

Tasmanian Calamari Fishery

Summary of Responses to the Discussion Paper

December 2021



In recognition of the deep history and culture of this island, we acknowledge the palawa people as the traditional and original owners and ongoing custodians of land and sea country of lutrawita/Tasmania and pay respects to their elders past and present.

Author: Wild Fisheries Management Branch

Publisher: Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania

Date: December 2021

Cover Image Source: Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Southern calamari are highly valued by commercial and recreational fishers, and by the Tasmanian community who consume them.

The calamari fishery on the north coast of Tasmania has experienced increased fishing pressure from both the recreational and commercial sectors since 2010 and has also been impacted by changing environmental conditions. Southern calamari have been assessed as 'depleting' by the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) since 2017. Changes are needed to reduce fishing levels and return calamari to a sustainable fishery.

If management changes are not made to address this, north coast stocks could follow a similar trajectory to stocks in Great Oyster Bay in the mid-2000s. Here, large spawning aggregations were dispersed due to sustained heavy fishing pressure over a prolonged period.

Actions by all sectors of the fishery to address sustainability risks should increase stock biomass and make the fishery more resilient. A spawning closure introduced on the north coast in 2017 has reduced some risks but more needs to be done.

A discussion paper—*Tasmanian Calamari Fishery – managing stocks for Sustainability*—was released on 8 October for a 30 day non-statutory consultation process to gain early engagement and feedback from the broader fishing community on management of calamari.

The discussion paper was accompanied by two surveys, for the recreational and commercial sectors. DPIPWE received 995 responses to the recreational survey and 53 responses to the commercial survey.

From 25-29 October 2021 and on 18 November 2021, fishery managers conducted interviews with 36 commercial licence holders/fishers on the content of the discussion paper. This was done to provide commercial operators an opportunity to talk about the discussion paper with fishery managers without the pressure of being in a public meeting. These meetings were conducted individually or in small groups.

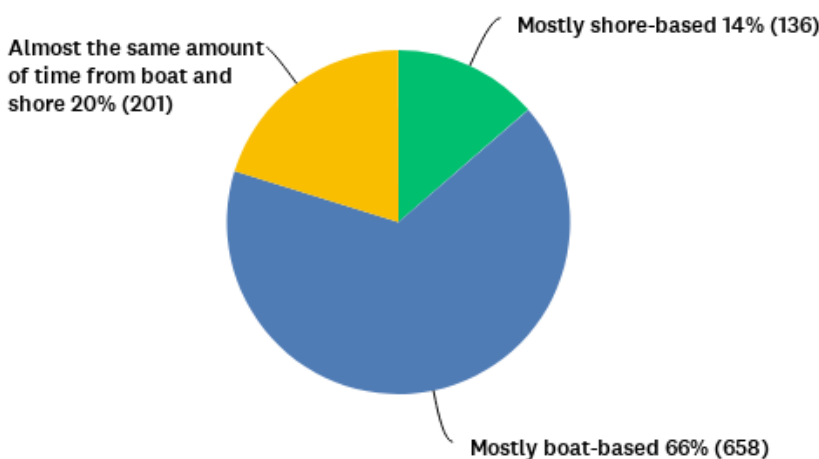
Due to the sustainability concerns of southern calamari and being mindful of the time it takes to make legislative changes, an investment warning was released in August 2018 on the Department website. This report summarises responses from both commercial and recreational fishers and should be read alongside the discussion paper.

RESPONSES TO RECREATIONAL FISHERY PROPOSALS

The Department received 995 responses via the online recreational survey.

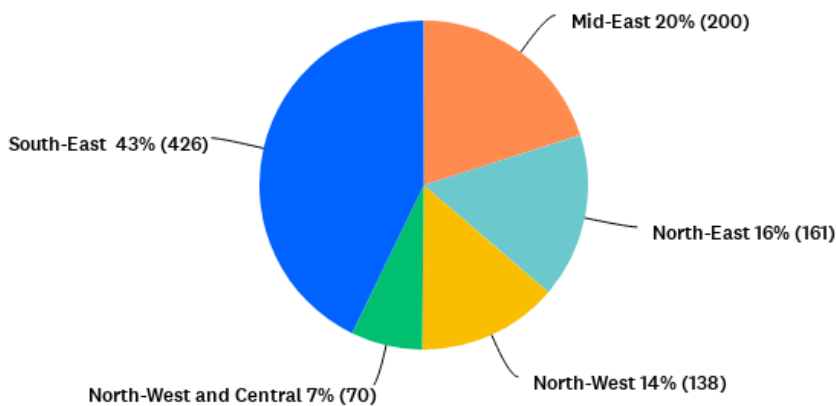
The key proposals for the recreational fishery were to introduce a boat limit and reduce the calamari bag limit.

Question 1. What type of calamari fishing do you do?



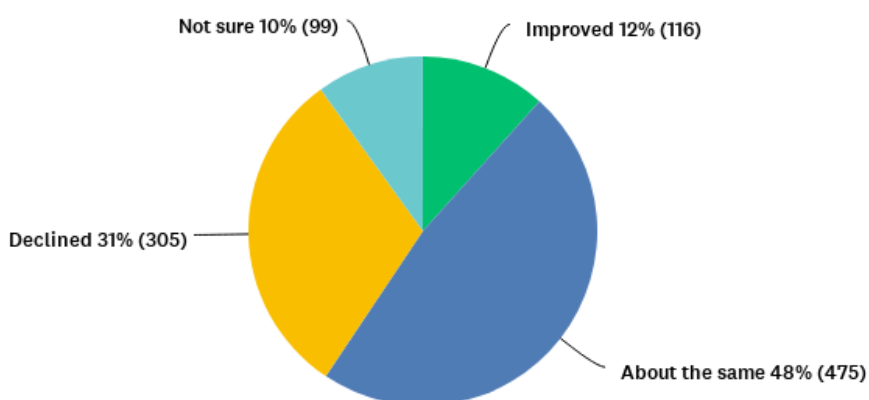
Two thirds of respondents mainly fish for calamari from boats while 14% mainly fish from shore. A further 20% of respondents indicated a similar amount of time spent calamari fishing from both boat and shore.

Question 2. Where do you fish for calamari the most?



Consistent with the distribution of Tasmania's population, 43% of respondents indicated fishing for calamari the most in the South-East region. This was followed by the Mid East Coast (20%), the North East Coast (16%), the North West Coast (14%) and the North West and Central North Coasts (7%).

Question 3. In the area that you fished most, do you think the stocks have changed?



Almost half of all respondents did not perceive a change in stock abundance during their period of involvement in calamari fishing. Among those who reported changes, considerably more fishers perceived a stock decrease than a stock increase. Respondents who did most of their calamari fishing on the South East and East coasts were more likely to report a

decrease.

