

Freshwater Proposals

Species	Current Situation		Ocean Watch Supports		
	Bag Limit	Min Size Limit	New Bag Limit	New Size Limit	Alternative Proposals
Australian bass and estuary perch	2 with only 1 over 35cm				Introduce a spawning closure (0 bag limit) in rivers and estuaries from 1 June to 31 August each year
Eastern freshwater crayfish	Combined bag limits of 10				Extend the rules that apply to Murray crayfish to all spiny crayfish
Eel tailed catfish	0 in Murrumbidgee and Murray, 2 in other streams	30cm	0*		* Except listed impoundments on the Lachlan and Darling systems
Longfinned eel		30cm			See saltwater proposal
Eastern cod	0		0		Introduce a spawning closure (no fishing) for the Mann and Nymboida river system from 1 August to 31 October each year
Murray cod	2 and only 1 over 100cm	50cm		60cm with 0 over 100cm	Fishing for a protected species should only be allowed in impoundments where the fingerlings are released.
River blackfish	0 in Murrumbidgee and Murray			0	

Ocean Watch also supports the following changes:

- Extend the freshwater bag and possession limits to include the transport and storage of freshwater fish (aquarium trade to be licensed separately)
- Introduce a possession limit of 10 for freshwater native species that have bag limits
- Extend the prohibition on the use of gaffs to take trout to all freshwater species and waters
- Simplify the existing closures for inland waters by combining them into four types
- Introduce a maximum time of 12 hours for setting gear
- Permit the use of two attended lines in all non-tidal waters other than notified trout waters, and prohibit the use of un-attended lines in any inland waters

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Australian bass and estuary perch	2 with 4 in possession	Only 1 over 35cm	<10t	0	2	Only 1 over 35cm	Also support a spawning closure 1 June to 31 August
Blue groper	2	-	14	0	0		This is a protected species and recreational fishers should not be harvesting them
Blue swimmer crabs	20	6cm	155	192	10	6cm	
Bonito	20	-	57	102	5	-	Provides increased protection for a heavily used stock. Recreational fishers mostly use them for bait. There is a commercial market where they are now sold as sashimi/sushi fish and can get up to \$10 kg
Common baitfish	-	-	Unknown but slimy mackerel >20	Unknown	50 finfish + 50 invertebrates	-	There are currently few restriction on the use of baitfish and reasonable limits will reduce the risk of poor management
Deep sea fishes	5 in total with a max of 2 gemfish				0 gemfish Combined total of 2 other species	-	Gemfish stocks are depleted and must be allowed to recover. A reduction in bag limits will reduce illegal fishing effort.

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Dusky flathead	10	36cm with only one fish over 70cm	634	185	5	Min 36cm Limit of 1 fish over 70cm for recreational fishers	Recent increase in mesh size for commercial fishers has reduced the amount of undersized fish caught in flathead nets. The majority of fish taken are over the current and proposed size limit.
Eastern rock lobster	2 lobsters in total	10.4cm mini 18 maxi	25	102	2 lobsters in total	10.4 cm mini. Maximum size of 18cm.	The size of lobster sold is driven by market demand (plate size). All eastern rock lobsters sold in NSW are juveniles, as adults are not allowed to be taken by commercial fishers (size restrictions prevent this). TAC governs harvest quantities.
Eastern sea garfish	-	-	Unknown	In decline, <25	20	-	Currently overfished, anglers could still catch 50 river garfish.
Flounders and soles	20 each	-	34 (flounder)	32 (flounder)	Combined limit of 10		
Jackass morwong	20	28cm	7	<10	10	28cm	Same as other morwong

