



FISHERIES & AQUACULTURE

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NOTICE TO MARINE SCALEFISH FISHERY LICENCE HOLDERS

Dear licence holder

I write to inform you of a second tranche of amendments made to regulations under the *Fisheries Management Act 2007* (the Act) in order to implement arrangements for the reform of the Marine Scalefish Fishery (MSF).

As outlined in the stage 3 MSF reform information pack provided to licence holders, significant changes to the fishery have been approved by the Government which took effect from 1 July 2021.

Further to the amendments to regulations outlined in the Notice to Fishers dated 1 July 2021, a second tranche of amendments to regulations have been made and gazetted on 1 July 2021. Of relevance to MSF licence holders are the following regulations:

Fisheries Management (General) (Miscellaneous) (No 2) Variation Regulations 2021

Fisheries Management (Marine Scalefish Fishery) (Miscellaneous) Variation Regulations 2021

These regulations, together with other amended and new regulations related to the reform of the MSF, are available on the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) website at pir.sa.gov.au/fishingreform

Key changes to the regulations

As outlined further below, this second tranche of regulatory amendments has primarily been made to implement reductions in red tape in the MSF and to enable existing management arrangements for bivalves in the Port River and Snapper stocks across the State to be maintained.

Bivalve closure of the Port River and surrounding areas

A new closure has been incorporated into regulations to formalise temporary management arrangements currently in place to protect the depleted Vongole stock

and mitigate the catastrophic risk of the spreading of Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome (POMS) to other areas of the State after it was discovered in the Port River region in 2018. These restrictions have until now been implemented through notices pursuant to section 79 of the Act. To continue the restriction on the take of bivalves for these purposes, an amendment to the *Fisheries Management (General) Regulations 2017* has been made that will allow for flexible and adaptive management of bivalve fishing by the recreational and commercial sectors. This provision closes the Port Adelaide River Estuary to the take of bivalve filter feeding molluscs unless the Minister has made a determination to the contrary by notice in the Gazette.

Snapper management

The existing Snapper fishing closure, which applies to the Gulf St Vincent and Kangaroo Island, the Spencer Gulf and the West Coast fishing zones, has been announced to be in effect until 1 February 2023. This closure has been implemented through notices under section 79 of the Act which are designed to be applied for the temporary (up to 24 months) prohibition of certain fishing activities.

With the move to total allowable commercial catch (TACC) and individual transferable quota (ITQ) management for Snapper and priority species as part of the reform of the MSF, the commercial sector fishing closures for Snapper can now be implemented, in effect, as a TACC determined at zero kilograms, as is currently the case in these zones.

To continue the recreational and charter fishing closure for Snapper fishing, an amendment to the *Fisheries Management (General) Regulations 2017* has been made which prohibits the take of Snapper until 1 February 2023 in the aforementioned zones, subject to scientific evidence the Snapper populations have recovered to levels where fishing would be sustainable.

The above amendments mean that section 79 notices will no longer be needed to implement the fishing closure for Snapper and the existing section 79 notice will subsequently be revoked.

Protection for berried crabs

An amendment has been made to the *Fisheries Management (General) Regulations 2017* to extend the protection of female berried crabs to Sand Crab, Rock Crab and Spider Crab species. This is intended to protect spawning females and, therefore, the reproductive potential of the stock. This is important as further amendments outlined below to reduce red tape in the MSF have added Rock Crab and Spider Crab as commercial permitted species to the MSF.

Red tape reduction

Further to recommendations provided by the MSF Red Tape Reduction Working Group (RTRWG), the following amendments have been made to improve the operational efficiency of MSF fishers:

- The addition of lift nets as a commercial gear type in the MSF. This addition of a defined lift net will also remove ambiguity with similar gear types.
- Changes to allow for the holder of an MSF licence or their registered master to take less than 150 razorfish over a period of three days in the West Coast

Fishing Zone of the MSF. This will allow for greater operational flexibility around the daily limit of 50 razorfish and will decrease costs for boats on the West coast who travel some distance to collect razorfish and then return to their fishing grounds.

- Removal of the regulation prescribing the mesh size in the pocket of a haul net. As has been communicated in a separate Notice to Fishers, the pocket mesh sizes of haul nets are now specified in a licence condition. This will allow for greater flexibility to adaptively manage the fishing for Southern Garfish.
- Addition of permitted species to Schedule 1, of the *Fisheries Management (Marine Scalefish Fishery) Regulations 2017*, as follows:
 - o Conger Eel (Family Congridae)
 - o Knifejaw (*Oplegnathus woodwardi*)
 - o Sergeant Baker (*Latropiscis purpurissatus*)
 - o Silver Drummer (*Kyphosus sydneyanus*)
 - o Blue Weed-Whiting (*Haletta semifasciata*)
 - o Rock Crab (*Nectocarcinus integrifrons*) (permitted to take West of 135 degrees East, as per existing restrictions for fishing for Blue Crab, and per amendment to the *Fisheries Management (General) Regulations 2021*)
 - o Spider Crab (Family Majidae) (permitted to take West of 135 degrees East, as per existing restrictions for fishing for Blue Crab, and as per amendment to the *Fisheries Management (General) Regulations 2021*).

If you have any queries regarding these arrangements or would like a copy of the amended regulations referred to above, you can contact Sam Stone, Fisheries Manager, on phone 84292101 or email sam.stone@sa.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Prof Gavin Begg
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FISHERIES & AQUACULTURE