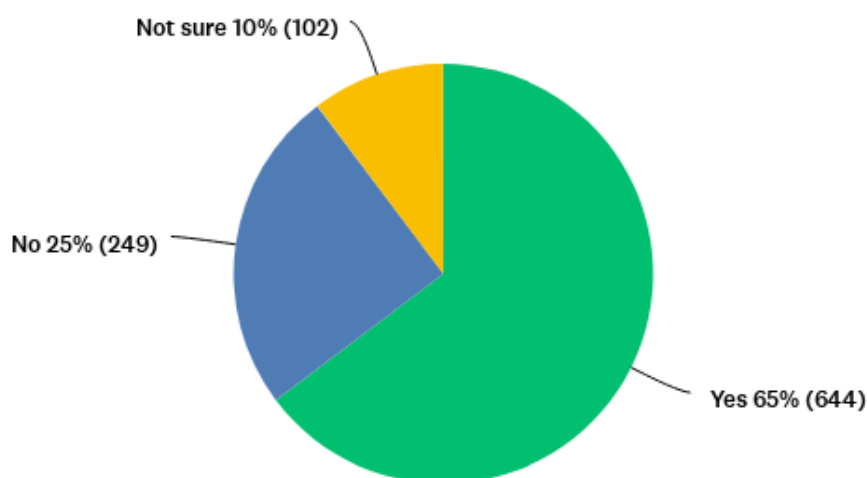
One hundred and fifty seven comments were received. Approximately half of these simply affirmed respondents' perceptions on whether stocks had changed. Some reporting increases attributed this to the introduction of regional spawning closures.

Among remaining comments, most were critical of commercial fishing practices—either in general or in relation to specific management settings, fishing practices (particularly the targeting of spawning aggregations) or fishing areas. Areas of most concern included Southport, Dover, Bull Bay, Triabunna, Great Oyster Bay, Storm Bay, Norfolk Bay, Frederick Henry Bay and Doctors Rocks.

A smaller number of respondents perceived stock impacts from recreational fishers and/or combined impacts from both sectors. Here, Frederick Henry Bay and Great Oyster Bay were mentioned on multiple occasions.

Other comments included reports of increasing 'patchiness' of calamari and perceived impacts on stocks from salmon farming activities.

Question 4. Do you think there is a need to limit the total calamari catch (both commercial and recreational)?

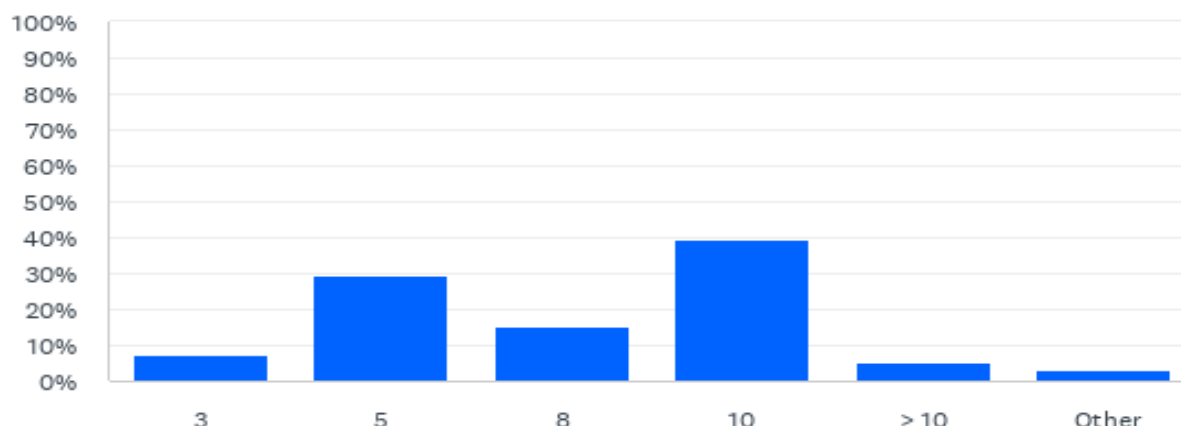


Two thirds of respondents acknowledged that the total calamari catch needs to be reduced. A quarter felt that no limits are required and 10% were unsure.

Over 300 comments were received. These indicate considerable support for only limiting commercial catches—i.e., without further catch restrictions for recreational fishers. Some expressing this view suggested that

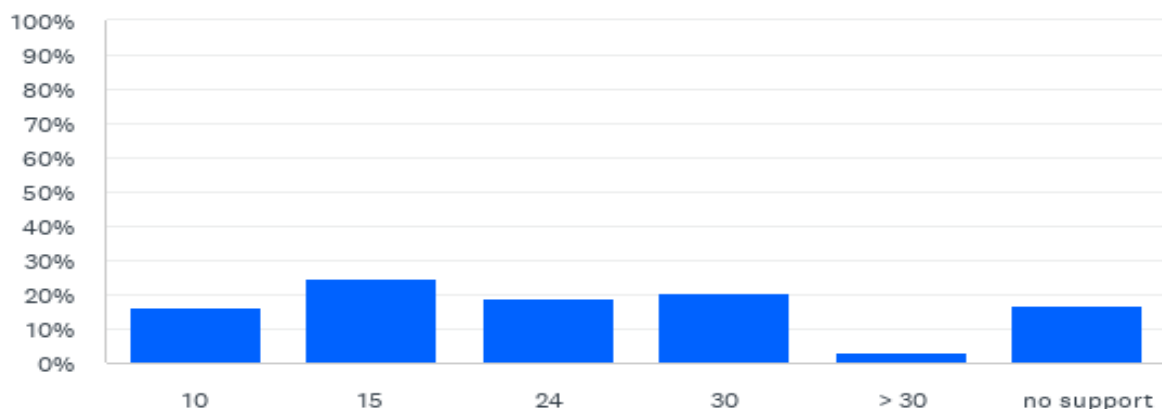
recreational constraints could be achieved through broadening seasonal closures, greater enforcement of fishing rules and more effective fisher awareness.

Question 5. What do you think is a fair day's calamari fishing – i.e., daily bag limit per person?



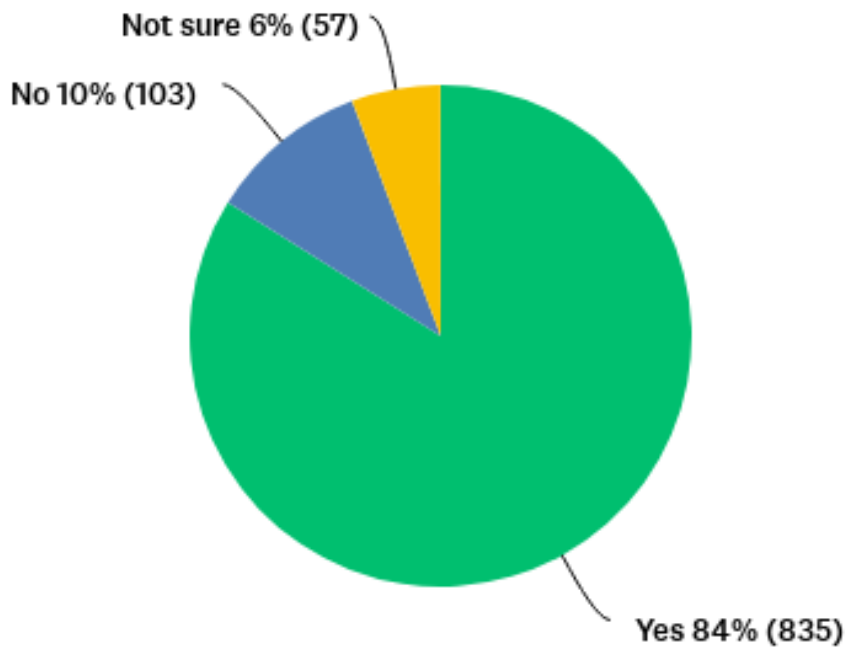
Almost 40% of respondents felt that the current daily bag limit of 10 calamari per day is fair. However, almost 60% suggested that current bag limits are too high. Of the 32 respondents who nominated "other", suggestions for alternative bag limits ranged from 2 to 40 calamari per day.

