



Management Plan for the South Australian Charter Boat Fishery (2022)

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All Enquiries

Department of Primary Industries and Regions
2 Hamra Ave,
WEST BEACH, SA 5024
www.pir.sa.gov.au/fisheries
Tel: 08 82075400

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1. Fishery to which this plan applies

This management plan applies to the South Australian Charter Boat Fishery (CBF), which is formally constituted by the *Fisheries Management (Charter Boat Fishery) Regulations 2016* (the regulations).

2. Consistency with other management plans

The aquatic resources accessed by recreational fishers, for which the CBF provides a platform, are also subject to a number of existing commercial fishery and recreational fishing management plans. This management plan has been developed to be consistent with other management plans.

3. Term of the plan

This plan replaces the previous *Management Plan for the South Australian Charter Boat Fishery* adopted on 1 April 2019 and expiring on 31 July 2022.

The management plan applies from 1 August 2022 for a period of 10 years (until August 2032).

4. Description of the fishery

The South Australian CBF is a commercial platform for recreational fishing activities. As such, all catch from the fishery is regarded as recreational catch. Charter boat fishing offers recreational fishers an increased probability of success through the guidance of an experienced operator, and a fishing platform that can access good fishing grounds.

A boat is considered to be used for charter boat fishing even if recreational fishing activities are not the sole or primary purpose for which the boat is being used. For example, a dive charter operator or a shark/whale viewing charter operator requires a CBF licence if passengers participate in recreational fishing and/or take fish during the charter trip.

A charter boat fishing trip may involve passengers leaving the boat to undertake shore-based fishing. In these cases, all fish taken are considered to be taken pursuant to the charter boat fishing trip.

A charter boat fishing trip may vary from a few hours (enabling a charter fishing operator to conduct multiple charter trips in one day) to a few days, where passengers may stay on board the charter boat and fish taken pursuant to the charter trip are kept on board the boat.

During the life of this management plan, PIRSA will work with the industry and relevant organisations to explore strategies that support sustainable growth in the tourism related activities associated with the sector, within the constraints of the allocated resource shares and within established sustainable catch limits and other arrangements designed to protect key shared fish stocks from being overfished. This may include ways to create better linkages with regional tourism strategies, research, and development to better

understand client needs and involve improved communication of the diversity and seasonality of South Australia's fish species and charter fishing opportunities and experiences.¹

4.1 Historical overview

The State Government recognised the need for direct management controls on charter boat fishing in the mid-1990s, following the increasing popularity of these fishing ventures. The potential existed for large charter operations to take many passengers on regular trips and take significant quantities of fish.

Left unmanaged, the continued expansion and development of the charter boat fishing industry was likely to have biological impacts on fish stocks and economic consequences for the commercial, recreational and charter sectors. Charter fishing operations needed to be better managed to ensure the sustainability of the State's aquatic resources.

Moreover, it was considered that controlled development and regulation of the charter boat fishing industry would provide:

- capacity for the management of catch and effort of the sector under sustainable use principles,
- reliable information for fisheries management decisions and planning,
- capacity to identify and legitimise professional charter fishing operators as stakeholders in fisheries matters and provide for their representation in fisheries management forums,
- capacity for the provision of a contribution by the charter boat fishing sector towards the costs of managing fish stocks, and
- capacity to manage and develop fishing-based tourism in South Australia.

Prior to the establishment of the CBF, the industry operated within the constraints of recreational daily bag and boat limits. Operators using larger vessels experienced difficulties in providing an equitable share of fish to passengers, especially with larger numbers (i.e. greater than 3 passengers). For this reason, Ministerial exemptions were required on an annual basis under the *Fisheries Act 1982* to increase individual passenger limits and total boat limits, in order to cater for larger passenger numbers.

The first draft management plan was finalised in May 2005. A key objective of the plan was to integrate the management of charter boat fishing into the overall management of South Australian fish stocks. With many fish stocks at, or near, full exploitation, there was a need to ensure that charter fishing, along with the recreational and commercial fishing sectors, was included in management arrangements for the conservation and sustainable utilisation of fish stocks.

The industry came under new licensing and management arrangements with the *Fisheries (Scheme of Management—Charter Boat Fishery) Regulations 2005*, gazetted on 21 July 2005. Licensing and management of the CBF provided a mechanism for collecting accurate information about catch and effort levels and for putting controls on catch and effort.

The establishment of the fishery also brought the industry into the co-management framework for South Australian fisheries, which recognised the South Australian Surveyed Charter Boat Owners and Operators Association of South Australia Inc. (SCBOOASA), now the Charter Boat Association of South Australia (CBASA), as the peak industry body to provide advice on management decisions.

¹ It is noted that PIRSA is not the responsible agency for tourism related strategies and any work to support the charter sector in this regard will need to be a collaborative approach with the South Australian Tourism Commission and associations with tourism responsibilities.

Restricted entry was implemented by the first management plan to restrain catch and to avoid over-capitalisation so that biological and economic objectives could be developed for the fishery and pursued in a managed way. Whilst management arrangements developed for the CBF sought to remove obstacles to competition, it was considered necessary to restrict entry to the fishery as a first step to implementing sustainable management arrangements. The policy of restricted entry will be reviewed during the life of this management plan when extension of the application of the fishery is considered.

A wildlife interaction logbook was introduced for all South Australian commercial fisheries in July 2007, which requires mandatory reporting of interactions with threatened, endangered or protected species.

Since the initial management plan, there has been two subsequent iterations. On 1 August 2011, the original management plan was replaced with a new 10-year management plan, that was subsequently reviewed in 2018-2019 resulting in it being replaced on 1 August 2019. This management plan is the fourth iteration of the *Management Plan for the South Australian Charter Boat Fishery*.

4.2 Biological and Environmental characteristics

4.2.1 Ecosystem and habitat

The CBF operates throughout the coastal marine waters off South Australia. The majority of charter boat fishing activities occur around reef, seagrass meadows, unvegetated soft bottom, sheltered beaches and tidal flats. A goal of this management plan is to manage the CBF as part of the broader ecosystem. Ecosystem impacts of fishing are considered in more detail in section 7.

4.2.2 Biology of key species

Four species: Snapper, King George Whiting, Southern Bluefin Tuna and Nannygai (Redfish, Red Snapper, Swallowtail), have been identified by the industry as primary target species for the CBF. They are recognised as the icon species targeted by operators and most sought after by clients. A brief synopsis is provided below on each of these species. More detailed information on other target species is provided in stock assessment and stock status reports prepared by the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI) Aquatic Sciences. All completed reports are available on the PIRSA and SARDI Aquatic Sciences websites at www.pir.sa.gov.au/fisheries or www.sardi.sa.gov.au.

