information onboard commercial fishing vessels operating throughout Queensland. While there is no legal requirement for fishers to carry an observer onboard in most fisheries, those that volunteer to have observers onboard allow valuable information to be collected for the industry and its management.

This cooperative approach by government and industry has been undertaken to maintain an observer program with world best practice methods at a low cost to commercial fishers.

From 2009, the Fisheries Observer Program will have an increased focus on operations taking shark (both targeted and incidental) in Queensland's net and line fisheries. Fishers will be asked to help accommodate observers both at sea and at the end of trips so that they can collect important information from that fishery. This information is vital for a better understanding of the types and sizes of sharks taken and the frequency, location and nature of interactions with no-take or limited-take sharks.

QPIF also collects biological data routinely for key commercial species in the inshore finfish fishery, such as barramundi, bream, whiting, flathead, sea mullet, spotted mackerel, grey mackerel and tailor. These data are collected with the voluntary assistance of fishers and others involved in the commercial fishing industry (e.g. seafood wholesalers). In general, these monitoring programs aim to collect representative length and age information from the commercial catch.

To find out more about fisheries monitoring programs, including how you can get involved, email [FisheriesMonitoring@dpi.qld.gov.au](mailto:FisheriesMonitoring@dpi.qld.gov.au) or visit the QPIF website at [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au) (click on 'Fisheries' > 'Monitoring our fisheries' > 'Commercial fisheries').

## **Appendix A: Commercial net fishery regulated waters**

### **The following areas are closed to the taking of any fish (Regulation section 33):**

Coomabah Lake and Coombabah Creek  
Swan Bay  
Wolf Rock (grey nurse shark protection area)  
Tinana Creek Barrage  
Mary River Barrage  
Burnett River Barrage  
Kolan River Barrage  
Fitzroy River Barrage  
Keppel Bay (Middle Island Underwater Observatory)  
Hook Island (Underwater Observatory)  
Yanks Jetty at Orpheus Island  
Mission Bay (south of Cape Grafton to False Cape)  
Centenary Lakes, Cairns  
Barron River (Barron Waters)  
Bizant River (German Bar and the Lagoon)

### **The following areas are closed to all commercial netting (Regulation section 87):**

The Broadwater (southern part and western part) and Nerang River  
Gold Coast Seaway  
Currumbin Creek and Currumbin Beach  
Tallebudgera Creek  
Coomabah Creek, Oyster Lake and Saltwater Creek  
Coomera River (southern branch)  
Manly Boat Harbour to Wynnum Creek  
Brisbane River  
Brisbane Airport floodway channel to the Pine River  
Sandgate Pier  
South Pine River and North Pine River  
Currimundi Lake and Currimundi Creek near Caloundra  
Mooloolah River

Maroochy River downstream area and ocean foreshores  
South Maroochy River and the North Maroochy River upstream of their junction  
Weyba Creek  
Noosa River downstream of Noosaville and Noosa's main beach  
Lake Como, Kin Kin Creek, the upper Noosa River and Lake Cootharaba  
Rainbow Beach area  
Snapper Creek near Tin Can Bay  
Wide Bay Bar  
Theodolite Creek  
Hervey Bay (Point Vernon to Urangan and Woodgate)  
Coonarr Creek  
Round Hill Creek  
Eurimbula Creek  
Rodds Harbour  
Calliope River (upstream from Farmers Island)  
Fitzroy River (town reach)  
Cawarral Creek  
Causeway Lake, Shoal Bay  
Rocky Dam Creek  
Louisa Creek  
Pioneer River (upstream)  
Constant Creek (upstream)  
Reliance Creek, west of Eimio  
Seaforth Creek  
Victor Creek  
Proserpine River  
Pioneer Bay  
Bowen Harbour and Magazine Island  
Merinda Creek  
Groper Creek, Yellow Gin Creek and the Burdekin River  
Burdekin River Anabranh  
Plantation Creek and Seaforth Creek  
Barramundi Creek

Haughton River and the Short Cut  
Townsville Harbour and Cleveland Bay within 400 m  
Rollingstone Creek  
Herbert River  
Hinchinbrook Channel (Round Hill to Fisherman Point)  
Meunga Creek  
Murray River  
Johnstone River  
Russell River, Mulgrave River and Mutchero Inlet  
Trinity Inlet  
Trinity Bay (see section 89 for exceptions)  
Daintree River  
Bloomfield River  
Annan River  
Endeavour River  
Bizant River, North Kennedy River and Normanby River  
North Kennedy River  
Normanby River

