



17 December 2020

FISHERIES & AQUACULTURE

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## 2021 Total Allowable Commercial Catch for the Central Zone Abalone Fishery

### NOTICE TO FISHERS

Dear Central Zone Abalone Fishery (CZAF) licence holders

I write in relation to the setting of the total allowable commercial catch (TACC) for the 2021 quota period.

In determining the TACC for the 2021 quota period, I have considered the following;

- Objectives of the *Fisheries Management Act 2007*,
- The requirements of the *Fisheries Management (Abalone Fisheries) Regulations 2017*,
- Draft Harvest Strategy decision rules in the draft *Management Plan for the South Australian Commercial Abalone Fisheries*,
- The latest scientific information from SARDI,
- Outcomes from a meeting held on 26 November 2020 between industry, the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) and SARDI,
- Advice provided by industry in correspondence to PIRSA received on 6 December 2020,
- The current status of Depleted for the CZAF Blacklip Abalone stock and Depleting for the CZAF Greenlip Abalone stock.

As delegate for the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, I have made the following determination for the Central Zone Abalone Fishery 2021 quota period:

- The Greenlip Abalone TACC has been determined as **46,046 kg** meat weight for 2021 (Table 1) which is the same TACC as set in 2020.
- The Greenlip Abalone unit value has been determined as 159.0 kg meat weight (Table 1).
- The Blacklip Abalone TACC will be set at **1,200 kg** meat weight, which will allow for monitoring of Blacklip stocks in the CZAF in 2021 through fishery-dependent diver surveys.
- The Blacklip Abalone unit value has been determined as 5.0 kg meat weight (Table 1).

Table 1. Greenlip and Blacklip Abalone unit values and TACCs for 2021.

	<b>Greenlip Abalone</b>	<b>Blacklip Abalone</b>
TACC (kg, whole weight)	138,151.8	3600.4
TACC (kg, meat weight)	46,046	1,200
Total abalone quota units	289.6	237.9
Abalone unit value (kg, whole weight)	477.0	15.1
Conversion factor	0.3333	0.3333
Abalone unit value (kg, meat weight)	159.0	5.0

The TACCs for both Greenlip Abalone and Blacklip Abalone are consistent with the draft *Management Plan for the South Australian Commercial Abalone Fisheries*, however, the secondary information contained in the draft management plan for the CZAF does not currently provide for diver-based observations. The observations provided at the TACC meeting and in correspondence from the association indicating that stock performance has not altered was included as secondary information, allowing an adjustment of the zonal catch to a maximum of 45,980 kg for the 2021 quota period. I acknowledge the initiative of CZAF licence-holders to waive the carry-over of 3,790 kg of uncaught quota from 2020 to the 2021 quota period, which if applied could result in a maximum TACC of 49,770 kg for 2021. Given the more conservative approach proposed by industry and the depleting status of the Greenlip Abalone stock, I have supported a TACC for Greenlip Abalone at 46,046 kg.

Prior to finalising the draft Management Plan for the *South Australian Commercial Abalone Fisheries*, the inclusion of diver observations as secondary information in the harvest strategy may be required to provide for this information in the future, similar to that provided by other South Australian abalone fisheries.

Following adoption and commencement of a new management plan, section 50 of the *Fisheries Management Act 2007* sets out that the Minister must manage commercial and recreational fishing activities in accordance with any relevant management plan adopted by the Minister, including the outcomes of a harvest strategy included in a management plan. PIRSA will continue to work with industry to finalise the plan and include additional secondary information as required.

In consideration of the depleted status of Blacklip Abalone in the CZAF, and the need to protect stocks and promote recovery, an effective monitoring program in 2021 may be considered in future determinations of the Blacklip Abalone unit value in the CZAF.

The information derived from this monitoring program must be of a quality that can be used as a benchmark to measure changes in Blacklip Abalone stock condition. Reporting requirements for this monitoring may be included in a Ministerial determination to facilitate timely delivery of information to PIRSA.