Snapper (*Chrysophrys auratus*)

Snapper (*Chrysophrys auratus*) is a large, long-lived, demersal, finfish species that is a member of the family Sparidae. It is broadly distributed throughout the Indo-Pacific region including Australia, where its extensive distribution includes the coastal waters of the southern two thirds of the continental mainland as well as northern Tasmania (Kailola et al. 1993). Throughout this distribution, Snapper occupy a diversity of habitats from shallow bays and estuaries to the edge of the continental shelf across a depth range of at least 200 m. The stock structure for Snapper in Australian waters is complex, as there are considerable differences in the spatial scales over which populations are divisible into separate stocks (Fowler et al. 2017). A recent study has indicated that the South Australian population involves three stocks (Fowler 2016, Fowler et al. 2017). The Western Victorian Stock (WVS) is a cross-jurisdictional stock that extends westward from Wilsons Promontory, Victoria into the south eastern waters of South Australia (SE). The remaining State waters of SA are divisible into the Spencer Gulf / West Coast Stock (SG/WCS) and Gulf St. Vincent Stock (GSVS) (Fowler 2016, Fowler et al. 2017).

King George Whiting (*Sillaginodes punctatus*)

King George Whiting is a member of the family Sillaginidae and is endemic to the shelf waters of southern Australia ranging from Port Jackson on the east coast through Bass Strait and west to Jurien Bay on the

west coast of Australia (Kailola et al. 1993). Juveniles occur in shallow waters to depths of 20 m, whilst adults are found in a range of habitats and depths from sandy patches in seagrass meadows to more exposed waters along coastal beaches and reef areas in the continental shelf waters to depths of 50m and greater (Kailola et al. 1993). The nursery areas for King George Whiting are shallow, protected bays where the post-larvae arrive during the winter and spring each year (Fowler et al. 2008).

While there is uncertainty about stock structure for King George Whiting throughout its range in southern Australia, for stock assessment and management purposes, three stocks are recognised based largely on the locations of, and connectivity between, nursery areas and spawning grounds (Fowler et al. 1999). These stocks are: West Coast of Eyre Peninsula, Spencer Gulf and Gulf St Vincent/Kangaroo Island (Fowler et al. 2014).

Southern Bluefin Tuna (*Thunnus maccoyii*)

Southern Bluefin Tuna is a member of the family Scombridae and are a highly migratory fish found throughout the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans. They are a pelagic species and can be found to depths of 500 m (AFMA n.d.). In Australia, they can be found from northern Western Australia to Tasmania and northern New South Wales.

Southern Bluefin Tuna is subject to an international recovery plan and is managed as a single global stock through domestic and international arrangements, in line with commitments to the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT).

Nannygai (Redfish, Red Snapper, Swallowtail) (*Centroberyx gerrardi*)

Bight Redfish are a member of the family Berycidae. They are endemic to the Great Australian Bight in Australia and can be found up to 500 m deep (AFMA n.d.). They generally school around rocky reefs and muddy substrates on the continental shelf and upper slope of the Bight (AFMA n.d.). The three species are grouped together as there is a level of uncertainty regarding the identification of species by fishers.

4.3 Economic and Social characteristics

The CBF has a strong association with tourism in regional communities, as it is a draw card for visitors who may wish to experience fishing in offshore areas.

The development and assessment of economic indicators for the CBF commenced in 2010-11. In 2019-2020 there were 84 licence holders in the CBF, with approximately 57% of operators undertaking regular charter operations (Figure 1). In 2019-2020, 7,616 passengers used a charter fishing operation in South Australia which is lowest level recorded since 2005-2006, a decline of 68 percent from a peak of 23,710 passengers in 2011-12 (EconSearch 2021). The fishery contributed approximately \$10.6 m to South Australia's Gross State Product in 2019-20 (Econsearch 2021) of which \$240,000 came from charter boat fishing directly, \$2.8 m was generated by downstream activities and \$7.5 m was generated in other sectors of the state economy (EconSearch 2021).

The CBF has seen a decrease in output, household income, contribution to Gross State Product and employment since 2009-2010 (EconSearch 2021). The decrease of contributions in recent years can be explained by a reduced Gross Value of Production (GVP), resultant of a declining number of active licences and declining number of clients (Figure 1, EconSearch 2021). This decline in GVP can be partly attributed to the total closure of the Snapper fishery, which began in November 2019 and will remain in place at least until the end of January 2023, and COVID-19 lockdowns and travel restrictions beginning in January 2020, significantly impacting tourism and thus the CBF clientele (EconSearch 2021).

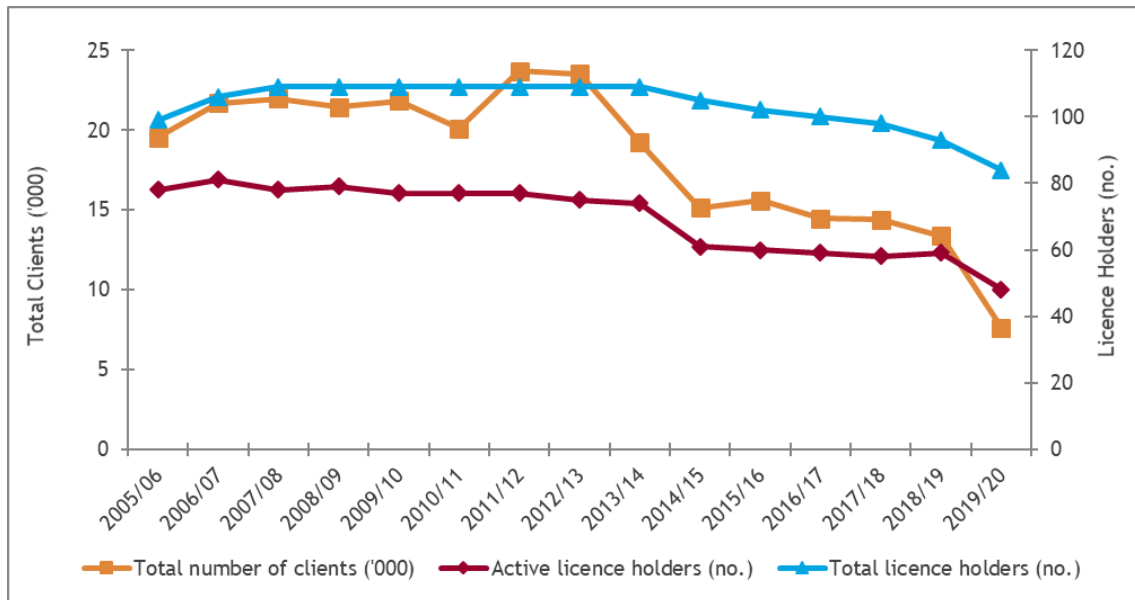


Figure 1: The total number of clients, licence holders and active licence holders for the CBF 2005-2006 to 2019-2020 (Source: EconSearch 2021)

5. Co-management arrangements

Co-management is an arrangement whereby responsibilities and obligations for sustainable fisheries management are negotiated, shared, and delegated at appropriate levels between government, recreational fishers, Aboriginal traditional fishers, the commercial fishing industry and other key stakeholders such as conservation groups (Neville 2008). Co-management is recognised as a collection of positions starting from centralised government regulation with no stakeholder input at one end, to more autonomous management by industry groups and key stakeholders at the other, where government plays more of an audit role. Co-management is designed to achieve efficient regulatory practice (among many other things) while maintaining appropriate regulatory scrutiny and influence by government.

