

# Queensland Sustainable Fisheries Strategy: 2017–2027

## Year 7 progress report

### Key achievements: 2023–2024



**Boat ramp surveys: 3,004 shifts, interviewed 35,011 fishers (16,352 boats) & measured 14,274 fish**

Measured **72,034** fish: recreational, commercial & traditional catch (coastal waters)

Collected otoliths from **10,756** fish to estimate age

Collected **4,100** tissue samples of Spanish mackerel & king threadfin



**Independent onboard monitoring** field trial in east coast trawl fishery



Set new or reviewed commercial catch limits for **14** species or multi-species groups



Stock assessments completed for **14** species (**13** stocks) – Gulf of Carpentaria king threadfin, Spanish mackerel (Torres Strait), east coast trawl multi-species and sea cucumber stock assessments completed



New commercial & recreational catch limits for Spanish mackerel



New membership for **9** working groups & **4** Expert Panel meetings

Cape York special working group – **4** meetings + Qld Reconciliation Awards finalist

Spanish mackerel & trawl project teams established



Consultation on mud crab & recreational reforms – over **200** & **1150** submissions respectively



**Commercial fishing app** – face-to-face training for **113** commercial fishers and **40** staff

**Recreational fishing app** – focus group of **40** fishers for enhancement feedback



**Women in recreational fishing network** continues to grow with over **1,900** members

Support for Women in Seafood Australia program



**1** ecological risk assessment completed & **2** in progress



Wildlife Trade Operation **export approval** for ocean beach, aquarium fish & commercial trawl (fin fish) fisheries



Continued work on harvest strategy for Gulf of Carpentaria fishery



Appointment of **10** new QBFP recruits



**22,806** inspections with **88.4%** compliance rate



**944** infringement notices  
**1,700** cautions  
**18** prosecutions



**317** joint patrols



**Qld eFisher commercial fishing app** – 17,723 fishing trips reported & daily average of **49%** reporting notices from app



**Qld Fishing 2.0 recreational fishing app** – reached 193,200 downloads + updates to content & enhancements, including new map zones



**Fisheries Act 1994** amendments to regulate **independent onboard monitoring**



**Queensland Government**

## Actions delivered

33  
actions

30  
delivered

### 1. Improved monitoring and research – ALL ACTIONS DELIVERED



**ACTION 1.1:** Develop a fisheries monitoring and research plan.

**ACTION 1.2:** Undertake additional monitoring of key biological stocks to better understand fishery performance and support management actions in a more timely way.

**ACTION 1.3:** Develop partnerships to trial the use of novel technologies for fisheries monitoring, such as apps, robotic vision, spatial interfaces and mapping, social media and citizen science.

**ACTION 1.4:** Develop and implement a data validation plan

**ACTION 1.5:** Develop and implement a practical and cost-effective system for collection of economic and social data.

### 2. Setting sustainable catch limits – ALL ACTIONS DELIVERED



**ACTION 2.1:** Develop guidelines for how sustainable catch limits should be set, as part of a harvest strategy guideline.

**ACTION 2.2:** Using improved data, undertake regular stock assessments (annually or at least every two years) for key stocks to assess the fisheries status against the sustainable target and limit reference points.

### 3. Improved stakeholder engagement – ALL ACTIONS DELIVERED



**ACTION 3.1:** Appoint an expert panel to provide independent advice on best practice fisheries management and science.

**ACTION 3.2:** Establish fishery-specific working groups with rotational membership to provide operational advice and participation to support the harvest strategies.

**ACTION 3.3:** Work with Indigenous groups and communities through various forums to provide advice on fisheries management issues.

**ACTION 3.4:** Utilise more novel engagement techniques (including online surveys) to gather a range of stakeholder feedback on particular fishery issues.

**ACTION 3.5:** Review the effectiveness of engagement mechanisms.

### 4. Environmental risk assessments – ALL ACTIONS DELIVERED



**ACTION 4.1:** Publish a guideline on assessing the ecosystem impacts of fishing activities, including the process for prioritising and undertaking ecological risk assessments.

**ACTION 4.2:** ERAs to be undertaken for priority fisheries or species, followed by the remaining fisheries.

### 5. Resource allocation – 1 OF 2 ACTIONS DELIVERED



**ACTION 5.1:** Develop a resource allocation policy to outline how decisions about allocation and reallocation of access will be made.

### 6. Harvest strategies – 1 OF 2 ACTIONS DELIVERED



**ACTION 6.1:** Develop a guideline on harvest strategies, including a process for how parameters should be set.

## 7. Fishing rules and access – ALL ACTIONS DELIVERED



**ACTION 7.1:** Review fishing rules, regulations and access arrangements as part of developing harvest strategies for each fishery.

**ACTION 7.2:** Amend fisheries legislation to minimise regulation and ensure rules are clear and practical.

**ACTION 7.3:** Implement an ongoing latent effort removal policy to ensure entitlements that aren't being used are not reactivated.

**ACTION 7.4:** Help facilitate industry-led structural adjustment through a range of mechanisms (e.g. two-for-one licence requirements and industry-led buybacks).