Question 6. If a boat limit for calamari was introduced, what is an acceptable amount?



Among the response categories, support was relatively evenly distributed between 10, 15, 24 and 30 calamari per boat. Only 3% supported a boat limit of more than 30 calamari. Seventeen percent of respondents did not support any boat limits.

Question 7. Do you support seasonal closures for calamari?



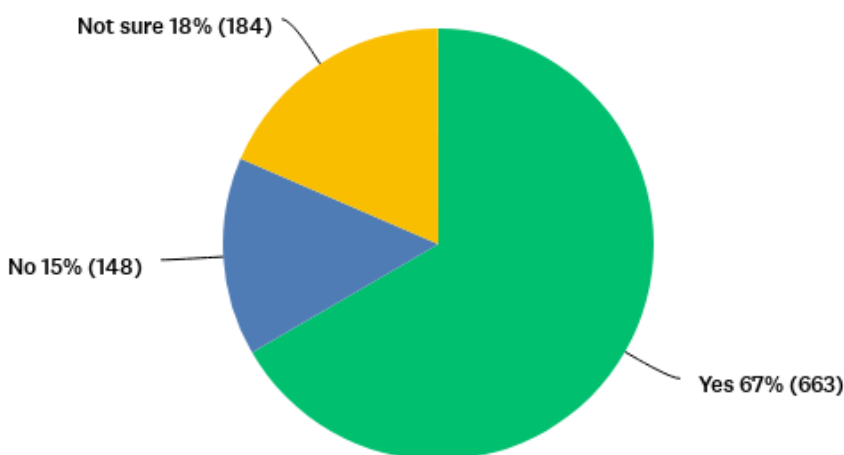
Seasonal closures were supported by 84% of respondents.

One hundred and ninety-one comments were received. The two main themes from those who support closures were: 1) closures should be extended beyond one month, and; 2) closures should be expanded state-wide. Many of these suggestions were framed as alternatives to decreasing recreational bag or boat limits.

Among those who didn't support spawning closures, reasons included the limited time some recreational fishers

have to go fishing and the "natural protection" that some fishing areas receive from prevailing weather conditions.

Question 8. Do you think the dates for the recreational and commercial fishery closed seasons should be the same?



Two-thirds of respondents supported maintaining the same closed seasons for both sectors. Many comments from those in support also indicated support for extending closures to cover a larger portion of the spawning season. There were also suggestions to extend closure times for a few years only, until calamari stocks recover.

Many people who did not support corresponding closures argued that closed seasons

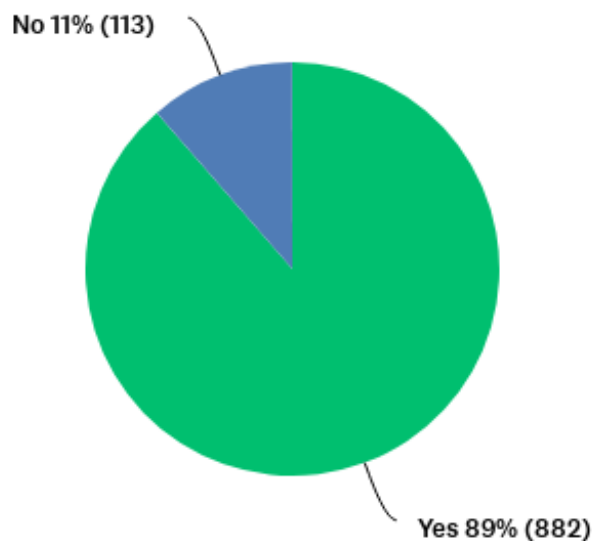
should be longer for commercial fishers. Arguments included the perceived greater impacts on calamari stocks by commercial fishers, the limited opportunities of some recreational fishers to go fishing and perceived benefits of staggered seasons in reducing intersectoral conflict.

Question 9. The current calamari closure on the North Coast is 1– 31 October, do you think this is about right?

Three hundred and sixty-nine respondents indicated the north coast as their primary calamari fishing region. Approximately half of these were unsure about the appropriateness of the timing of the current closure. Some of these suggested that these decisions should be guided by scientists and not popular opinion.

Some people who did not support the current closure indicated support for a closure covering a larger proportion of the spawning season.

Question 10. Do you voluntarily release small calamari?



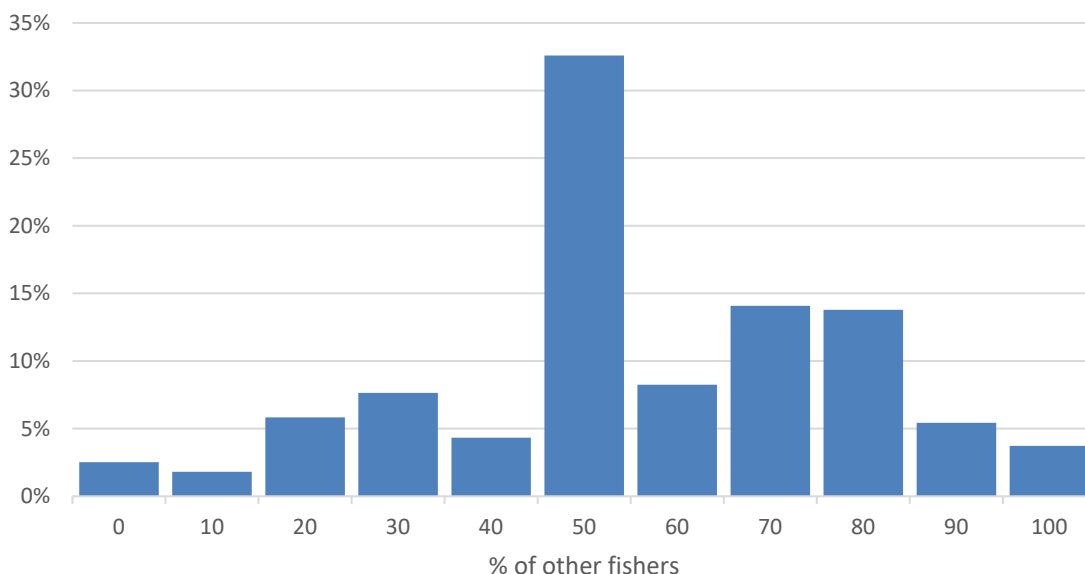
Almost 90% of respondents indicated that they voluntarily release small calamari. The main reasons to release small calamari were: 1) to enable smaller fish a chance to grow and spawn, and; 2) the limited value of smaller calamari as food or bait .