PIRSA has adopted a *Policy for the Co-Management of Fisheries in South Australia* (available at https://www.pir.sa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/262538/Co-management_policy.pdf) to inform discussion with the wider commercial fishing industry and other stakeholder groups as to how best to promote and implement co-management. The policy proposes that implementation of a preferred co-management model should be through a phased approach whereby industry and key stakeholders build their capacity over time, and which allows for a government audit process to measure performance and success.

Section 20 of the *Fisheries Management Act 2007* provides that the Minister, or delegate of the Minister, may establish committees to provide advice to the Minister on any matter related to the administration of the *Fisheries Management Act 2007*.

The CBASA is recognised as the representative industry body of the CBF. The Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development has oversight of the management of the fishery under this management plan, but day to day management is conducted by PIRSA in association with CBASA. Engagement with the Charter industry is further achieved through representation on the Marine Scalefish Fishery Management Advisory Committee. Engagement also occurs with other representative industry bodies, including Recfish SA.

Progressing co-management in the fishery could involve the development of a CBF Management Advisory Committee. Such a committee could be an industry driven structure similar to the co-management advisory committees established for several other South Australian fisheries, to provide advice to the Executive Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture on management issues related to the fishery. Such an initiative could be considered during the life of this plan.

6. Allocation of access between sectors

6.1 Information used to allocate shares of the resource

The *Fisheries Management Act 2007* provides that a management plan must specify the share of the fishery to be allocated to each fishing sector under the plan (s43(2)(h)). The Act also provides that, in determining the share to be allocated to a particular fishing sector under the first management plan for an existing fishery, the share to which that sector had access at the time the Minister requested the plan to be prepared (based on the most recent information available to the Minister) must be taken into account. The Allocation Policy requires that information about current use by sectors must be real, recent and reliable.

The information used to allocate shares of aquatic resources in the first management plan for the CBF was derived from the following sources:

- 2007/08 South Australian Recreational Fishing Survey (Jones, 2009)
- The South Australian Recreational Charter Boat Fishery Report 2009 (Knight, 2010)
- South Australian Wild Fisheries Information and Statistics Report (Knight and Tsohos, 2009)
- South Australian Wild Fisheries Information and Statistics Report 2008/09 (Knight and Tsohos, 2010)
- SARDI Aquatic Sciences catch and effort database of licensed commercial fishers' logbook returns

6.2 Allocated shares of the resource

The then Minister formally requested preparation of the first management plan for the CBF on 3 July 2008. The management plan, therefore, took into account the share of aquatic resources that the CBF (as part of the recreational sector), and commercial sector and Aboriginal traditional fishing sectors had access to at that time. The best available information on the level of use by all fishing sectors was used to inform quantification of those shares.

For the purpose of this management plan, CBF catch is considered to be recreational catch and is accounted for in the allocation for the broader recreational fishing sector. Industry, through the CBASA, has stated they wish to secure species allocations, separate to the recreational sector. The process of exploring separate species allocations in management plans will be examined prior to the statutory mid-term review of the plan.

Recreational fishing means fishing other than commercial fishing or Aboriginal traditional fishing wherein fish are captured for personal consumption, sport or pleasure and either retained and consumed, shared or released. Many Aboriginal people participate in recreational fishing, as well as Aboriginal traditional fishing, and have a strong cultural connection to sea country. See Appendix 1 for further details on the sectors related to recreational fishing allocations.

When this management plan was first developed, allocations were provided for the CBF for the two main species targeted by the fishery at that time, King George Whiting and Snapper (Table 1.) This aimed to facilitate targeted management measures for the CBF, distinct from the wider recreational sector, if required.

Table 1: Allocated shares of Snapper and King George Whiting for the CBF as a component of the recreational fishery.

Species	Commercial		Recreational		Aboriginal traditional
Snapper	MSF	79%	Charter	10%	1%
	RLF	2%	Recreational	8%	
	LCF	0.03%			
Total	81%		18%		1%
King George Whiting	MSF	49.5%	Charter	3%	1%
	RLF	1%	Recreational	45.5%	
	LCF	-			
Total	50.5%		48.5%		1%

The CBF also has access to take other aquatic resources, which are provided by the *Fisheries Management (General) Regulations 2017*. However, in this management plan, shares are allocated to the first two primary target species taken in the fishery (Snapper and King George Whiting) only.

PIRSA will continue to monitor the take of species through catch and effort logbook returns. Any future management arrangements will be developed as required and as more information on these species becomes available. Allocations of shares of other species have been made in other relevant fishery management plans, such as for the commercial Marine Scalefish Fishery and the recreational fishery.

6.3 Review of allocations

Allocations between sectors may be reviewed periodically in accordance with the criteria set out in the *Allocation Policy: Allocation of access to fisheries resources between fishing sectors* (the Allocation Policy). The following scenarios may be considered during a review of allocations:

- a review of the management plan, which will reassess the appropriateness of shares and may trigger an adjustment,
- one or more sectors exceed their allocation, or
- a major change in the management of a species and or a sector that results in a shift of allocations to a sector/s, including the making of an Aboriginal traditional fishing management plan.

Further, where there is a sustainability concern for a particular species or stock or new information becomes available, a review may be undertaken at that time.

The declaration of a marine protected area that would result in a reallocation of shares may be given effect through the *Marine Parks Act 2007* and policies applying under that Act. The *Marine Parks Act 2007*

provides the ability to pay compensation to licensed fishers affected by the closure of an area or restrictions of activities within a marine park.

6.4 Allocation review process

The process to review allocations under the scenarios described above will be a two-staged approach. The first stage is an initial assessment to determine whether a full assessment is necessary or appropriate.

6.4.1 Initial assessment

The initial assessment of allocations will be conducted by PIRSA Fisheries and Aquaculture in consultation with relevant sectors of the fishery. Once the need for a review has been recognised an assessment committee will be established. The committee may be required to assess the need for a second-stage assessment based on consideration of the following questions:

- Has there been a shift in the access value of the fishery or is new information available that suggests a reallocation of shares would bring additional social and economic benefits to the State?
- If a trigger limit has been breached, can the breach be readily explained and justified?
- Is the potential change in shares significant and considered long-term? (Noting a minor shift/anomaly may not require a full review)

A written report is to be prepared by the committee, with a recommendation to proceed to a full assessment or not. PIRSA Fisheries and Aquaculture will determine whether to move to a full assessment or may refer a recommendation to the Minister.

6.4.2 Full assessment

As with the initial assessment, a full assessment of allocation will be conducted by PIRSA Fisheries and Aquaculture in consultation with relevant stakeholders. An evaluation panel is to be established with membership including independent experts and representatives.

