

Sustainable Fisheries Strategy

2017–2027

Results of consultation: revised developmental fishing policy

Overview

Developmental fishing enables fishers to investigate the viability of new commercial fishing activities, including, but not limited to:

- targeting of new, unallocated or currently non-commercial species
- use of a different or modified type of fishing apparatus
- exploration of new areas for fisheries resources.

A developmental fishing policy was published in 2015. Since then, the legislative framework and best practice fisheries management principles have been reviewed and updated, which triggered the need for policy review. The draft developmental fishing policy revised the current policy to provide a clearer and more flexible pathway for interested parties to explore, test the viability and develop new fisheries and:

- better pursue the objectives of the *Fisheries Act 1994*
- align with the principles outlined in the *Queensland Sustainable Fisheries Strategy: 2017–2027*
- set out a more modern, responsive and consultative approach to fisheries management
- ensure fishing is low risk and optimises benefits to the Queensland community.

Public consultation process

The draft policy was released for consultation in August 2020 for a period of 6 weeks and consisted of:

- draft document available on Department of Agriculture and Fisheries eHub website
- emails sent to all commercial licence holders
- emails sent to representative groups, bait and tackle shops, local councils and Indigenous corporations
- website promotional material.

The public were able to have their say by completing an online survey on eHub or sending a written submission via post or email. There were two types of responses to questions:

- multiple choice answers to questions ('Yes', 'No')
- comments provided in a written submission or in the comments field of the surveys.

Consultation summary

A total of four responses were received from fishers, three survey responses and one written. Most appeared to be from existing commercial fishers (although sector information was not provided). Comments were fairly brief and, in general, supportive.

All respondents were supportive in principle of the concept of developmental fishing permits and of the principles of the draft policy. Respondents emphasised the need to consider impacts on other stakeholders, including existing commercial fishers and recreational and traditional fishers, which is provided for in the policy.

The single written response suggested the policy scope should include targeting or bycatch of recreational or traditionally caught species. To address this point, the policy was amended to clarify that developmental fishing permits only apply to commercial fishing.

One written response was received from a government agency. It provided advice about additional approvals that may be required. To address this point, the policy was amended to clarify other approval process that are likely to be required as part of applying for developmental fishing permits.

Additional targeted consultation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders

It is recognised that most of the opportunities for sustainable fishing within Queensland waters have already been established as regulated commercial fisheries, so applications for developmental fisheries will need a greater emphasis on socio-economic outcomes in order to achieve triple bottom line outcomes. For this reason it is expected that developmental fishery proposals should consider the flow of benefits to local communities – in particular, building capability and economic opportunities in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, which is a key objective for the Queensland Government.

No feedback was received from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders during the consultation phase. Subsequent to the public consultation process, Fisheries Queensland sought specific feedback from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders from 3 November to 30 November 2020. An email inviting comments on the policy was sent to:

- coastal Registered Native Title Body Corporates and claimant groups
- four land councils
- Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation (who had requested an extension)
- Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport (Innovation policy team).

No responses were received, but the policy has been updated to reflect previous verbal advice from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to Fisheries Queensland to promote opportunities and ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders are consulted.