**The following areas are closed to all commercial netting during the specified period (Regulation section 90):**

Lakes and lagoons south of Endeavour River	6 pm Friday to 6 pm Sunday
Waterways south of Double Island Point	6 pm Friday to 6 pm Sunday
The Broadwater (central part)	<p>a. 1 August to 31 August</p> <p>b. from 1 September to 30 November:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monday to Thursday 6 am to 6 pm</li> <li>• 6 am Friday to 6 pm Sunday</li> </ul> <p>c. from 1 December to the end of February</p>
Tallebudgera Creek to Burleigh	1 September to 30 April
North Stradbroke Island (northern beaches)	20 September to 1 April
Dunwich	1 August to 30 April
Moreton Bay (including The Broadwater)	6 pm Friday to 6 pm Sunday
Caloundra (Kings Beach to Shelly Beach)	1 September to 31 March
Noosa River (ocean foreshores)	1 May to 31 August
Fraser Island:	
• Tooloora Creek to Ngkala Rocks	midday 1 April to midday 1 September
• Hook Point to northern tip	midday 1 September to midday 1 April
Great Sandy Strait	<p>a. 1 February to 30 November—2 pm Friday to 2 pm Sunday</p> <p>b. 1 December to 31 January—6 pm Friday to 6 pm Sunday</p>
Waterways from Point Vernon to Cape Manifold (other than part of Fitzroy River)	6 pm Friday to 6 pm Sunday
Wild Cattle Creek	1 September to 30 April

Tannum Sands	1 September to 30 April
Boyne River and part of South Trees Inlet	1 September to 30 April
Port of Gladstone and The Narrows	6 pm Friday to 6 pm Sunday
Waterways from St Lawrence Creek to Endeavour River	6 pm Friday to 6 pm Sunday
Hinchinbrook Channel	6 pm Friday to 6 pm Sunday

**The following areas are closed to commercial nets of the specified type/use (Regulation sections 96 & 97):**

South of North Stradbroke Island	a net that is neither fixed nor hauled; or a set mesh net
Moreton Bay	a net that is neither fixed nor hauled; or a set mesh net
Moreton Island to Double Island Point	a net that is neither fixed nor hauled; or a set mesh net
Fraser Island (rivers and creeks)	a set mesh net
Pioneer River (downstream)	any net other than: a. a cast net; or b. a mesh net used as a seine net
O'Connell River	any net other than: a. a cast net; or b. a mesh net used as a seine net
Queens Bay	a net that is neither fixed nor hauled; or a set mesh net

Note that other general netting regulations also apply.

<p>The following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deepwater Creek</li> <li>Jenny Lind Creek</li> <li>Boyne River</li> <li>Auckland Creek</li> <li>Middle Creek (The Narrows)</li> <li>Boat Creek (The Narrows)</li> <li>Waters off Curtis Island (The Narrows)</li> <li>Montecristo Creek</li> <li>Mundurán Creek</li> <li>Badger Creek</li> <li>Mosquito Creek</li> <li>Barker Creek</li> <li>Maria Creek</li> <li>Seahill (Pacific) Creek</li> <li>Causeway Creek</li> <li>West Water Creek</li> <li>Island Head Creek</li> <li>East Creek</li> <li>Head Creek</li> <li>Mistake Creek</li> <li>Georges Creek</li> <li>Shoalwater Creek</li> <li>Styx River</li> <li>Middle Head to Norton Point</li> <li>South Trees Inlet</li> <li>Calliope River (area near mouth)</li> <li>Cattle Point to Cardigan Point</li> <li>Island Bluff to Charon Point</li> <li>Island Bluff to Charon Point</li> <li>Little Cape Creek to Shag Creek</li> <li>South Bluff to Coconut Point</li> <li>Carmilla Creek</li> </ul>	<p>From midday 1 November to midday 1 February:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. any nearshore net</li> <li>b. any offshore net with a monofilament diameter of more than 1.06 mm.</li> </ul>
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<p>Louisa Creek  Pioneer River  Seaforth Creek  Victor Creek  Blackrock Creek  Hervey Creek  Dempster Creek  O'Connell River  Repulse Creek  Dingo Creek  Inlet Creek  Constant Creek (area near mouth)  Elliott River  Rocky Pond Creek  Groper Creek  Yellow Gin Creek  Haughton River  Crocodile Creek  Alligator Creek  Ross Creek  Ross River  Bohle River  Cattle Creek  Palm Creek  Damper Creek  Nobbies Inlet  Burdekin River Anabranh mouth  Sheep Station Creek to Barratta Creek  Victoria Creek  Gentle Annie Creek</p>	<p>From midday 1 November to midday 1 February:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. any nearshore net</li> <li>b. any offshore net with a monofilament diameter of more than 1.06 mm.</li> </ol>
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<p>Hinchinbrook Channel (Seaforth Channel to Fisherman Point)</p> <p>Hinchinbrook Island (Macushla Point to Forkey's Creek)</p> <p>Meunga Creek</p> <p>Wreck Creek</p> <p>Dallachy Creek</p> <p>Murray River</p> <p>Tully River</p> <p>Hull River</p> <p>Moresby River</p> <p>Thompson Point to Flying Fish Point</p> <p>Mulgrave River</p> <p>Russell River</p> <p>Mutcherro Inlet</p> <p>Daintree River</p> <p>Annan River</p> <p>Barron River (area near mouth)</p> <p>Mossman River (area near mouth)</p>	<p>From midday 1 November to midday 1 February:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. any nearshore net</li> <li>b. any offshore net with a monofilament diameter of more than 1.06 mm.</li> </ul>
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**The following areas are defined as Zone A Dugong Protection Areas (Regulation Chapter 2 Part 11):**

