ESTUARY GENERAL – MESHING

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
444	60,275	1,975 tonnes	143

Draft share linkage recommendation

All of the linkages in the table below are proposed.

- The first change, in July 2016, is to enforce the current minimum shareholding requirement.
- Also from July 2016, new species shares for blue swimmer crabs and for mud crabs will be allocated in proportion to the number of existing meshing shares held by each shareholder. These new species shares will be additional to the existing meshing shares so that the number of fishers per region remains limited but the catch quota can be traded and used throughout the state.
- In July 2018, an effort quota based on the number of days fishing will start. Days will be allocated based on meshing shares held at the time. A 'day' is a unit of fishing effort and will be a 24 hour period from the time a fisher starts the fishing activity.
- From July 2018, the catch quotas for blue swimmer crab and mud crab will start.

<table>
<tr><th>Linkage</th><th>July 2016</th><th>July 2018</th><th>2020 onwards</th></tr>
<tr><td>MINIMUM SHAREHOLDING</td><td colspan="3">Enforce the current minimum shareholding of 125 shares.</td></tr>
<tr><td>EFFORT QUOTA
Days</td><td>-</td><td>Days effort quota commences.
Quota (days) issued to individuals in proportion to the meshing shares held at the time, with a total effort limit (ITCAL) of 35,286 days:
<table>
<tr><th>Region</th><th>Days per share</th><th>Days per 125 shares</th></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>0.42</td><td>52</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>0.48</td><td>61</td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>0.64</td><td>80</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>0.74</td><td>93</td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>0.41</td><td>51</td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td>0.56</td><td>70</td></tr>
<tr><td>7</td><td>0.50</td><td>62</td></tr>
</table>
Quota transfers (leasing) not permitted.</td><td>A Total allowable Commercial Effort is set following TAC Committee advice.
Quota transfers (leasing) permitted within regions.</td></tr>
<tr><td>CATCH QUOTA
For blue swimmer crab and mud crabs</td><td>New species shares issued in proportion to the existing meshing shares held at the time. Total catch limits (ITCALs, for meshing) of 39,849 kg of blue swimmer and 7,646 kg of mud crabs will apply. The resulting kg allocations for meshing shares will be:
<table>
<tr><th rowspan="2">Region</th><th colspan="2">Blue swimmer crab</th><th colspan="2">Mud crab</th></tr>
<tr><th>Kg per share</th><th>Kg per 125 shares</th><th>Kg per share</th><th>Kg per 125 shares</th></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>0.01</td><td>0.6</td><td>0.05</td><td>6.4</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>0.02</td><td>2.9</td><td>0.05</td><td>6.1</td></tr>
</table></td><td>Catch quotas commence.
Quota transfers (leasing) not permitted.</td><td>Total allowable Commercial Catches are set following TAC Committee advice.
Quota transfers (leasing) permitted. Kg freely transferable throughout the State.</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th>Linkage</th><th>July 2016</th><th>July 2018</th><th>2020 onwards</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>
<table>
<tr><th rowspan="2">Region</th><th colspan="2">Blue swimmer crab</th><th colspan="2">Mud crab</th></tr>
<tr><th>Kg per share</th><th>Kg per 125 shares</th><th>Kg per share</th><th>Kg per 125 shares</th></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>0.3</td><td>31.5</td><td>0.1</td><td>14.3</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>1.2</td><td>145.8</td><td>0.2</td><td>29.2</td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>0.1</td><td>18.1</td><td>0.05</td><td>6.0</td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td>2.1</td><td>256.8</td><td>0.1</td><td>17.0</td></tr>
<tr><td>7</td><td>0.2</td><td>24.9</td><td>0.04</td><td>4.5</td></tr>
</table>
Species shares can be traded throughout the State from this time.
</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

Other proposed measures

From July 2016:

- Provide for unendorsed assistance if the fishing business holds 250 shares or more.
- Remove requirement for boats under 10m to be licenced.
- Remove requirement for meshing nets with a mesh size below 4.5 inches to be registered.

What does the recommendation deliver for fishers?

- Applying the current minimum shareholding of 125 shares will reduce a small proportion of the excess fishing capacity that exists in the fishery.
- Effort and catch quotas will:
  - provide a stronger form of access right and improve security for operators
  - allow shareholders to secure their portion of access to the fishery/stocks
  - 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) and will help to improve community support for meshing in estuaries.
- Commencing both the catch and effort quotas from July 2018 provides time for fishers to adjust their businesses to prepare for the changes.
- Removing the need to use licensed boats and registered nets 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 and mud crab species shares once issued. This will provide you with two years to adjust your business before the catch quota commences in July 2018.
- By July 2018: You will need to hold enough shares to cover your desired level of fishing.
- New blue swimmer crab and mud crab species shares will also be allocated to the holders of shares in other share classes, such as trapping, mud crab trapping and category 1 hauling.
- 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 Effort and Total Allowable Commercial Catches for the two crab species will be set following TAC Committee advice. At this time, you will need to hold enough shares/quota to cover your desired level of fishing activity.