The panel needs to evaluate how the value of one or more sectors is changing and the likely trends in the future. In the context of these changes, all options being considered should be evaluated against the option of maintaining the status quo and the potential follow-on effects with regard to:

- contribution to Gross State Product,
- contribution to employment,
- access for consumers to fresh seafood,
- maintenance and growth of regional communities,
- health impacts,
- sport and recreation opportunities,
- consistency with tourism policies, and
- other criteria relevant to the fishery.

6.4.3 Assessment outcomes

Following the full assessment, the Allocation Policy (PIRSA 2011) provides that the review panel may recommend to the Minister one of two actions, either:

- manage each sector within the existing allocated shares, or

- proceed to adjust shares.

6.4.4 Process for managing within existing shares

If shares are to be maintained between sectors it may be necessary, depending on the circumstances, to alter the catch of one or more sectors. To determine the appropriate mechanism to re-establish initial allocations, the existing co-management arrangements will be used to develop a preferred option.

Adjustments to recreational shares, if required, are likely to be made through alterations to fishing limits, seasonal or area closures or size limits. Managing adjustments to the commercial sector, if necessary, are likely to be achieved through a variety of controls consistent with current management arrangements and the harvest strategy for the commercial fishery such as seasonal and area closures, gear restrictions, catch limits and size limits.

6.4.5 Process for adjusting allocations

The following points are provided to guide an allocation adjustment process:

- Adjustments to the shares will, in the first instance, be implemented through a voluntary process and through direct negotiations between the relevant sectors.
- If agreement cannot be reached, a process of compulsory acquisition may occur in accordance with the *Fisheries Management Act 2007*. Adjustments are to be finalised within two years of the allocation adjustment process commencing.
- Where the commercial fishing sector's shares are reduced, so as to increase the share of another sector, compensation may be paid to the holders of commercial licences or licensed entitlements (sections 43(2) and 58 of the Act).
- The Act does not provide compensation requirements for changes to the recreational sectors shares. However, management plans for each commercial fishery includes objectives to manage the commercial take with the allocated shares as part of the harvest strategies set out in those plans.

6.4.6 Fishery development within existing shares

As indicated in Section 4, the CBF economic indicators are trending downward and PIRSA is working with industry to develop strategies to address this issue. In line with the objects of the *Fisheries Management Act 2007* it is important that these strategies are established within the constraints of the allocated resource shares and within established sustainable catch limits and other arrangements designed to protect key shared fish stocks from being overfished.

This will include exploring strategies to create better linkages with regional tourism strategies, research and development to better understand client needs and involve improved communication of the diversity and seasonality of South Australia's fish species and charter fishing opportunities.

To help support the CBF, the State Government, through a 'Fishing for Tourism' Program committed \$500,000 to support diversification in the charter boat sector to broaden tourism offerings and position the sector for future growth. Further, red tape reduction measures to reduce the impact of the Snapper closure were presented by industry to be explored. This saw changes to legislation to allow one Southern Bluefin Tuna per passenger on a Charter rather than a restrictive boat limit of 6 in 2020; progressing arrangements to allow for the taking of bait by Charter Boat operators; the endorsement of Rock Lobster pots on CBF licences; and investigating provisions to extend the application of the fishery to inland waters.

7. Ecosystem Impacts

The *Fisheries Management Act 2007* requires the following ecological impacts be identified in a management plan:

- current known impacts of the fishery on the ecosystem,
- potential impacts of the fishery on the ecosystem, and
- ecological factors that could have an impact on the performance of the fishery.

The ecological impacts associated with the CBF were considered through a review of a previous ecologically sustainable development (ESD) risk assessment conducted in 2018. This review (and the 2018 risk assessment) were guided by the *National ESD Reporting Framework for Australian Fisheries* (Fletcher et al. 2002). In accordance with the ESD objective in the Act, this approach is aimed at identifying and prioritising the important ecological, social and economic factors affecting the management of the fishery.

Risks and important issues in the fishery were identified in consultation with stakeholders and were prioritised using risk ratings from negligible to extreme. The highest risk rating in the revised assessment was moderate. Specific management strategies to minimise the moderate risks and associated performance indicators have been developed and are provided in Table . An overview of the ESD risk assessment for the CBF is provided at Appendix 2.

8. Goals and Objectives

As set out in Section 7 of the *Fisheries Management Act 2007*, one of the objects of the Act is to protect, manage, use and develop the aquatic resources of the State in a manner consistent with ecologically sustainable development. The Act also requires that management plans be consistent with the objects of the Act.

A number of biological, social and economic factors are identified in the objects of the Act that must be balanced in pursuing ecologically sustainable development. However, it is specified that the following principle applies: 'proper conservation and management measures are to be implemented to protect the aquatic resources of the State from over-exploitation and ensure that those resources are not endangered'.

The four goals for the CBF are set out in Table 2. These goals capture the factors identified in the Act that must be balanced to pursue ecologically sustainable development. These goals are:

- Goal 1 – CBF resources harvested within ecologically sustainability limits – with the primary objective to ensure that species targeted in the CBF are harvested sustainably and that adequate information exists and is collected to ensure this occurs.
- Goal 2 – Optimum utilisation and equitable distribution of the CBF resources for the benefit of the community – with objectives set around the economic and social benefits derived from the CBF to provide a benefit to the community.
- Goal 3 – Fishery impacts on the ecosystem are minimised – with the main objectives being to minimise fishery impacts on bycatch species and the ecosystem, and to avoid incidental catch and mortality of endangered, threatened and protected species.
- Goal 4 – Cost-effective, efficient and participative management of the fishery – with objectives set in relation to co-management, planning and cost recovery.