Some who nominated “no” indicated that they have never caught small calamari. For those who have caught small calamari and have chosen not to release them, reasons for their decisions include:

- Their ‘live fast, die young’ life cycle means that some of the fisheries benefits associated with releasing small fish are less applicable for calamari
- A perception that small calamari taste better
- Small calamari are good whole-bait for snapper and kingfish
- A perception that releasing calamari would scare other calamari from being caught
- A perception of poor post-release survival.

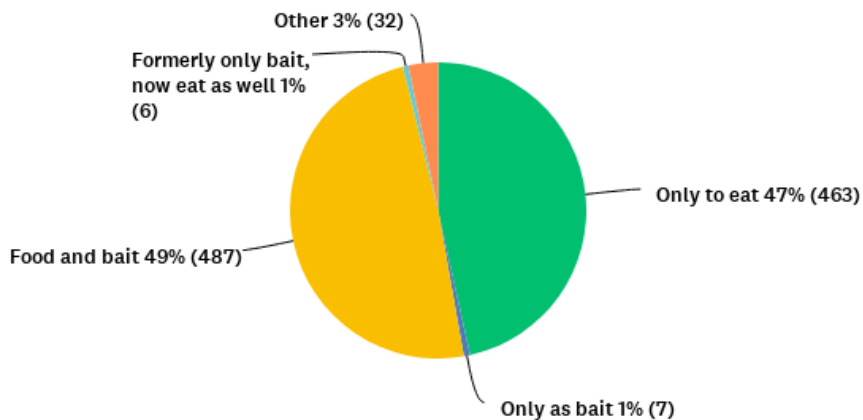
Among responses aligned with both response categories, it appears that decisions to keep or release small calamari often depend on the presence/absence of larger fish available and the cooking preferences of fishers.

Question 11. What percentage of other fishers do you think would voluntarily release small calamari?



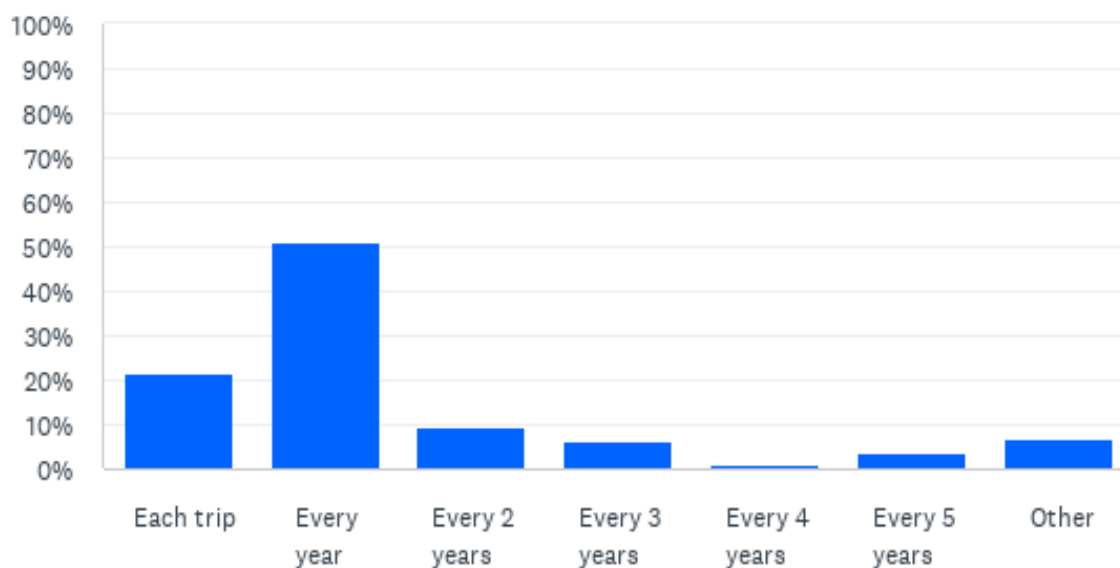
The most prominent response category was 50%.

Question 12. How do you use the calamari that you catch?



Total responses were relatively evenly split between those who only fished for food and those who fished for both food and bait. Only 7 respondents only used calamari for bait, reflecting the growing importance of calamari as seafood in Tasmania. Fishers who nominated 'other' generally described different uses for different parts of the calamari.

Question 13. How often do you think we need to collect recreational calamari catch data?



Half of

those surveyed perceived a need to collect recreational calamari catch data annually. Only 4% felt that the current system of recreational scalefish fishery assessment – where data is collected every 5 years – is sufficient.

Over 20 respondents who nominated 'other' suggested that collecting catch data from recreational fishers is unnecessary due to their perceptions that recreational fishers have negligible impact on calamari stocks.

Question 14. Do you have any other comments related to the management of calamari?

Five hundred and forty comments were received. Overwhelmingly, the most prominent theme was a perceived need to address sustainability concerns in the calamari fishery by constraining the commercial sector. To this end, there were many comments about resisting bag limit changes and altering arrangements for seasonal closures. As these have already been captured, other suggestions included:

- Introducing commercial quotas, including at a regional level
- Enhancing commercial compliance and monitoring
- Encouraging relatively greater commercial fishing effort following the peak of the spawning period
- Introducing resource-rent payments
- Banning seine netting
- Increasing the publishing frequency of commercial catches

Suggestions of relevance to both sectors included:

- A need for more reflexive management with capacity to review and implement rules annually in view of prevailing fishery conditions
- Introducing area-based management to reduce sectoral conflict, particularly near population centres
- Introducing a minimum size for calamari
- Developing a catch share arrangement between sectors
- Engaging IMAS for further research to investigate the link between spawning success and timing, and environmental factors
- Increasing efforts to protect sensitive calamari habitats such as seagrass

Suggestions that were recreational fishery-specific included:

- Enhancing recreational compliance particularly at 'hotspots' including Eaglehawk Neck, Stanley Wharf and Dodges Ferry
- Enhancing public information on calamari life cycle and biology
- Introducing recreational licence endorsements for calamari fishing
- Enhancing recreational data collection including through apps, logbooks and intercept surveys

RESPONSES TO COMMERCIAL FISHERY PROPOSALS

Feedback was sought from commercial fishers through three means—online survey, written responses and via direct consultation, which was also used to encourage fishers to submit their feedback either in writing or via the online survey.

