

Conditions on the Wildlife Trade Operation Declaration for the Queensland East Coast Inshore Fin Fish Fishery (ECIFFF)

Relating to the harvesting of fish specimens that are, or are derived from, fish or invertebrates, other than specimens of species listed under Part 13 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), taken in the Queensland East Coast Inshore Fin Fish Fishery, made under the Queensland *Fisheries Act 1994* and the Queensland Fisheries Regulation 2008.

1. Operation of the fishery will be carried out in accordance with the Queensland East Coast Inshore Fin Fish Fishery (ECIFFF) management regime in force under the Queensland *Fisheries Act 1994* and the Queensland Fisheries Regulation 2008.
2. The Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries (DPI&F) to inform the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) of any intended amendments to the ECIFFF management arrangements that may affect the assessment of the fishery against the criteria on which EPBC Act decisions are based.
3. DPI&F to produce and present reports to DEWHA annually as per Appendix B to the *Guidelines for the Ecologically Sustainable Management of Fisheries - 2nd Edition*.
4. DPI&F to introduce a logbook for 'S' symbol holders by 1 July 2009, that will provide information on all catches, better recording of effort and species-specific data on chondrichthyan catch (linked to new Shark Identification Guide for Queensland Fishers), including as a minimum:
 - blacktip (*Carcharhinus tilstoni* and *C. limbatus*);
 - spot-tail (*C. sorrah*);
 - milk and Australian sharpnose (*Rhizoprionodon acutus* and *R. taylori*); and
 - hammerhead (*Sphyrna* spp)and where necessary the product form of retained catch.
5. By 1 July 2009, DPI&F to implement a statistically robust observer program for 'S' symbol holders.
6.
 - a) By 30 March 2010, DPI&F is to investigate and report to DEWHA on an appropriate catch validation system, with monitoring to provide confidence in these data, to verify sales against landings and to cross check logbook catch data with catch landing data.
 - b) By 1 July 2011, DPI&F is to implement the outcomes of the investigation in Condition 6a).
7. By 1 July 2009, DPI&F to set a total allowable commercial catch (TAC) of no more than 600 tonnes for chondrichthyans.
8.
 - a) DPI&F to conduct annual reviews of the management arrangements for the shark fishery, including the TAC, and report to DEWHA by 1 December each year. Reports will include at a minimum:
 - analysis of catch composition;
 - analysis of spatial distribution of catch by species;
 - update of risk assessments for individual species; and
 - once sufficient data is available, stock assessments for species caught in the fishery.

- b) DPI&F to revise management arrangements as appropriate following annual reviews.
9. By 1 December 2010, DPI&F to report to DEWHA on the implementation and continued improvement of the harvest strategy for sharks, including progress towards species-based management.
10. By 1 July 2009, DPI&F to close the Bizant, Normanby and Kennedy Rivers to netting.
11. By 1 July 2009, DPI&F to introduce a requirement for high risk chondrichthyan species which are permitted to be retained, to be landed with the fins naturally attached. High risk species include: white spotted guitar fish (*Rhynchobatus* spp), whitetip reef sharks (*Triaenodon obesus*) and grey reef sharks (*Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos*).
12. By 1 December 2009, DPI&F to examine and report on the significance of conservation benefits of spatial closures in:
- a) areas where fishing effort overlaps with important habitats for speartooth shark, sawfish, dugong and inshore dolphins; and
 - b) waters north of Cooktown to mesh net fishing to provide additional protection to these species.
13. By 1 July 2009, DPI&F to finalise and implement the performance measurement system for the ECIFFF.
14. By 1 July 2009, DPI&F to review and lower the proposed trigger for effort from 34,000 net days to more closely reflect the average level of effort in the fishery over the last two years.
15. By 1 July 2009, DPI&F to determine an appropriate management response to be implemented if the effort trigger as identified by Condition 14 is reached.
16. By 1 December 2010, DPI&F to review management arrangements for the ECIFFF and investigate additional management measures to control catch and effort, including consideration of regional management.
17. By 31 December 2011, DPI&F to implement the outcomes of the review described in Condition 16.
18. By 1 July 2009, DPI&F to set a precautionary commercial TAC for grey mackerel (*Scomberomorus semifasciatus*), taking into account all sources of mortality.

Recommendations to the Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries (DPI&F) on the ecologically sustainable management of the Queensland East Coast Inshore Fin Fish Fishery (ECIFFF)

The following recommendations have been made to further strengthen the effectiveness of the management arrangements for the ECIFFF and minimise environmental risks in the short to medium term. Unless a specific timeframe is provided in the recommendation each recommendation must be addressed before the next review of the ECIFFF in 2012.

1. DPI&F to monitor the proportion of chondrichthyan catch taken by 'S' symbol holders compared to the catch taken by those operators who do not hold an 'S' symbol.
2. DPI&F to make completion of commercial logbooks prior to completion of unloading mandatory for all sectors, and completion of logbooks at sea mandatory for those boats or subfisheries where it is possible.
3. DPI&F to obtain estimates of all sources of mortality for ECIFFF target species including catch in other Queensland fisheries and by recreational, charter and indigenous fishers, with a particular focus on chondrichthyans. Estimates of total mortality should be considered when determining stock sustainability; included in the annual status reports; and improved through time to be species specific for all sectors.
4. DPI&F to implement a risk based observer program for the ECIFFF with particular focus on those subfisheries that are likely to interact with protected species.
5. DPI&F to work with other relevant jurisdictions to progress the development and implementation of stock assessment models for blacktip (*Carcharhinus tilstoni* and *C. limbatus*), spot-tail (*C. sorrah*), milk and Australian sharpnose (*Rhizoprionodon acutus* and *R. taylori*) and hammerhead sharks (*Sphyrna* spp).
6. DPI&F to investigate further compliance measures to detect illegal finning at sea.
7. DPI&F to implement an appropriate research plan to pursue and support research on chondrichthyan species in the ECIFFF, in particular to address the following areas:
 - determine harvest rates for all commonly caught chondrichthyan species, including tagging studies as appropriate;
 - update demographic parameters and risk assessments;
 - standardise catch rates of the main target species;
 - determine spatial heterogeneity of chondrichthyan species taken in the ECIFFF, particularly inshore protected and high risk species; and
 - determine post-release survival of hook and net caught chondrichthyans from recreational and commercial sectors.
8. DPI&F to include in the annual reporting on the ECIFFF, estimates of interactions and mortality of protected species based on the SOCI logbook, the observer program and surveillance and compliance information.
9. In cooperation with relevant agencies, DPI&F to implement appropriate management measures to address risks and issues identified in the report required by Condition 12 by 1 December 2010.

10. DPI&F to work with industry to identify and implement appropriate gear selectivity improvements that minimise capture of protected species and large chondrichthyans.
11. DPI&F to conduct a review, considering recent research, and seeking broad public and scientific input to:
 - a) identify species and areas at risk of localised depletion; and
 - b) implement management measures to address identified risks.

The review may be conducted as a component of the review of management arrangements described in Condition 16.

12. By 30 March 2010, DPI&F to update the age-structured stock assessment for tailor (*Pomatomus saltatrix*) to ensure the current level of harvest is sustainable.
13. DPI&F to continue education programs across all sectors on species identification, safe handling and release procedures and conservation.
14. DPI&F to continue to pursue collaborative management of shared ECIFFF stocks with relevant fisheries management agencies.