Table 2: Summary of performance indicators and reference points for the CBF

Goal	Objective	Strategies	Addressing Risk	Performance Indicator	Description	Trigger Reference Point
Goal 1 CBF resources harvested within ecologically sustainable limits	1a Manage total catch and effort across the sector to ensure species are harvested at sustainable levels	1a(i) Ensure input and output controls support sustainable use of the resource	Target Species – Breeding Stock populations Species of Interest Allocation	Catch for key species allocated between sectors Total sector catch for each species Catch ratio for recreational non charter and recreational charter Catch ratio for recreational (all platforms) and commercial	General indicators are derived from catch and effort information and include total catch and species specific catches	Increasing trend of the CBF as a proportion of the recreational allocation
		1b(i) Collect fishery-dependent information through commercial logbooks	Research/information	Licence holders provide timely and accurate monthly logbook information. (CBF logbooks can't be validated if information provided is confusing or appears to be misleading)	Good quality fishery-dependent data is vital to building a robust suite of fishery data Catch validation ensures logbook data is accurate and improves confidence in the data	Commercial fishing (including Charter) catch data not collected, monitored and reported Logbook information provided is confusing or appears to be misleading
	1b Collect sufficient and accurate fishery, biological and environmental information to inform management decisions	1b(ii) Monitor and report on fishery catch data annually	Target Species – Breeding Stock populations Allocation	Fishery catch data is monitored and reported on annually	Quality fishery-dependent data on key species is vital to building a robust suite of fishery data to inform management	Commercial and charter fishing catch data not monitored/reported in annual fishery reports
		1b(iii) Undertake recreational survey to estimate catch and effort periodically		Recreational survey undertaken	Good quality data are essential to on-going monitoring of fishery status	Recreational survey not undertaken at a minimum every 5 years
		1b(iv) Status of key species is assessed and reported	Research/information Target Species – Breeding Stock populations	Stock assessment and stock status reports produced to a high standard in line with agreed schedules	Good quality data are essential to on-going monitoring of fishery status	Stock assessment report not provided on regular basis
		1b(v) Incorporate the research needs of the CBF into the Marine Scalefish Fishery research priorities and review every three years		The Marine Scalefish Fishery Strategic Research priorities are reviewed and updated every three years	Strategic research to fill knowledge gaps can improve the information for the fishery	Strategic research priorities not reviewed at a minimum every 5 years and Charter research needs are not included
Goal 2 Optimum utilisation and equitable distribution of the CBF resources for the benefit of the community	2a Maintain catches within allocated shares	2a(i) Monitor catch shares for key species within allocations for fishing sectors.		Level of catch	Accurate logbooks indicate catch is within allocated shares	Catch of any sector exceeds allocated shares
	2b Allocation framework and management arrangements provide for development of the CBF	2b(i) Regulatory reform is undertaken to allow for more flexibility in business operation and management arrangements within established sustainable catch limits Work with relevant organisations to explore strategies that support sustainable growth in tourism activities associated with the sector	Target Species – Breeding Stock populations Allocation Economic performance of fishery	Regulatory reform undertaken to allow for flexibility in business operation Growth of passenger numbers in charter sector Increase in trips Economic performance of CBF	Management framework enables changes / increases in fishing activities within the established allocated share The management plan provides processes for managing within existing shares and adjusting allocations, if required. Why is there no economic descriptor when there is a TRP? There is an annual process to provide economic information	Regulatory reform to allow for agreed changes not undertaken Catch data not monitored annually or reported in stock assessments Economic indicators not monitored annually
	2c Recognise Aboriginal traditional fishing access and cultural values	2c(i) Integrate any traditional fishing access prescribed in Aboriginal traditional fishing management plans with the management of the CBF and broader recreational sector		Aboriginal fishing recognised in allocation framework within the Management Plan		Improved catch information for Aboriginal traditional fishing is available
Goal 3 Fishery impacts on the ecosystem are minimised	3a Minimise fishery impacts on bycatch species and the ecosystem	3a(i) CBASA to improve the awareness and adoption by industry of best practice measures/guidelines for fishing operations to reduce risk of translocation of exotic aquatic plants/animals and associated diseases	Introducing disease	Improved awareness of adoption of best practice measures/guidelines regarding management pests and diseases No. of reported breaches of regulations	Translocation of biological material and disease can have negative environmental and economic effects	Members are not kept informed of current and emerging biosecurity risks and best practice measures/guidelines to reduce risk of translocation
		3a(ii) Manage the interaction with, and best practice handling of, non-retained species and undersized fish to ensure that fishing related mortality is minimised especially for species subject to specific effort control measures		Code of conduct developed to address the interaction with and better handling of non-target species	Code of Conduct and other existing guidelines will clearly outline to fishers the expectations and guidelines on minimising interactions with, and how to best handle, these species	Industry not adopting best practice measures/guidelines Industry requirement to adopt best practice measures/guidelines is not written into the CBASA Service Level Agreement with PIRSA

Goal	Objective	Strategies	Addressing Risk	Performance Indicator	Description	Trigger Reference Point
	3b Avoid the incidental catch and mortality of threatened, endangered and protected species	3b(i) Fishers to report interactions with threatened, endangered and protected species		Trends in fishery interactions with protected species	All commercial fishery licence holders have to complete and submit wildlife interaction logbooks to report any interactions with threatened, endangered and protected species	Reports on incidental catch and/or mortality not submitted
		3b(ii) Develop management measures to avoid interactions with threatened, endangered and protected species should issues arise	TEPS Bycatch mortality	Management measures developed	There is an obligation under legislation to minimise interactions with these species.	Management measures are not developed in response to issues surrounding threatened, endangered and protected species
Goal 4 Cost-effective, efficient and participative management of the fishery	4a Cost-effective and efficient management of the fishery, in line with government's cost recovery policy	4a(i) Develop and implement management arrangements that are effective at achieving management objectives and optimising costs	Management effectiveness Economic drivers Access	Fee per licence holder	Licence fees include the costs of management, compliance and research A breakdown of major cost items as a proportion of total boat cash costs	Licence fee increases by more than CPI Licence fees as a percentage of GVP are increasing
		4a(ii) Recover licence fees from licence holders, sufficient to cover the attributed costs of fisheries management, research and compliance of the fishery in accordance with the Government's cost recovery policy	Information Industry Association Effectiveness	Licence fees reflect the costs of fisheries management, research and compliance	Licence fees include the costs of management, compliance and research.	Licence fees not collected. Licence fees are not sufficient to achieve cost recovery goals.
		4a(iii) Develop options for greater co-management		CBASA membership is representative of licence holders	It is essential that there is effective representation of licence holders through CBASA for effective PIRSA-industry communication	CBASA does not provide evidence of industry support for the co-management service.
	4b Management arrangements reflect concerns and interests of the wider community	4b(i) Promote stakeholder input to the management of the fishery through co-management processes, communication strategies and possible research	Management effectiveness Information	ESD risk assessment re-assessed at management plan review		Ecologically Sustainable Development Risk Assessment not re-assessed at management plan review
		4b(ii) Ensure that social and cultural issues are given appropriate consideration when new management strategies are developed		Demonstrate that these have been taken into account when developing new management strategies		Social and cultural issues not adequately addressed when new management strategies are being developed
		4b(iii) Communicate management arrangements and research to the wider community		Information on PIRSA website, media releases Documentation of fisheries management decision making processes and management plan		Availability of publicly available information on charter boat fishing and managements decreasing from previous year
	4c CBF licence holders are provided with key management information	4c(i) CBF licence holders are informed of key information affecting the fishery	Information	Changes in status and management arrangements to relevant species in other sectors and other key information are communicated to the charter sector		Key information affecting the fishery, including management arrangements to relevant species in other sectors, are not communicated to CBF licence holders
	4d Compliance with management arrangements	4d(i) Undertake annual compliance risk assessment	Target Species – Breeding Stock populations Management effectiveness	Compliance risk assessment undertaken annually	The compliance risk assessment provides the opportunity to assess compliance status in fishery and prioritise work functions on high-risk areas to fishery	Compliance risk assessment not undertaken annually Outcomes of compliance risk assessment not achieved
		4d(ii) Develop and implement management arrangements that are clear and uncomplicated to promote voluntary compliance and assist with enforcement		Industry understands management arrangements	Achieving sustainable management of fisheries requires fishers to comply with regulations regarding fishing activities, and to be responsible for their fishing activities. A key objective of fisheries management is therefore to ensure fishers are aware of their social responsibilities and are motivated to comply with these	Licence holders indicate they do not understand management arrangements, as reported in the EconSearch reports for the fishery
		4d(iii) Encourage the community to report fisheries offences to the Fishwatch number		Communication materials used to encourage reporting of illegal fishing activity to Fishwatch (e.g., media releases, news stories, information on website)	Gathering intelligence from a number of sources is important	No intelligence received on CBF Fishery offences