In determining the 2021 TACCs, the following agreements between PIRSA and the Central Zone Abalone Industry were taken into account:

1. An agreement to waive any carry-over of uncaught quota entitlements from 2020 to 2021.
2. The need for limited harvest of Blacklip Abalone to allow for monitoring through diver surveys.

### ***Tiparra catch cap and seasonal closure***

Consistent with a recommendation of the TACC meeting held 26 November 2020 and endorsed by industry in correspondence dated 6 December 2020, the Section 79 fishing notices implementing the catch cap and season fishing closures on Tiparra Reef will not be renewed in 2021. I note the intention of industry to voluntarily manage fishing activity at Tiparra Reef. PIRSA will continue to monitor fishing effort and catch at Tiparra through 2021.

### ***Size limit***

I have considered a request from the Central Zone Abalone Industry to remove the legal requirement of the Minimum Legal Size Limit (MLL) for Greenlip Abalone from 13.5 cm to 13.0 cm in 2021. It is considered the proposed change in size limit could impact catch rate independent of stock abundance, with potential impacts on the interpretation of performance indicators through the draft harvest strategy. In consideration of the current depleting stock status for the CZAF Greenlip Abalone stock and with the uncertainty regarding the potential impact of removing the rule to ensure abalone less than 13.5 cm MLL are taken, I am unable to support this request until a strategy is proposed to ensure any variation in catch rate can be monitored and taken into account.

The requirement to only take Greenlip Abalone of a size not less than 13.5 cm MLL consistent with previous years has been included in a new licence condition as follows;

*Greenlip abalone (Haliotis laevis) taken from the Central Zone Abalone Fishery must not be less than 13.5cm in length.*

I have requested PIRSA officers work with industry in 2021 to develop an agreed approach to this request. Licence holders have a right under section 111 of the *Fisheries Management Act 2007* to seek a review of a variation or imposition of a licence condition to refusal to issue, renew or consent to the transfer of an authority.

### ***Use of data logger system***

Licence holders are reminded a Ministerial determination under Regulation 16(1)(c) of the *Fisheries Management (Abalone Fisheries) Regulations 2017* is in place requiring CZAF licence holders or the registered master to cause the diver engaged in the taking of any class of abalone pursuant to the licence to use the data logger system. This Ministerial determination will continue to apply in 2021. A copy of the determination is available at:

[https://www.pir.sa.gov.au/fishing/commercial\\_fishing/fisheries\\_management/determinations](https://www.pir.sa.gov.au/fishing/commercial_fishing/fisheries_management/determinations)

### ***Catch sampling data***

Licence holders are reminded a Ministerial determination under Regulation 16(1)(a) of the *Fisheries Management Abalone Fisheries Regulations 2017* is in place requiring CZAF licence holders or the registered master to cause the diver engaged in the taking of any class of abalone pursuant to the licence to measure and record the shell length in the form as determined by SARDI of at least five Blacklip Abalone or five Greenlip Abalone from every catch bag containing abalone taken from the waters of the CZAF. This Ministerial determination will continue to apply in 2021. A copy of the determination is available on the PIRSA website at:

[https://www.pir.sa.gov.au/fishing/commercial\\_fishing/fisheries\\_management/determinations](https://www.pir.sa.gov.au/fishing/commercial_fishing/fisheries_management/determinations)

**Extract certificate**

An updated licence extract certificate is included with this notice.

**Quota unit transfers**

If you wish to transfer quota units to another licence, application forms can be obtained from the PIRSA website [www.pir.sa.gov.au/fisheries](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/fisheries) or by contacting PIRSA Fisheries and Aquaculture on (08) 8204 1370.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the actions taken by the industry to co-develop surveys to monitor and assist with monitoring the recovery of Blacklip Abalone stocks and the pro-active step to collect further information and improve the timing of Greenlip Abalone fishing. This action reflects a strong co-management approach, and I commend the industry for taking this position.

If you have any other queries in relation to the Abalone fisheries please contact Dr Annabel Jones, Program Leader - Commercial Fisheries, on (08) 842 90165.

Yours sincerely

**Prof Gavin Begg****EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FISHERIES & AQUACULTURE**

Delegate of the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development