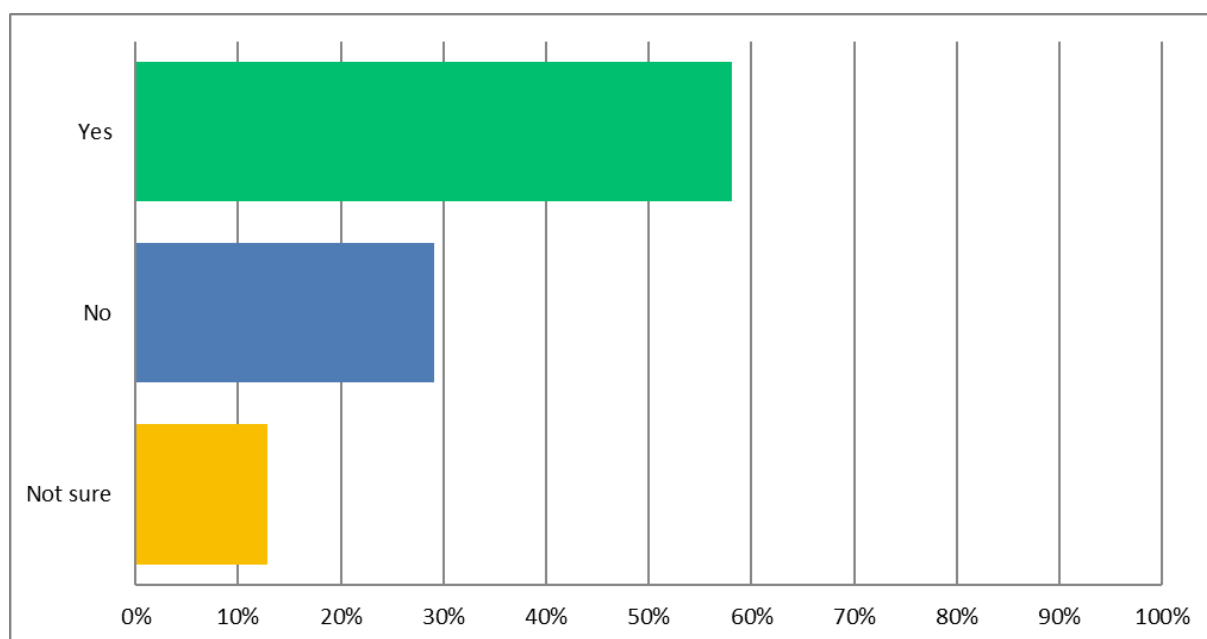
Fishery managers met with 36 commercial fishers at 7 locations around the North East (including Flinders Island) and North West of the state to have informal conversations about the discussion paper. Comments from these interviews are included at the end of this paper.

Of the 41 online survey responses and 12 written submissions, 13 were submitted by non-commercial fishers. The responses from non-commercial fishers have been excluded from this section of the report to gain a clearer picture of commercial fisher sentiment.

The key proposal for the commercial fishery was to introduce two new limited licences for the North West and North East regions and a statewide trip limit for those that do not qualify for one of the new licences.

General questions

Question 3. Do you think there is a need to limit the total calamari catch—i.e., both commercial and recreational?

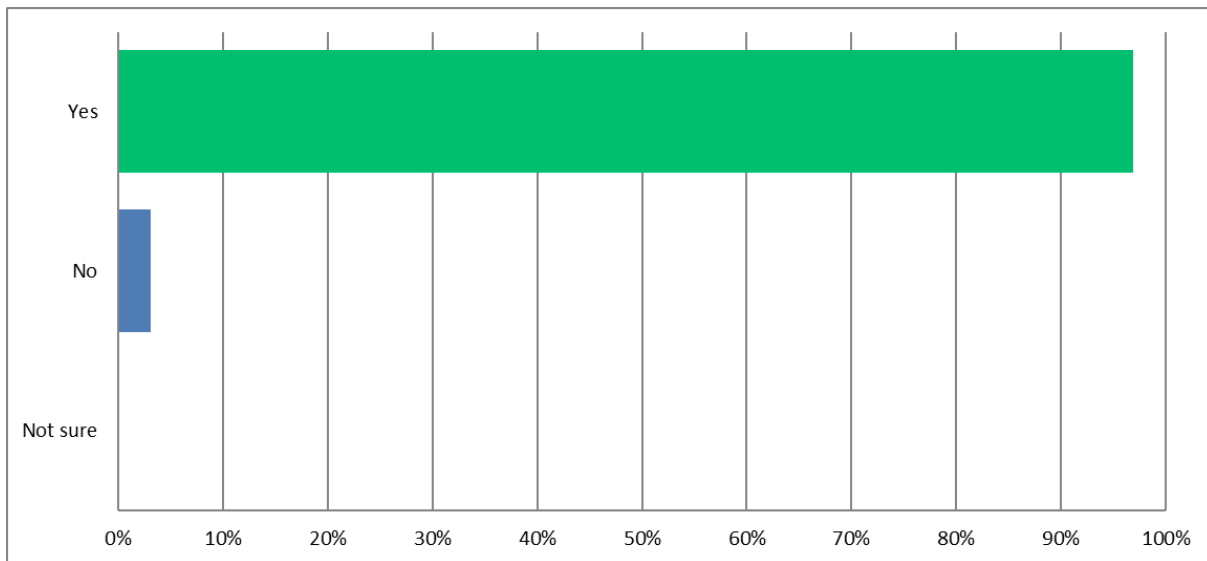


Comments included:

- Further limiting recreational fishers and not commercials

- Boat limits for recreational fishers
- Have a longer spawning closure
- Limit catches prior to spawning
- Have rolling closures and no catch limits for commercials
- Recreational interest in calamari is increasing so need limiting
- No licence but impose catch limits for commercial fishers

Question 4. Do you see calamari as a shared stock between commercial and recreational fishers?