Name of DPA A	Restrictions
<p><b>Hervey Bay–Tin Can Bay</b></p> <p><b>1. Greater DPA</b> Hervey Bay south of latitude 25°01'01"S and west of longitude 153°E, Great Sandy Straits and Tin Can Bay</p> <p><b>2. Mary River and Burrum River area</b> Burrum River downstream of 152°35'50"E and the around the river mouth, and Mary River downstream of 152°54'24"E and south of 25°25'45"S</p> <p><b>3. Hervey Bay</b> South of latitude 25°04'30"S and west of longitude 152°40'12"E</p> <p><b>4. Hervey Bay–Great Sandy Straits waterways</b> Waterways except those otherwise closed, or the Mary River Mary River upstream of longitude 152°47'30"E</p>	<p>Offshore set mesh nets and nets that are neither fixed nor hauled must be made of monofilament &lt; 0.65 mm, 33 meshes deep, and used by at least two people.</p> <p>A set mesh net may not be used.</p> <p>A set mesh net or a net that is neither fixed nor hauled may not be used from 3 pm to 5 am from 1 July to 31 October.</p> <p>Three set mesh nets up to 50 m long and 50 mesh drop per net may be used.</p>
<p><b>Port Clinton</b> Reef Point to Townshend Island to Cape Clinton</p>	<p>A set mesh net or a net that is neither fixed nor hauled, or any net with a mesh size &gt;115 mm generally may not be used, except</p> <p>three set mesh nets may be used, up to 50 m long with a 50 mesh drop per net in a restricted area.</p>
<p><b>Shoalwater Bay</b> MacDonald Point to Townshend Island Reef Point</p>	<p>Any net other than a cast net may not be used.</p>

See Schedule 2 Part 2 for full area description and note that other general netting regulations also apply in these areas.

<p><b>Upstart Bay</b> Beach Hill to Cape Upstart</p>	<p>A set mesh net or a net that is neither fixed nor hauled, or any net with a mesh size &gt;115 mm generally may not be used, except three river set mesh nets up to 50 m long with a 50 mesh drop per net may be used, and nearshore set nets may be used in a restricted area.</p>
<p><b>Hinchinbrook Island</b> From the mainland shore at 18°12.795'S south to the Brook Islands, to Eva Island, to Hillock Point to the seaward end of the jetty at Lucinda Point</p>	<p>A set mesh net or a net that is neither fixed nor hauled, or any net with a mesh size &gt;115 mm may not be used.</p>
<p><b>Ince Bay</b> Allom Point to Cape Palmerston</p>	<p>A set mesh net or a net that is neither fixed nor hauled, or any net with a mesh size &gt;115 mm may not be used.</p>
<p><b>Stewart Peninsula–Newry Islands–Ball Bay</b></p>	<p>A set mesh net or a net that is neither fixed nor hauled, or any net with a mesh size &gt;115 mm may not be used.</p>
<p><b>Cleveland Bay–Magnetic Island</b> From the mainland shore at 146°39'E to Magnetic Island to Cape Cleveland</p>	<p>A set mesh net or a net that is neither fixed nor hauled, or any net with a mesh size &gt;115 mm may not be used.</p>