**ACTION 7.5:** Pilot regional management in a key location (e.g. Moreton Bay) to assess the benefits and limitations of regionally specific management arrangements.

**ACTION 7.6:** Develop a traditional fishing policy to clarify arrangements and an Indigenous commercial fishing development policy to support Indigenous economic development in a way that supports sustainable fishing.

## 8. Responsive decision-making – ACTION DELIVERED



**ACTION 8.1:** Amend the fisheries legislation to clarify the roles of the responsible minister and Fisheries Queensland, to ensure decision-making is at the appropriate level and is timely and evidence-based, and that rules can be changed via declaration as far as possible to ensure sufficient flexibility.

## 9. Compliance – ALL ACTIONS DELIVERED



**ACTION 9.1:** Continue to refine strategic compliance plans to support implementation of this strategy.

**ACTION 9.2:** Boost compliance resources from 2017–18 onwards.

**ACTION 9.3:** Undertake a thorough review to strengthen enforcement powers, particularly in relation to serious offences and black-market sales of seafood.

**ACTION 9.4:** Establish a cultural liaison role for some Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol officers to support education and other community initiatives.

**ACTION 9.5:** Continue to promote cross-decking with other enforcement organisations (e.g. police, maritime safety and marine parks) and establish formal arrangements to facilitate data sharing and collaborative compliance effort.

**ACTION 9.6:** Require installation of vessel tracking on all commercial boats by 2020, with a priority to install on net, line and crab boats by 2018.

## 10. Resourcing – 1 OF 2 ACTIONS DELIVERED



**ACTION 10.1:** In the short term, increase government funding to Fisheries Queensland to implement the reforms set out in this strategy.



Targets met



Better data for key fisheries to underpin evidence-based management



Reduced volume of fisheries regulation



## Actions to be delivered by 2027

### 5. Resource allocation

On track



**ACTION 5.2:** Determine allocations as an explicit part of harvest strategies or individual stocks or regions.

⇒ **16 harvest strategies in place and operational – 2 remaining**

### 6. Harvest strategies

On track



**ACTION 6.2:** In consultation with fishery working groups and the expert advisory panel, develop harvest strategies for all major fisheries by the end of 2020, with a priority to develop trawl, crab and inshore fisheries strategies by the end of 2018.

⇒ **16 harvest strategies in place and operational – 2 remaining (Rocky Reef and Gulf of Carpentaria fisheries)**

### 10. Resourcing

Work continuing



**ACTION 10.2:** In the longer term, develop a resourcing strategy based on a beneficiary-pays system. This should include a review of the recreational use fee and commercial licence fees once harvest strategies are in place for key fisheries.



## Targets to be met by 2027

 <b>Harvest strategies for all Queensland fisheries</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Remaining 2 harvest strategies to be developed for Rocky Reef and Gulf of Carpentaria fisheries</li></ul>	On track 
 <b>Maintain or restore Commonwealth environmental approvals</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>12 Queensland fisheries currently accredited for export under the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i></li></ul>	Work continuing 
 <b>Increased satisfaction of recreational fishers (compared to 2017 figures)</b>	Work continuing 
 <b>Improved stakeholder satisfaction about engagement mechanisms</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Survey completed in 2023 – recreational fishers, aquaculture industry, government agencies and non-fishers were more satisfied than dissatisfied, and commercial fishers and charter operators are continuing to have a low level of satisfaction with engagement</li></ul>	Work continuing 
 <b>Set sustainable catch limits to achieve maximum sustainable yield (around 40–50% biomass) and then maximum economic yield (around 60% biomass) for all Queensland fisheries</b>	On track 
 <b>No Queensland fisheries overfished</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>5 stocks considered to have sustainability concerns:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>5 stocks considered depleted – snapper, saucer scallops, pearl perch, king threadfin (Gulf of Carpentaria) and Spanish mackerel (east coast)</li><li>Management planning in place to achieve sustainable fisheries</li></ul></li></ul>	On track 
 <b>Increased certainty for commercial operators</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Economic and social data for commercial and charter fisheries – published online via an interactive dashboard</li><li>Collection of 2022–23 and 2023–24 data scheduled for 2025</li><li>Completion of ITQ and ITE allocations, along with new and revised commercial catch limits support operationalisation of the fisheries reforms and new harvest strategies, and also provide certainty to commercial fishers about the harvest expected from their operations</li></ul>	On track 
 <b>Improved compliance rates</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>88.4% – improved compliance behaviour due the success of intelligence-based compliance that targets non-compliant operators rather than random inspections and the continued focus on education supporting voluntary compliance and enforcement providing general deterrence</li></ul>	Work continuing 
 <b>A responsive and consultative approach to fisheries management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Satisfaction and engagement survey completed – next survey scheduled for 2026</li><li>Membership for 9 working groups being refreshed, targeting gender diversity and First Nations representation</li><li>Sustainable Fisheries Expert Panel met 4 times</li><li>Cape York special working group held first meeting and met 4 times</li></ul>	On track 