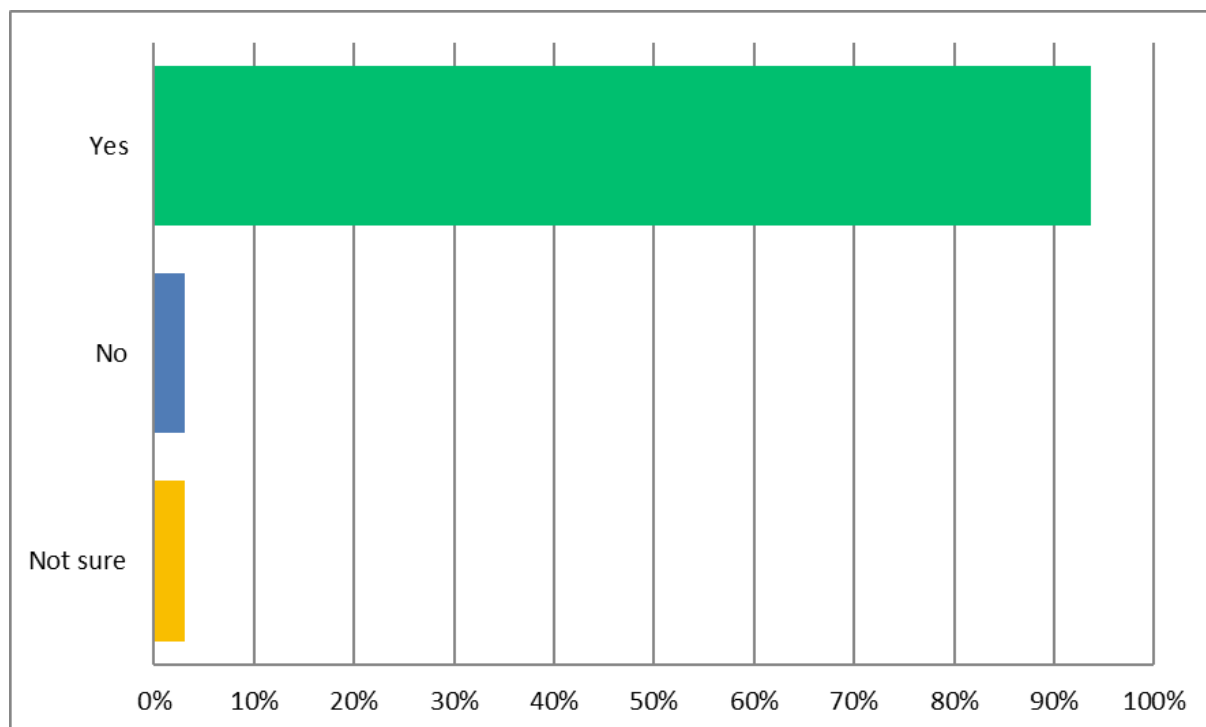


Around 95% of all online respondents agree that calamari should be viewed as a shared stock between commercial and recreational fishers. Supporting comments include:

- It's a shared community resource. If only a recreational species, then where would the non-fisher person be able to access it from.
- Recreational fishers should have a right to fish for calamari
- Commercial fishers should be giving more rights to catch the fisher so everyone has the opportunity to consume seafood products. Commercial fishers also play large access fees to use their licence and recreational fishers do not
- Recreational catch is too high
- The inshore fishery is accessible to both sectors.
- Everybody has the right to catch fish. We need to have a fair solution and taking away the rights of State licence holders is not the right way to do this
- Yes, but not having enough resources to police the fishery means that some recreational fishers (not all) will continue to push the boundaries until they are caught.
- On any given day commercial and recreational fishers are on the same fishing grounds
- There is no clear picture of what recreational catch is

Seasonal spawning closures

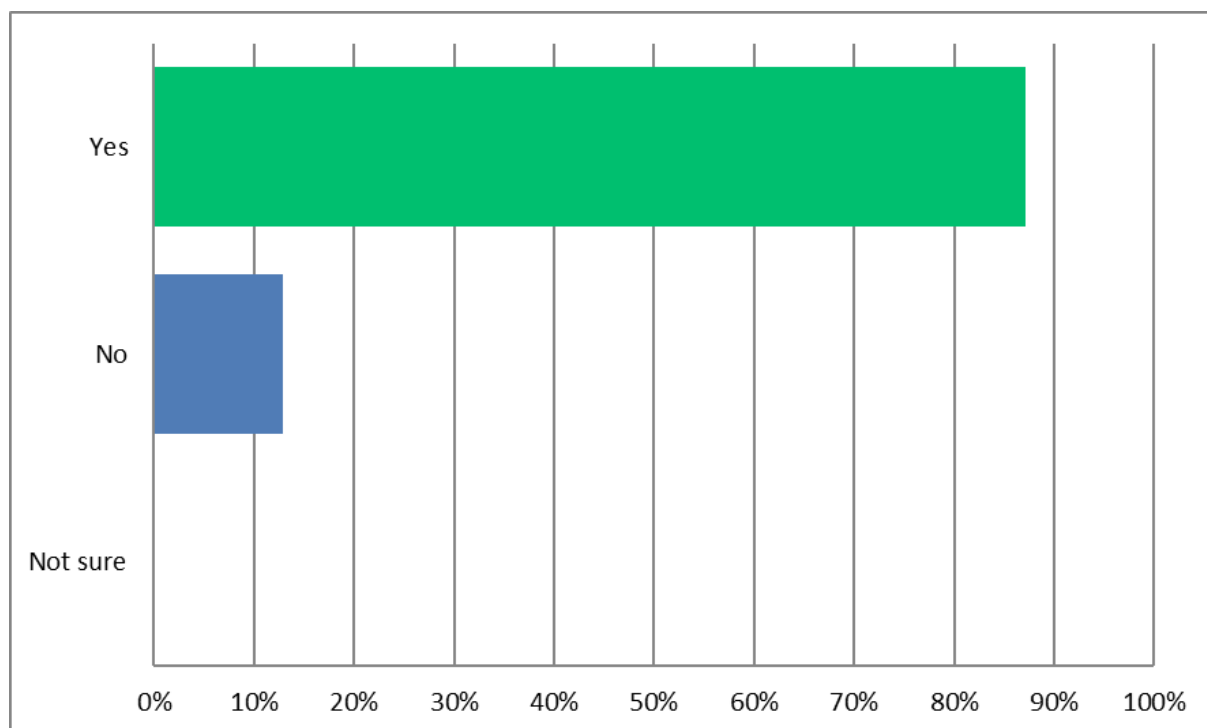
Question 5. Do you support seasonal closures for calamari fishery?



Over 90% of online respondents supported seasonal closures for calamari. There were mixed views as to how long closures should be. Supporting comments include:

- Yes, due to breeding and restocking
- No more than 4 weeks
- Yes, but only for 4 weeks due to weather conditions
- Yes, and support a longer seasonal closure to protect spawning calamari
- Closures are good for the fishery, but the season should remain closed for a further 2 weeks for recreational fishers.
- Yes, but should be closed for the last 2 weeks of September and all of October
- Yes, but 4 weeks only commencing 15 September
- Yes but believe the closure could be made longer than 1 month to allow fish to spawn without being interrupted.
- Regard this as the main management measure especially for the commercial fishery. Notes that the data in the discussion paper is mainly pre-spawning closure with no assessment of the effectiveness of the closure on catch rates etc over the past 2 years.
- Closures are crucial to the sustainability of the fishery. However fishing at Coles Bay you witness recreational fishers catch calamari throughout the closure
- Earlier closure would help as leading up to the current closure the fishing improves. So, if we shut 2 weeks earlier the males will be protected. Without the males drawing the females in some areas are less productive