9. Harvest strategy

9.1 Overview

A harvest strategy is a framework that specifies the pre-determined management actions in a fishery for defined species (at the stock or management unit level) necessary to achieve the agreed ecological, economic and/or social management objectives (Sloan et al. 2014)

Given the CBF is a commercial platform for recreational fishing, the harvest strategy provided by the Management Plan for Recreational Fishing in South Australia will be used for the CBF (PIRSA 2020). This harvest strategy provides a structured framework for decision-making that specifies predetermined management actions necessary for the South Australian recreational fishery to achieve the ESD objectives of the Act. This harvest strategy is designed to be consistent with the 2014 *National Guidelines to Develop Fishery Harvest Strategies* (Sloan et al. 2014), and the *South Australian Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy* (PIRSA 2015). The harvest strategy brings together all of the key scientific monitoring, assessment and management elements to form an integrated package to make decisions about the level of fishing intensity that should be applied to recreational fishing resources.

Monitoring of the fishery is achieved through various methods which are dependent on the suitability for assessment of each species. The indicators, operational objectives and trigger reference points and/or limit reference points are set out in the various commercial management plans.

Consistent with the Act, the principle of ecological sustainability has priority over the other principles of ESD; hence the sustainability aim is the primary assessment focus for the harvest strategy. Assessment outcomes lead to an annual stock status being determined for the fishery, which is reported in stock assessment reports and national stock status reports.

9.2 Spatial scale of fishery management

The CBF operates from the Western Australian border (129°E longitude) to the Victorian border (141°E longitude); a total of 3 820 km of coastline.

The South Australian marine waters are divided into marine fishing areas, which are used to distinguish harvest locations and enable spatial research and management of the fishery. Each of the fishing areas have a corresponding map number; charter boat fishing activities are reported against those map numbers (refer to Appendix 3). The marine fishing areas are separated into five regions for the purpose of reporting:

- West Coast
- Spencer Gulf / Coffin Bay
- Gulf St. Vincent / Kangaroo Island
- Victor Harbor / South East
- Other (offshore areas)

The fishery is generally managed at a whole-of-state level with size and catch limits in place for individual species, although there are some specific management arrangements that apply to particular regions of the fishery, for example, due to stock boundaries or localised management issues.

Unlike other fisheries operating with commercial interests, the CBF is deemed to comprise recreational catch taken from a commercial platform. Monitoring the total catch allocated to the CBF will inform

management decisions on catches taken by the fishery. Such decisions would primarily be made to pursue the sustainability objectives of the Act and the goals of this management plan. Future changes to input and output controls in place for the CBF (including size and catch limits) would also be considered in the context of these sustainability provisions, as well as the arrangements for the broader recreational fishing sector.

9.3 Objectives of the harvest strategy

The objectives of this harvest strategy are to:

1. Ensure long-term sustainable harvest of recreational species. Where sustainability issues are identified through commercial (or other) stock assessment processes, changes to the recreational sector are undertaken correspondingly to the commercial sector in line with each sector's allocated shares.
2. Maintain recreational catches within the allocated shares. The process for reviewing and/or adjusting shares will be undertaken in accordance with the limits specified in Section 10. The catches by relevant sectors will be presented within the stock status/ or fishery assessment report in years when available.
3. Maximise fishing experience within ecological sustainable limits and allocated shares.

In achieving the objectives of this and future harvest strategies it is difficult to identify the appropriate management responses given the complexities of this fishery. There is a range of management tools available to achieve the operational objectives of this harvest strategy, which include:

- catch limits,
- size limits,
- seasonal and area closures, and
- gear modifications.

Determination of the most appropriate mix of controls in the circumstances to achieve the specified management target will be considered within the existing co-management framework and in accordance with the harvest strategy provided by the Management Plan for Recreational Fishing in South Australia.

Charter boat fishing limits were reviewed for a number of species as part of the mid-term review of the previous management plan in 2017-2018, and again during the implementation of red tape reduction strategies in 2020-2021.

For further detail on the harvest strategy please refer to the Harvest Strategy for the Management Plan for Recreational Fishing in South Australia (PIRSA, 2020), which provides a number of components including:

- biological objectives, performance indicators and trigger/limit reference points,
- decision rules,
- potential management options for revised recreational fishery management arrangements,
- species not covered by a commercial fishery management plan,
- allocation, and
- recreational fishing surveys.

10. Stock assessment and research

10.1 Research Services

PIRSA conducts scientific research services for each fishery. SARDI Aquatic Sciences is the primary research provider for core research for the CBF.

10.2 Data collection and analysis

The primary source of data used for stock assessments for Snapper and King George Whiting is fishery-dependent; however, there have been a number of research projects undertaken by SARDI to improve understanding of these key fish stocks (i.e. Steer et al 2017). Information on other priority species is reported and analysed in the regular reports discussed at 10.3. The collection of fishery-dependent data is facilitated by a commercial logbook program, which requires all commercial fishers, including charter boat operators, to compulsorily record daily information on catch and effort levels and other details on daily fishing operations. This information is entered into a database, which is managed by SARDI Aquatic Sciences. Information collected through the logbook program is periodically reviewed to ensure data collection meets management and research needs. The common unit of effort currently used to measure catch per unit effort (CPUE) in the fishery is fishing time on target species (e.g. Snapper and King George Whiting).

Due to the inherent limitations associated with fishery-dependent data sets, it is recognised that the information required to generate accurate estimates of some fishery performance indicators may require additional fishery-independent data. It is also recognised that it may be necessary for fishery-dependent data sets to be periodically validated by independent means to ensure accuracy of the data collected.

All data available on recreational catch and effort levels will be taken into account when assessing the performance of the CBF through stock assessment. The data provided by the 2013-14 South Australian Recreational Fishing Survey (Giri and Hall 2015) was used as the main source of information on catch and effort levels in the broader recreational sector. The results of a Recreational Fishing Survey conducted in 2021-22 are currently being finalised to lead future management arrangements in the broader recreational sector to ensure the sector is managed within their allocation and access to the South Australian fishing resources are sustainable. Development of cost-effective methods to continue the collection of accurate recreational catch and effort data is identified as a strategic research priority (Section 10.4).

10.3 Reporting

Three types of report are prepared and delivered periodically for the CBF:

1. *Annual catch and effort report.* This annual report compiles catch and effort data supplied by licensed commercial operators in the CBF. This report monitors catches of all species in the fishery and is delivered to an industry forum each year.
2. *The South Australian Recreational Charter Boat Fishery Research Report.* This is a more comprehensive report that is published once every three years analysing the performance of the CBF along with additional information including customer origins, TEPS interactions and limited socio-economic summaries.
3. *Economic Indicators report.* An economic indicators report for the CBF has been published annually since 2010-11.