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Kingfish	5	60cm	187	171	5	Minimum size 60cm	<p>Size at maturity is 75cm so a 2yr review is required to see if further size increases are needed</p> <p>Commercial fishers could be allocated a (trip limit) quota on this species with a minimum size limit. The average size of kingfish appears to reduce as your travel further south and therefore any changes to the minimum size will create economic impacts to fishers.</p>
Leatherjacket	20 each	-	108	360	Combined limit of 20	-	A combined limit of 20 would help preserve stock and limit identification confusion as males and females in same species differ.
Longfinned eels	20 eels in total	30cm	Very low	121	5 eels in total	Minimum weight eg. 500gr with 100gr tolerance based on a %	<p>Conserves male spawning stock.</p> <p>It is very difficult to measure commercial quantities of live eels. The alternatives provided for commercial fishers to use weight eg 500gms as an alternative to size is suitable. Recreational catch is listed as very low though black marketing exists due to eels being a high priced item.</p>
Luderick	20	25cm	330	515	10	Minimum 25cm	

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Mahi-mahi (dolphinfish)	20	-	109	5	10	Minimum 60cm with only 1 over 110cm	Protects fish from recent increase in fishing pressure created by Fish Attracting Devices. Commercial fishers target mature Mahi-mahi (generally 14-17kg). These fish are ocean wanderers and may be a lot more prevalent - more research is required to assess stock levels.
Marlin, sailfish, sword fish	2 of each type	-	1,153	632	Combined limit of 1/ person		Protects trophy fish. A minimum size on black marlin should be set based on best science available to protect juvenile black marlin. Most marlin caught by amateurs on the east coast are juvenile blacks.
Mullet	20 of each type	30cm for sea mullet	Unknown eg 2 (red)	29 (red)	Combined limit of 10	30cm	Reduces confusion over different species and ensures conservation
Mulloway	5	45cm with only 2 over 70cm	102	70	5 with only 2 over 70 cm.	Minimum size 45 cm	Further review of bag limits may be required in 2yrs. Reduce bags to 2 over 55 cm.
Octopus	20 of each type	-	Unknown but significant	516	Combined limit of 10	-	Precautionary measure given the difficulty of identifying different species

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Pearl perch	5	-	7	10.5	5	Minimum 30cm	Increases opportunity for individual fish to spawn before first capture
Prawns	10L	-	Unknown but significant	2,521	5L	-	The amount of prawns currently allowed to be kept allows for illegal fishing by unscrupulous operators.
Red rock cod	20	-	18	5	5	-	Highly vulnerable to overfishing
Red morwong	-	25cm	1	-	-	Minimum 25cm	Increases to size limits would lead to resource wastage as survival rates are low when caught in deeper water
Rubberlip (grey) morwong	20	28cm	187	65	5	Minimum 28cm	See above
Samsonfish and amberjack	20 of each type	-	6	<2	5 in total	-	Aims to protect spawning aggregations. Commercial fishers could be allocated a (trip limit) quota on this species with a minimum size limit.

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Silver trevally	20	-	105	98	10		<p>A legal minimum length on silver trevally would impact on the South Coast purse seine fishery as the regulations specify that purse seining cannot catch fish that have a legal size limit. Of worthy note is that when these fish are caught, the smaller fish bring a higher price than larger fish (\$4-5/kg when under 500gm, \$0.80 for fish over 1 kg). Any increase in size limits would therefore reduce the economic return to fishers subsequently increasing effort, forced to fish harder to get the same return from lager fish. There is also not the market for the larger fish, hauls of larger trevally on occasions in the past have been sold as cray bait (huge waste of resource)</p> <p>If a size limit is introduced then the regulations for purse seining will require amendment to allow purse seining to continue for silver trevally within the size limit, or introduce a trip limit for this species for commercial fishers. .</p>

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Sharks and rays	Combined limit of 5	-	Variable	>580	Combined limit of 2 over 10kg, 5 under 10kg and 0 for spear fishers	-	Sharks are internationally recognised to be threatened. A minimal bag limit allows trophy fishing but protects shark populations. A cut off size limit of 10kg would allow those targeting prized eating species 5 fish (eg. Gummy shark)
Snapper	10	30cm	162	213	5	30cm	With a proposed increased to 35cm over the coming years In addition, a seasonal closure for 4-6 weeks during spawning could be considered for commercial and recreational fishers. It is generally recognised that snapper stocks may be under threat due to waterway degeneration and over fishing. It is imperative that DPI do not wait for another southern bluefin tuna, eastern gemfish or orange roughy before any action is taken. We need to act now for this species.
Spanish mackerel	5	-	6	7	2	Minimum 75cm	This will discourage illegal fishing of the species
Spotted mackerel		-	7	29	3	Mini 60cm	As for Spanish mackerel

