ESTUARY GENERAL – TRAPPING

Profile

Total no. of Fishing Businesses (FBs) with shares	Total no. of shares	Reported annual catch (avg.)	No. of FBs accounting for 80% of the catch value
157	21,100	113 tonnes	31

Draft share linkage recommendation

All of the linkages in the table below are proposed.

- The first change is, from July 2016, to enforce the current minimum shareholding.
- At the same time, an additional trap will be able to be used for each 10 shares held above the minimum shareholding.
- Also from July 2016, new species shares for blue swimmer crabs will be allocated in proportion to the number of existing trapping shares held by each shareholder. These new species shares will be additional to the existing trapping shares so that the the number of fishers in each region remains limited but the catch quota can be traded and used throughout the state.
- From July 2018, blue swimmer crab catch quota will start.

<table>
<tr><th>Linkage</th><th>July 2016</th><th>July 2018</th><th>July 2020</th></tr>
<tr><td>MINIMUM SHAREHOLDINGS</td><td colspan="3">Enforce the current minimum shareholding of 125 shares (authorises the use of 15 fish traps).</td></tr>
<tr><td>EFFORT QUOTA
Regional trap numbers</td><td colspan="3">Each 10 shares held above 125 shares authorises the use of 1 additional fish trap.</td></tr>
<tr><td>CATCH QUOTA
For blue swimmer crabs</td><td>New species shares for blue swimmer crab issued in proportion to the existing trapping shares held at the time. Total catch limit (ITCAL, for trapping) of 137,447 kg will apply. The resulting kg allocations for trapping shares will be:
<table>
<tr><th>Region</th><th>Kg per trapping share</th><th>Kg per 125 trapping shares</th></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>0.03</td><td>3.9</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>0.1</td><td>8.8</td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>2.8</td><td>353.2</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>12.3</td><td>1,532.0</td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>0.2</td><td>25.4</td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td>0.9</td><td>107.9</td></tr>
<tr><td>7</td><td>0.2</td><td>26.5</td></tr>
</table></td><td>Blue swimmer crab catch quota commences.

Quota transfers (leasing) not permitted.</td><td>Total Allowable Commercial Catch is set following TAC Committee advice.

Quota transfers (leasing) permitted. Kg freely transferable throughout the State.</td></tr>
</table>

Other proposed measures

- Remove requirement for boats under 10m to be licenced (from July 2016).
- Allow blue swimmer crabs to be kept if caught by any relevant method, provided blue swimmer crab catch quota is held to cover the catch (from July 2018).
- Allow mud crabs to be kept if caught in a fish trap (from July 2018).

What does the recommendation deliver for fishers?

- Enforcing the current minimum shareholding will reduce a small proportion of the excess fishing capacity that exists in the fishery.
- The trap number linkage will allow fishers to legally use more than the current standard trap limit provided more shares are held.
- Catch quota will:
  - provide the strongest form of access right and improve security for operators
  - allow shareholders to secure their portion of access to the stock
  - encourage fishing at times when it is most profitable (for example, when catch rates are good and when market demand/price is strong)
  - provide more certainty that the management arrangements can address any future resource sharing or resource sustainability issues, which is crucial for a long term viable fishery.
- Commencing the catch quota from July 2018 provides time for fishers to adjust their businesses to prepare for that change.
- Removing the need to use licensed boats will take away an unnecessary and ongoing burden for fishers.

Things to consider

- By July 2016: If you currently have less than the minimum shareholding and wish to remain endorsed to fish, you will need to get hold of enough shares to get up to the minimum. You can buy shares from someone else or put in a bid to buy shares in the exit grant program. If you already hold the minimum, you may consider buying more shares, if needed, in preparation for the changes to come in 2018 and 2020.
- From July 2016: You will be able to trade in blue swimmer species shares once issued. This will provide you with two years to adjust your business before catch quota commences in July 2018.
- By July 2018: you will need to hold enough shares to cover your desired level of fishing activity.
- If you no longer want to be endorsed to fish in this share class, you can put in an offer to sell shares in the exit grant program or you can sell shares to someone else at any time.
- The exit grant program offers a good opportunity to buy or sell shares at a subsidised rate, without having to find buyers or sellers yourself.
- By July 2020: A Total Allowable Commercial Catch will be set. At this time, you will need to hold enough shares to cover your desired level of fishing activity.