4. *Stock assessment reports.* These major reports for Snapper and King George Whiting are published regularly and document, analyse and interpret the available data and assess these key target species against the performance indicators identified in the management plan for the Marine Scalefish Fishery. Information on stock assessment and stock status for individual species in the CBF currently relies on reports published by SARDI Aquatic Sciences through the research program for the commercial Marine Scalefish Fishery.

10.4 Strategic research priorities

During the term of this management plan, the CBF aims to build an understanding about the impacts of the fishery on the aquatic resources of the State.

Strategic research priorities identified for the CBF include:

- Cost-effective methods to continue the collection of accurate recreational catch and effort data to ensure recreational fishing is conducted within the bounds of the recreational allocation,
- Collection of sound economic data for the fishery and the further development of economic indicators,
- Continuing stock assessments for primary target species,
- Information on survival and mortality for catch and release fishing, and
- Building capacity and communication / education programs for participants in the CBF.

PIRSA, SARDI and CBASA may identify additional research projects for the CBF as appropriate.

Issues associated with stock abundance and health are primarily addressed under the research priorities of the Marine Scalefish Fishery, as detailed in the Management Plan for the South Australian Commercial Marine Scalefish Fishery. Given the economic challenges facing the fishery and the differences it has to the Marine Scalefish Fishery, there could be benefit in developing a Strategic Research Plan specifically for the CBF.

11. Compliance and monitoring

PIRSA runs a compliance program that has dual objectives that are consistent with the National Fisheries Compliance Policy:

- to maximise voluntary compliance with fisheries rules, and
- to create effective deterrence to breaching fisheries rules.

Voluntary compliance is maximised through ensuring that fishers are aware of the rules that apply to their fishing activities, understand the rules and the purpose of those rules, and operate in a culture of compliance. Effective deterrence is created through the presence of Fisheries Officers and awareness of compliance operations, as well as through detection and prosecution of illegal activity.

12. Management arrangements

The management arrangements in the CBF include both input and output controls. Current input controls include:

- restrictions on the number of licences,
- restrictions on the number of vessels per licence that can be used on the water at any one time,

- gear limits per passenger,
- limited number of registered masters per vessel,
- seasonal / area closures for certain species, and
- prohibitions around the fishing activities CBF licence holders or crew undertaking fishing activities while operating a charter fishing trip can undertake.

Output controls include limits on the length of retained fish, and bag limits on a per boat and trip basis. These arrangements are legislated under the *Fisheries Management (General) Regulations 2017* and *Fisheries Management (Charter Boat Fishery) Regulations 2016*.

Charter operators must also meet marine vessel survey requirements and hold appropriate levels of public liability insurance. Operators must clearly display their CBF licence number while undertaking fishing charters.

12.1 Strategic policy priorities

In reviewing the management plan, a number of key issues of relevance to the CBF were identified and will be explored prior to the mid-term review of this management plan. These include:

- Rock Lobster pots as endorsed gear on CBF licences:
 - To improve opportunities for clients to take Rock Lobster on charter fishing trips and facilitate greater engagement with the tourism market, the CBASA have requested changes to the restrictions around the use of Rock Lobster pots on charter boats. In 2019 a Ministerial exemption allowing CBF licence holders to set pots on behalf of clients who acquired a recreational rock lobster registration tag was trialed. The CBASA felt the Ministerial exemption was not practical due to difficulties with clients accessing the registration tags and providing them to operators prior to the day of a charter. To overcome the difficulties while allowing for the increased opportunity the CBASA have requested for up to two Rock Lobster pots to be endorsed, with appropriate payment, on CBF licence and for an adjustment in the boat limit to a daily limit of one Rock Lobster per paying customer aboard a charter. At the time of writing this management plan consultation with key industry stakeholders had commenced.
- Regulatory changes to enable take of bait by CBF operators:
 - As a red tape reduction strategy, the CBASA have requested that CBF licence holders be able to fish for bait that would subsequently be used by customers aboard charters. At the time of writing this management plan consultation with key industry stakeholders had commenced.
- Review of the definition of the CBF to consider inland waters and land-based fishing guide activities:
 - At present, CBF licence holders may operate their vessels in inland waters, with the only restriction being the need to comply with recreational bag and boat limits instead of CBF limits. Extending the CBF to apply to inland waters would require the regulation of a currently unregulated area of the CBF. To provide for an equitable extension of the CBF to inland waters, consideration would need to be given to reviewing the restricted entry policy and allowing individuals to make application to enter the fishery or the inland waters area of the fishery.
- Structure of licence fees – apportionment of fees between licence holders in the fishery.
- Region-specific management of the fishery.
- Allocation of shares to the charter boat sector for other key species.
- Electronic reporting.

13. Review of plan

Under the *Fisheries Management Act 2007* management plans are subject to periodic review. Section 49 of the Act outlines the process of reviewing a management plan. Amendments to management plans may also be considered under section 46 of the Act.

Annual review conducted by PIRSA and the CBASA of Table 2 to see how the CBF is traveling against the objectives of the management plan.

14. Resources required for implementation

14.1 Cost recovery – overview

South Australian commercial fisheries operate in accordance with the Government's cost recovery policy, which provides that the costs attributed to the management of the commercial fishery are recovered from industry. Therefore, the costs of policy development, research and compliance programs are cost recovered through legislated licence fees. The commercial fishing industry, through its representative bodies, has a high level of involvement in structuring the relevant policy, compliance, and research programs in partnership with PIRSA and its service providers. This is an important facet of co-management in South Australia.

14.2 Cost recovery – Charter Boat Fishery

CBF management costs are recovered through a base licence fee and an additional boat registration fee per each vessel registered. The base licence fee applies to all licence holders. In addition to the base licence fee, three categories of boat registration fees exist reflecting surveyed capability for taking paying passengers.

15. Appendices

15.2 Appendix 1 – Sectors related to fishing allocations

Recreational sector

The recreational sector accounts for a significant proportion of the total catch of a number of species, including King George Whiting, Blue Swimmer Crabs, Mulloway and Southern Calamari. For the purpose of this management plan, CBF catch is considered to be recreational catch and is accounted for in the allocation for the broader recreational fishing sector.

Commercial sector

Licence holders in the Marine Scalefish Fishery, Southern Zone Rock Lobster Fishery, Northern Zone Rock Lobster Fishery, Miscellaneous Fishery, Lakes and Coorong Fishery, Blue Crab Fishery and Central Zone, Western Zone and Southern Zone Abalone Fisheries all have some form of access to recreationally caught species. All commercial sectors with access were considered in the initial allocation process.

Some recreationally taken species are also taken by Commonwealth managed fisheries such as the Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery and the Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery. These species are managed by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA), and the management of these commercial fisheries are outside the jurisdiction of the South Australian Government. As such, an allocation is not provided for these fisheries.