**The following areas are defined as Zone B Dugong Protection Areas (Regulation Chapter 2 Part 12):**

<b>Name of DPA B</b>	<b>Restrictions in all DPA B areas</b>
<b>Port of Gladstone–Rodds Bay</b> Friend Point to Curtis Island to Facing Island to Rodds Peninsula	A general purpose net with a mesh size of > 115 mm or that is fixed at more than one part of the net.
<b>Clairview Bluff–Carmilla Creek</b> Carmilla Creek to Clairview Bluff	A net that is neither fixed nor hauled in nearshore waters.
<b>Llewellyn Bay</b> Freshwater Point to Allom Point	A set mesh net or a net that is neither fixed nor hauled in offshore waters within 2 km of the high water mark other than if the net does not touch the seabed or sink below the surface.
<b>Ball Bay–Sand Bay</b> Ball Bay and Sand Bay	River set mesh nets if the nets are more than 800 m apart.
<b>Repulse Bay</b> From Rocky Point to longitude 148°49'44"E	A nearshore set mesh net unless:
<b>Edgecumbe Bay–Bowen</b> From the mainland shore at 148°11'10"E to Gloucester Island to Cape Gloucester	a. each net is no longer than 200 m b. the distance between the first and last net is no more than 1 km
<b>Bowling Green Bay</b> Cape Cleveland to Cape Bowling Green	c. the nets are no more than 800 m apart.
<b>Lucinda to Allingham–Halifax Bay</b> Lucinda Point to Allingham	

See Schedule 2 Part 2 for full area description and note that other general netting restrictions will also apply.

## Appendix B: Glossary of terms

**Back net:** Part of a mesh net that:

- a. is part of the total length of a mesh net;
- b. is no more than one quarter of the total length of the mesh net being used;
- c. is supported by no more than 12 stakes;
- d. if it is being used to take fish as part of a ring or seine net, remains in the water while the ring or seine net is being used; and
- e. is used as an artificial shore for concentrating fish to remove them from the water.

**Fix:** To attach or anchor a net or part of a net to a place or thing to prevent the net or the part of the net from moving away from its position.

**Foreshore:** Parts of the banks, bed, reefs, shoals, shore and other land between high water and low water.

**General purpose mesh net:** A mesh net used other than as a set mesh net, or as a net that is neither fixed nor hauled in offshore waters.

**Haul:** To gather or retrieve a net or a part of a net, without the use of a boat, for taking fish.

**Mesh net:** A net suspended vertically through a water column that can be used, for example, as a general purpose mesh net, ring net, seine net, set mesh net or net that is neither fixed nor hauled, but does not include a net that is hauled by use of a boat for taking fish.

**Monofilament diameter (of a net):** The average diameter of the monofilament of 10 meshes of the net, each of which is at least 30 cm from the other 9.

**Nearshore waters:** Tidal waters that are less than 2 m deep at low water; however, nearshore waters do not include waters in a river or creek upstream of a line across its banks at low water.

**Net that is neither fixed nor hauled:** A mesh net that, while it is being used for taking fish, is:

- a. allowed to move freely in the water; and
- b. is not fixed to a place or otherwise restricted in its movement by the person using the net.

**Offshore waters:** Tidal waters that are at least 2 m deep at low water. However, offshore waters do not include waters in a river or creek upstream of a line across its banks at low water or in an inlet.

**Seine net:** A mesh net, with or without a pocket, which can be:

- a. shot in a way that partly encircles the fish being targeted; and
- b. hauled in a way that concentrates the fish in an area for taking them.

**Set mesh net:** A net that has:

- a. two or more points of the net fixed to the ground or a thing to prevent the net from moving from the position in which it is set; or
- b. a point of the net fixed to a boat and another point of the net fixed to the ground or a thing.

**Waterway:** Includes a river, creek, stream, watercourse or inlet of the sea. A reference to a waterway is a reference to all waters upstream of the shortest line between the banks at their junction, at low water, with the body of water into which the waterway finally flows, and includes the foreshores of the waterway.