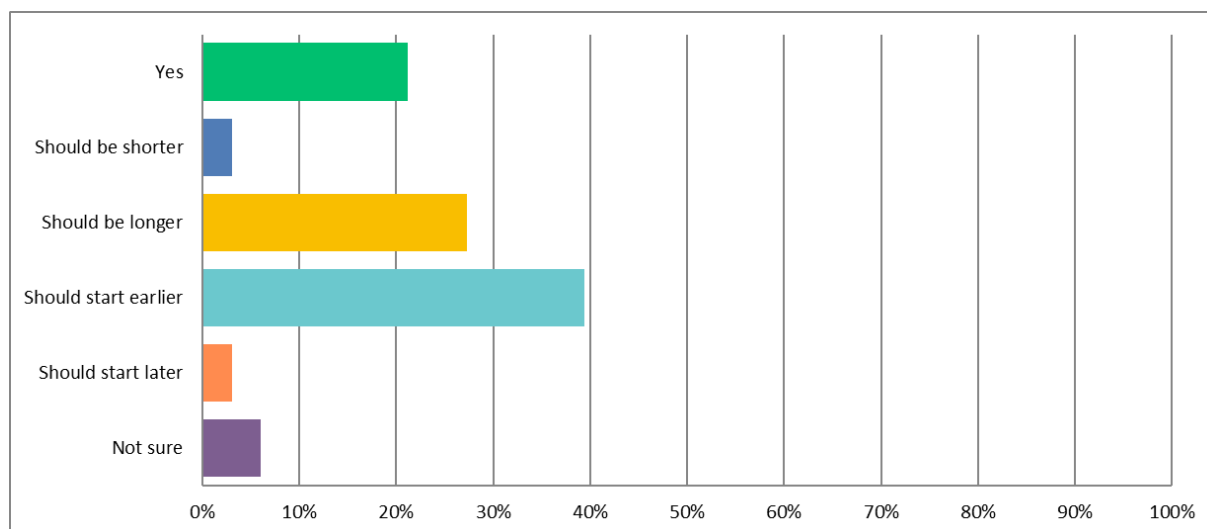
Question 6. Do you think the dates for the commercial and recreational fishery closed seasons for calamari should be the same?



Over 80% of respondents supported the same closure dates for both sectors. The main reasons supporting this view were ease of policing and equity between both sectors. The small number of respondents who didn't support this view suggested that the commercial closure should be longer than the recreational closure. Supporting comments include:

- Closed seasons of the same period should apply to both sectors
- Ease of policing
- Be the same but made longer
- Recreational fishers should only be able to catch calamari from the 14 November to the end of January and commercial fishers should be closed from March to 15 October.
- So it can be policed
- Made longer – shut September and October
- Should be based on spawning activity / science
- Must be the same or recreational fishers would not be happy. Let's face it, managed properly we can all have a share of a fish which lives for 12 months.
- Should be 6 weeks

Question 7. The current calamari closure on the north coast is from 1–31 October, do you think this is about right?

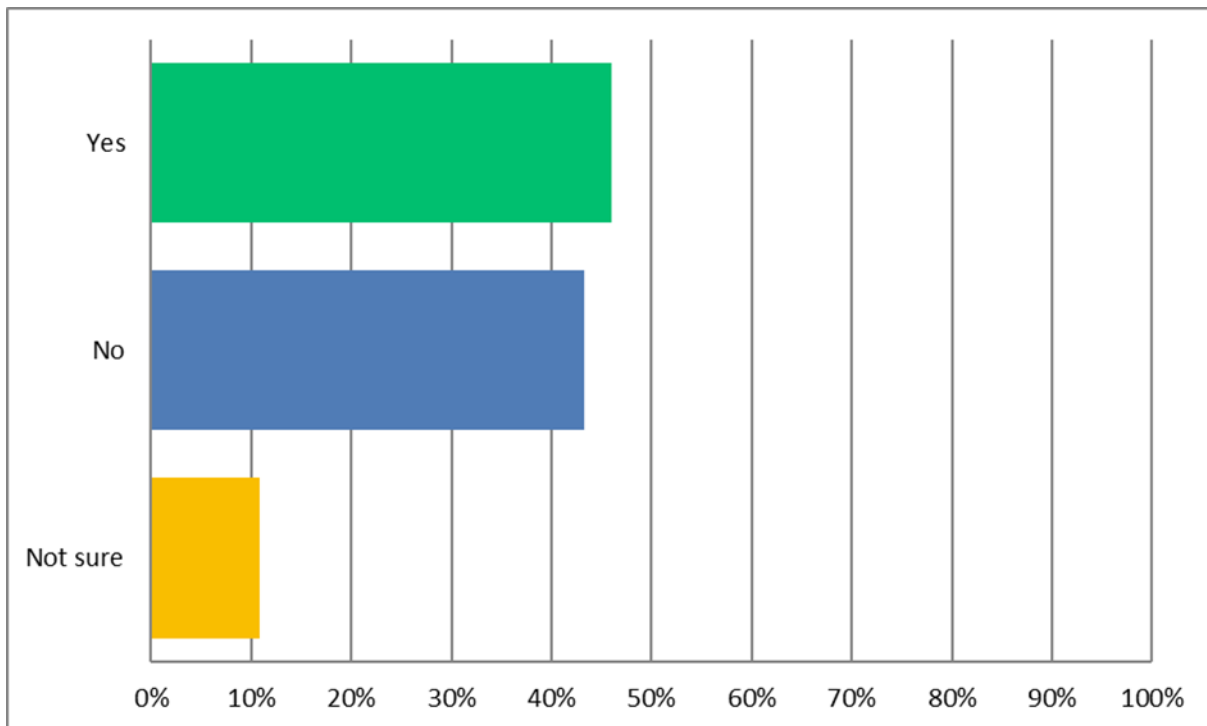


Almost 40% of respondents support the closure starting earlier and almost 30% suggest the closure should be longer. Over 20% support the timing of the current closure. Around 6% thought the closure should start later or be shorter and around 6% were unsure if the timing of the currently closure was about right. Supporting comments include:

- Thought there was uncertainty of when fish spawn, so other strategies could be considered
- Closure should be from mid-September to mid-October
- Should be at least 2 months to allow more calamari to spawn—i.e., 1 September to 31 October
- Earlier for commercial and later for recreational
- Last 2 weeks of September and all of October
- Should be from 15 September to 15 October
- Prefer to extend the closure if needed rather than limit access
- Research says that this is about the right time
- 6 week closure
- Should be shift for April as well as October to protect large males
- Should include September and have a higher catch limit through November and December when the fish are dying
- Extend the closure from 1 September to 31 October for a few years and focus on updating the science
- Timing of closure should be moved to start on the last 2 weeks of September and end mid-October. Concerned that all of October is a little late but acknowledges that this may differ from year to year.