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Swallowtail dart		-	>15	6	-	Mini 35cm	Protects juvenile fish – Option 3
Sweep			45	60	10		
Squid and cuttlefish	20 of each type	-	Est >40	>350	Combined limit of 10	-	
Tailor	20	30cm	574	69	10	-	
Tarwhine and bream	20 each	20cm (T) 25cm (B)	Unknown (T) 729 (B)	50 (T) 331 (B)	Combined limit of 10	Minimum 25cm	Option 3 although an increase in size has the potential to impact on the commercial fishery. Avoids confusion over species identification
Teraglin	5	38cm	114	23	5	38cm	
Whiting	20	27cm (sand)	394	1,235	10 (sand) 20 other	27cm	
Wobbegongs	2	-	unknown	98	2 for recreational Trip limit for commercial	-	Note it is very difficult to prevent a wobbegong from swallowing a hook. It is also very easy to damage a shark when a hook is pulled out. It is unlikely that circle hooks would perform better. Size limits not suitable as it is very difficult to measure a

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							<p>live wobbegong and more than likely any fish caught and released would not survive. A limit of 2 for recreational fishers would prevent resource wastage from accidental capture.</p> <p>Large amounts of undersized wobbegongs would be caught if a size limit were introduced, with probable low survival rate. Wobbegongs market price fluctuates and introducing a trip limit would reduce the amount of effort placed on the fishery when prices are low and prevent overfishing in times of high market prices. They are a slow growing migratory species and therefore susceptible to overfishing, possibly DPI could buy out the fishing history for wobbegongs via NHT funding.</p> <p>Further research is required to determine a suitable management tool for this species.</p>

Additional saltwater bag and size limit or other management proposals

Ocean Watch also supports the following changes:

- Introduce an aggregate bag limit of 20 for all species combined
- Lower the general bag limit to 10 for each species without a lower prescribed limit
- Extend the saltwater bag and possession limits to include the transport and storage of saltwater fish. Ban the use of power winches for all recreational fishers except those with a disability who would otherwise be unable to fish
- Require the registration of hand haul prawn nets on an annual basis in line with option 2, combined with an increase in net mesh size of in accordance to commercial fishing regulations.
- The holder of a recreational fishing licence must have it or licence number in their possession whilst fishing and fines should be increased for not having it in their possession.
- Introduce laminated waterproof licenses.
- The recommendations from the Palmer review of illegal fishing should be implemented, including increasing the fines for illegal and black market fishing.

Fishing Competitions

Ocean Watch supports the following changes to improve the management of fishing competitions

- A compulsory code of practice for fishing competitions requiring best practice management
- Licensing of competitions including a database of competitions and their catch records and compulsory inspection of boats by compliance officers
- Include spear fishing competition under other management arrangements such as monitoring of catch and require spear fishing to be undertaken in accordance with a formal code of practice.
- Improve management of charity auctions to ensure food safety requirements are met and introduce a requirement that all money raised must go to a registered charity! Charity auctions indicate there is too many fish being caught. All recreational fishers should be applying a catch and release policy unless they plan to eat the fish. A decrease across the board in bag limits should assist in reducing the size and number of charity auctions occurring.
- Promote conservation practices to fishing competitions, such as a reducing the number of fish that can be caught and released during the life of the competition per competitor.
- All event organisers must finance and undertake an EIS for each competition annually and develop and implement an overarching Environmental Management System within which competitions occurs.

* Information for this table was sought from various locations including:

- www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries
- Commercial fisheries Environmental Impact Statements
- National Recreational fishing survey
- Trailer boat survey