## Appendix C: Fish sizes

Species	Size limit	Exceptions
Sharks and rays	150 cm maximum or 60 cm interdorsal length	S symbol holders who take the fish by net
Amberjack	75 cm	
Samson fish	75 cm	
Barramundi	58–120 cm	
Bream—tarwhine, pikey, yellowfin	25 cm	Until 1 March 2010 a 23 cm size limit applies
Estuary cod—blackspot and goldspot	38–120 cm	
Flathead—bar-tailed and sand	30 cm	
Flathead—dusky (mud)	40–75 cm	
Golden snapper (fingermark)	35 cm	
Grass emperor	30 cm	
Javelin—silver (small spotted grunter)	30 cm	
Javelin—barred (spotted grunter)	40 cm	
Jewfish—black	75 cm	
Kingfish—black (cobia)	75 cm	
Kingfish—yellowtail	60 cm	
Luderick (black bream)	30 cm	
Mackerel—grey	60 cm	
Mackerel—spotted	60 cm	
Mackerel—school	50 cm	
Mackerel—shark	50 cm	
Mahi mahi (dolphin fish)	60 cm	
Mangrove jack	35 cm	
Mullet—diamond scale	30 cm	

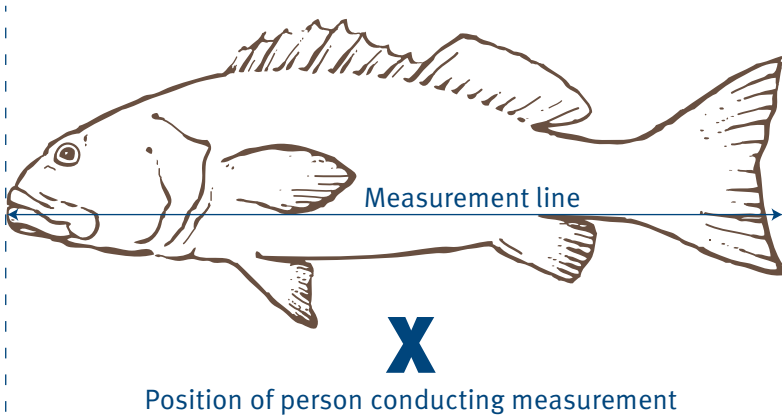
Species	Size limit	Exceptions
Mullet—sea	30 cm	
Mulloway	75 cm	
Queenfish (giant)	50 cm	
Swallowtail dart	30 cm	
Tailor	35 cm	Until 1 March 2010 a 30 cm size limit applies
Threadfin—king	60 cm	
Threadfin—blue	40 cm	
Wahoo	75 cm	
Whiting—golden lined	23 cm	
Whiting—northern	23 cm	
Whiting—sand (summer)	23 cm	

### ***Measuring fish***

The size of the fish must be measured without manipulating the fish, other than to the extent reasonably necessary to allow the fish to be measured as required.

#### **Total length (finfish)**

- When measuring flathead, sharks or rays—measure the distance of a straight horizontal line along the centre of the fish’s underside from the fish’s foremost point to the end of its tail.
- When measuring another finfish—while the fish is lying on its side with mouth closed, measure the distance of a straight horizontal line (along the fish’s side) from its mouth to the point corresponding with the end of the longest part of the tail.

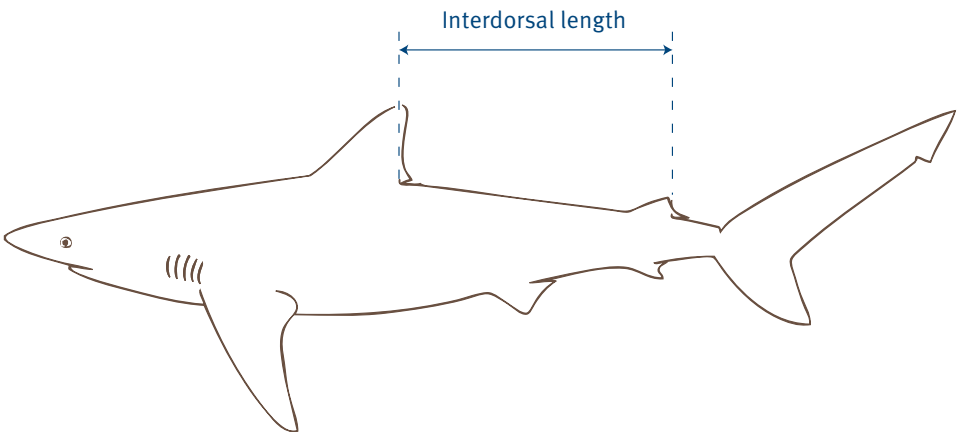


### Interdorsal length (sharks, guitarfish and shovelnose rays)

Measure the distance of a straight line between:

- the point on the body where the back edge of the first dorsal fin attaches to it; and
- the point on the body where the back edge of the second dorsal fin attaches to it.