Aboriginal traditional sector

The Act acknowledges Aboriginal or indigenous fishing in the form of Aboriginal traditional fishing. This is defined in part as being 'non-commercial' in nature. It should be noted that, under the Act, the Minister may create separate management plans for Aboriginal traditional fishing where an Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) exists with any Native Title group.

In respect of any future traditional fishing management arrangements, they will be subject to any ILUA's and Traditional fishing management plans and any claims of Native Title as they relate to the taking of aquatic resources in SA waters.

The nature and extent of Aboriginal traditional fishing for recreational species (state-wide marine and freshwater) has not been ascertained at this time. In this management plan, a share of access has been allocated and set aside for the purpose of resolving any Native Title claims. Should the nature and extent of Aboriginal traditional fishing of species within this plan become evident the provisions of this plan can be reviewed. It should be noted that at the time of preparing this management plan, one claim for access or allocation for Aboriginal traditional fishing has been determined under a Native Title claim registered in South Australia. There are a number of applications before the Native Title Tribunal; refer to <http://www.nativetitlesa.org/claims> for more information.

15.3 Appendix 2 – Updated ESD risk assessment

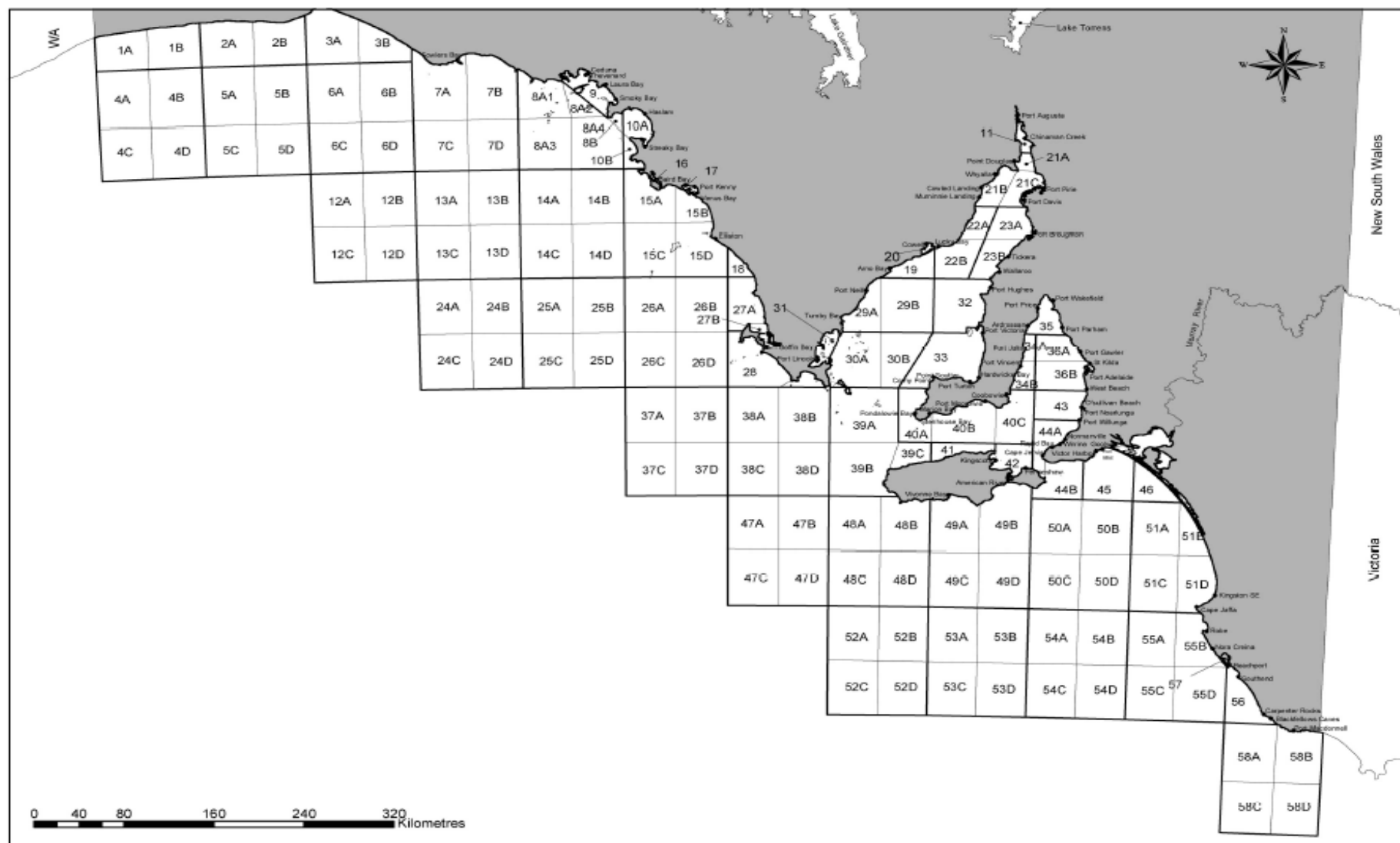
Through the Charter Boat Fishery Management Plan Review Working Group, stakeholders in the fishery revisited the risk assessment and identified components where the risk had remained the same or changed. An updated table of medium and high risks is at Table 3. A full description of these risks and the assessment process are provided in the ESD Risk Assessment for the Charter Boat Fishery 2022.

Table 3: Performance report for Extreme, High and Moderate Risk elements of the Charter Boat Fishery ESD Risk Assessment.

* = Review at mid-term review of management plan

Issue	Risk/Priority	Objective developed	Indicator measured	Performance measure	Current performance	Robustness	Actions
Retained species							
KGW SG	Moderate	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not defined	High	*
KGW GSV	Moderate	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not defined	High	*
SBT	Moderate	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not defined	High	*
Non-retained species							
Finfish (including discarded target species)	Moderate	No	No	No	No defined		*
General Ecosystem Impacts of Fishing							
Introducing disease	Moderate	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*
Community							
Relationships	Moderate	No	No	No	N/A	N/A	*
WHS	Moderate	No	No	No	No	N/A	*
Governance							
Industry Association Effectiveness	Moderate	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not meeting objective	Medium	*
OCS	Moderate						*
External factors affecting performance of the fishery							
AFMA	Moderate	No	No	No	N/A	N/A	*
Marine parks	Moderate	No	No	No	N/A	N/A	*
Social	Moderate	No	No	No	N/A	N/A	*
Illegal operations	Moderate	No	No	No	N/A	N/A	*
Cost Recovery	Moderate	No	No	No			*
Natural fluctuations	Moderate	No	No	No	N/A	N/A	*
Spatial restrictions	Moderate	No	No	No	N/A	N/A	*
Temporal restrictions	Moderate	No	No	No	N/A	N/A	*
Other industry	Moderate	No	No	No	N/A	N/A	*
Governance	Moderate	No	No	No	N/A	N/A	*
Aquaculture	Moderate	No	No	No	N/A	N/A	*
Water quality	Moderate	No	No	No	N/A	N/A	*
Running costs	Moderate	No	No	No	N/A	N/A	*

15.5 Appendix 3 – Charter Boat Fishery statistical areas



16. References

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