



FISHERIES & AQUACULTURE

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NOTICE TO NORTHERN ZONE ROCK LOBSTER FISHERY LICENCE HOLDERS

Extending the 2020/21 fishing season in the Inner Region

Dear licence holder

The Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) has been actively working with industry through the Rock Lobster Fishery Management Advisory Committee (RLFMAC) to consider mitigation measures to assist licence holders overcome the impacts of the market disruption to trade of rock lobster in China.

I write to advise that, as delegate of the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, on the advice and recommendation of the RLFMAC, I have made a determination to vary the fishing closure normally in place between 1800 hours on 31 May 2021 and 1200 hours 1 November 2021 under the *Fisheries Management (Rock Lobster Fisheries) Regulations 2017*. This determination removes the normal fishing closure in 2021 and allows you to fish during this time using your 2020/21 quota entitlements up to the start of the next fishing season on 1 November 2021.

The determination to remove the winter fishing closure in 2021 has been made considering:

1. The objectives of the *Fisheries Management Act 2007*
2. Targeted research conducted by the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI) that indicated there was no additional risk to the biological sustainability of rock lobster stocks or by-catch species from commercial fishing during the normal winter fishing closure
3. The recommendation of the RLFMAC that the fishing season in the Inner Region be extended as a temporary arrangement to assist licence holders overcome the impacts of the current market disruption

The RLFMAC considered options, out of session, and recommended temporary management arrangements to assist fishers through the market disruption, including allowing commercial fishing during the normal winter fishing closure in the

Northern Zone Inner Region in 2021. The extension will allow fishers additional time to use their uncaught quota entitlements if markets are re-established. The South Australian Northern Zone Rock Lobster Fishermen's Association (SANZRLFA) support this recommendation.

As you will be aware, provisions allowing for a 12-month fishing season in the Outer Region of the Northern Zone were implemented in May 2016. These arrangements were based on the scientific advice after a two-year targeted research project in the Northern Zone and recommendations from the RLFMAC. The results from this research are available on the SARDI website at https://pir.sa.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0006/274119/A2769465.pdf.

At that time the regulations were implemented for the Outer Region, a provision was also introduced to allow for the Minister to make a determination to vary the length of the fishing closure in the Inner Region of the commercial fishery as a precautionary and sustainable management tool.

Marine Scalefish Access

The requirements for Northern Zone Rock Lobster Fishery licence holders to fish for Marine Scalefish under "owner operator" arrangements between 1800 hours on 31 May and 1200 hours on 1 November included in licence condition 11741 and 11763 remain unchanged. Decisions regarding the use of replacement masters during this period are guided by the Replacement Masters Guidelines previously sent to you.

Giant Crab Access

The winter fishing closure for Giant Crab will remain in place and any Giant Crab incidentally caught in rock lobster pots in the period from 1800 hours on 31 May to 1200 hours on 1 November must be released as soon as practicable.

Carry-over of uncaught quota entitlements

PIRSA is also actively seeking amendment to the *Fisheries Management (Rock Lobster Fisheries) Regulations 2017* to allow carry-over of uncaught quota entitlements from the 2020/21 fishing season to the 2021/22 and 2022/23 fishing seasons. Further information on this matter will be provided to licence holders as soon as possible.

Please contact Dr Annabel Jones, Program Leader-Commercial Fisheries, on telephone (08) 8429 0165 or email Annabel.jones@sa.gov.au if you require any further information regarding the management of the fishery or telephone 8204 1370 for any licensing enquiries.

Yours sincerely



Prof Gavin Begg
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

As delegate of the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development