This is shown as the distance between the two vertical lines in the diagram below.



Note: An interdorsal length cannot be applied to skates and stingrays, so only the total length requirement is relevant for this group.

## Appendix D: Contacts and additional information

**Fishwatch hotline:** You can protect Queensland’s fisheries resources by reporting any suspected illegal fishing activities to the 24-hour, toll-free Fishwatch hotline on **1800 017 116**. This number is not to be used for general enquiries.

**Management agency:** Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries  
Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation  
Level 2 Primary Industries Building 80 Ann Street  
Brisbane  
GPO Box 46 Brisbane Queensland 4001

**Website:** [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au)

**Phone:** 13 25 23

**Key Staff:** Mr Mark Lightowler  
Manager, Crab and Estuarine Fisheries  
Phone: (07) 3225 1897

Mr Shane Hansford  
Principal Fisheries Management Officer  
Phone: (07) 3405 6825

Ms Tara Smith  
Fisheries Management Officer  
Phone: (07) 3255 1855

Quota Reporter (normally available 24 hours)  
Phone: (07) 3017 0000

Mr Tom Roberts  
Manager, Quota Monitoring Unit  
Phone: (07) 3224 8885

Mr Doug Zahmel  
Logbook Coordinator  
Phone: (07) 3227 6544

Julia Davies  
Observer Coordinator  
Phone: (07) 3225 1898

## Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol offices

<b>Airlie Beach:</b>	Combined Marine Operations Base, Shingley Drive, Airlie Beach Phone: (07) 4946 7003
<b>Bowen:</b>	6 Herbert Street, Bowen Phone: (07) 4786 3444
<b>Brisbane (Pinkenba):</b>	Marine Operations Base, MacArthur Avenue East, Pinkenba Phone: (07) 3860 3502
<b>Bundaberg:</b>	Enterprise Street, Bundaberg Phone: (07) 4131 5817
<b>Cairns:</b>	64–66 Tingira Street, Portsmith, Cairns Phone: (07) 4035 0700
<b>Gladstone:</b>	Alf O'Rourke Drive, Gladstone Marina Phone: (07) 4972 0699
<b>Gold Coast:</b>	40–44 Sea World Drive, Main Beach Phone: (07) 5583 5500
<b>Hervey Bay:</b>	Buccaneer Avenue, Urangan Phone: (07) 4125 3989
<b>Ingham:</b>	7 Haigh Street, Ingham Phone: (07) 4776 1611
<b>Karumba:</b>	8 Palmer Street, The Point, Karumba Phone: (07) 4745 9142
<b>Longreach:</b>	Landsborough Highway, Longreach Phone: (07) 4658 4400
<b>Mackay:</b>	QPIF Building, Tennyson Street, Mackay Phone: (07) 4967 0724
<b>Mooloolaba:</b>	Parkyn Parade, Mooloolaba Phone: (07) 5444 4599
<b>Noosa:</b>	Russell Street, Noosaville Phone: (07) 5449 7555

<b>Port Douglas:</b>	Ashford Avenue, Port Douglas Phone: (07) 4099 5160
<b>Redland Bay:</b>	Redlands Research Station, 26–40 Delancey Street, Cleveland Phone: (07) 3824 9546
<b>Regional Office North and Community Relations</b>	180–202 River Boulevard, Townsville Phone: (07) 4760 1590
<b>Roma:</b>	Roma Research Station 290 Raglan Street, Roma Phone: (07) 4622 9999
<b>Thursday Island:</b>	38 Victoria Parade, Thursday Island Phone: (07) 4069 1772
<b>Townsville:</b>	60 Ross Street, South Townsville Phone: (07) 4772 7311
<b>Weipa:</b>	Kerr Point Road, Evans Landing, Weipa Phone: (07) 4069 8114
<b>Wondai:</b>	32 Bramston Street, Wondai Phone: (07) 4168 5990
<b>Yeppoon:</b>	John Howes Drive, Rosslyn Bay Phone: (07) 4933 6404

To access complete copies of the *Fisheries Act 1994* and other fisheries legislation, visit [www.legislation.qld.gov.au](http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au)

Information on other relevant legislation may be found at [www.afma.gov.au](http://www.afma.gov.au) and [www.environment.gov.au](http://www.environment.gov.au) (federal), [www.gbrmpa.gov.au](http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au) (Great Barrier Reef Marine Park) and [www.epa.qld.gov.au](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au) (Queensland Marine Parks).