Proposed introduction of two new calamari licences

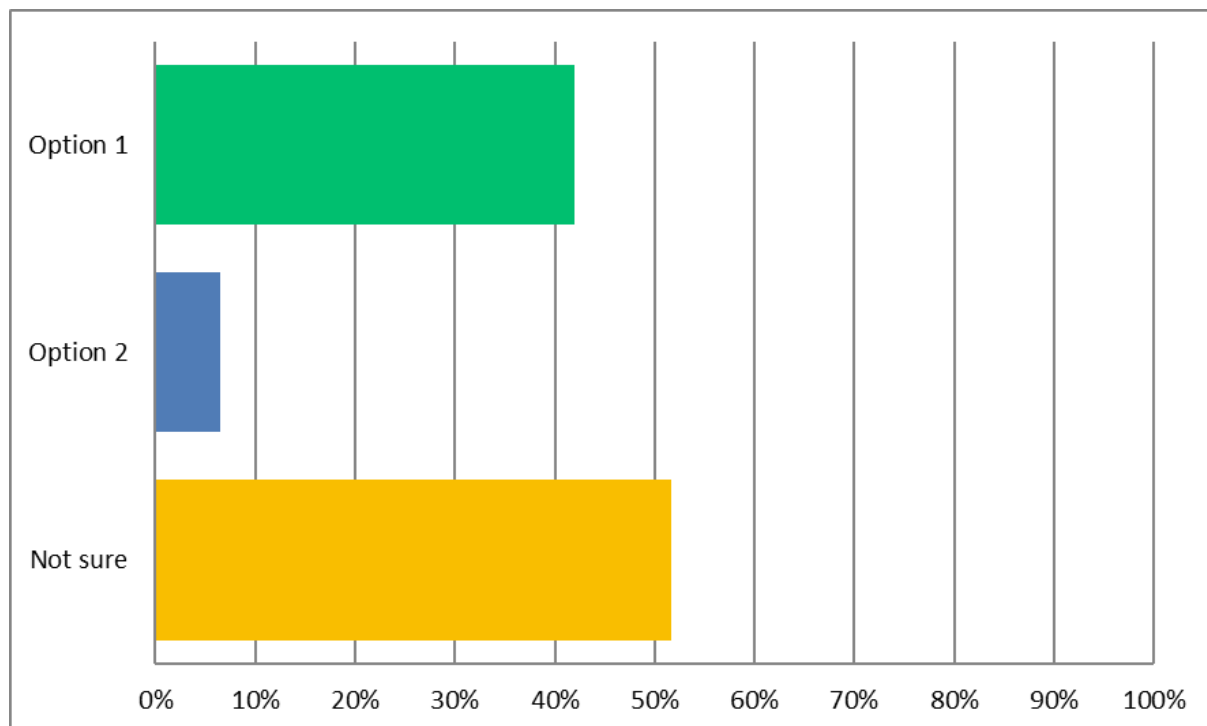
Question 8. Do you support the introduction of two new calamari licences on the north coast?



Over 45% of respondents supporting introducing new calamari licences. However, over 43 % did not support the proposed new licences. A little over 10% were unsure. Comments include:

- Need to limit catch but licensing means a smaller group of fishers take more fish. Needs to be fair to all scalefish fishers.
- Significantly reduces options for scalefish fishers. If a licence is introduced there should only be one statewide licence with spawning aggregations managed through closures.
- All the science in the world does not change the fact that fishing at Coles Bay on weekends and holidays there are at least 30 recreational boats with an average of 4 people on board catching their bag limit daily. Limiting commercial fishing in that area has not helped in any way. Can't see that working in the north either.
- Closed season and sustainable catch limits should be the tools used not a new licence.
- Supports some restriction for recreational fishers and introduction of licences are necessary to sustain calamari stocks.
- Regional licences are not going to protect the fishery when there is no limit on catch. Alternate proposal is for DPIPWE to hold quota for calamari and those scalefish licence holders who want access should have to pay for it each season at a set rate per kilogram (with increases set to cpi). Funds used for research and compliance. Sliding scale of access subject to FLA, FLB or FLC.
- No licence and instead extend spawning closure and introduce trip limit for all.
- Does not support a quota of upper catch limit for commercial fishers who qualify for a licence
- Supports some restriction to recreational catch and introduction of licences to sustain stocks.

Question 9. Which of the proposed licence area boundary options do you support?

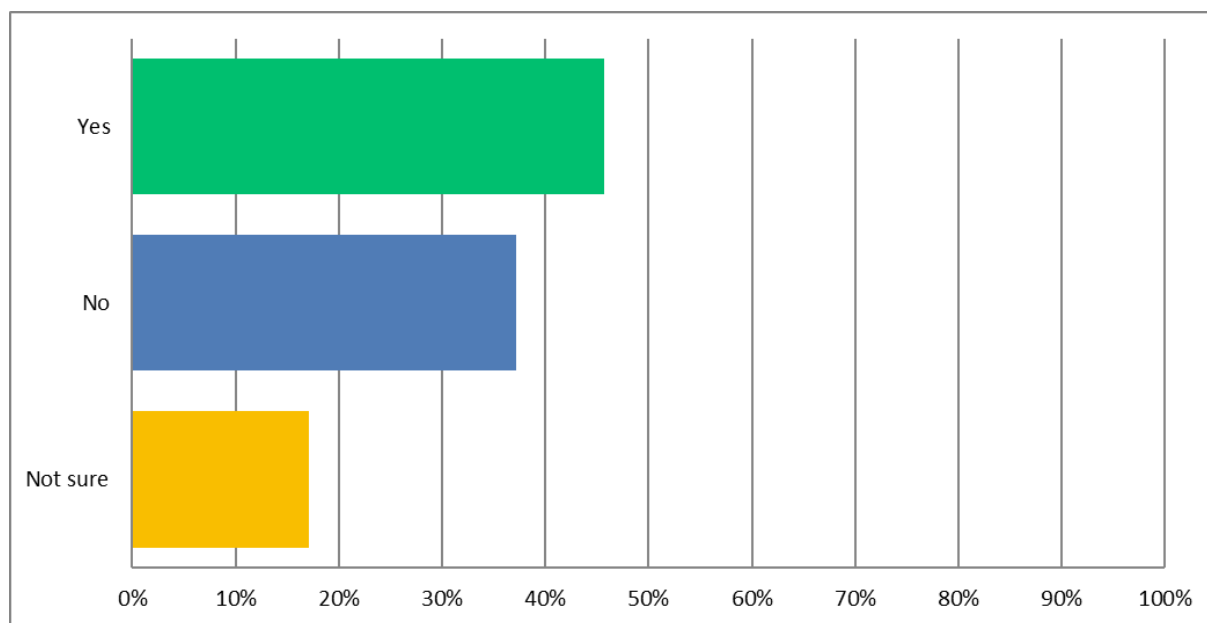


Although over 40% of commercial respondents supported option 1 as the proposed licence area boundary over 50% were unsure.

Comments include:

- Because of remoteness, King Island and Flinders Island should not be included in either licence area if licences are implemented. The Bass Strait Islands cannot be fished by traditional trailer vessels used in the coastal calamari fishery. There is opportunity for this fishery to be further explored and developed.
- The north coast is accessible to the very mobile fleet of small vessels that have traditionally fished to suit weather patterns along the north coast. It would not be right to lock fishers into a specific area when weather patterns could see them with no income because of prevailing easterly or southern westerly winds.
- None of them. Close the fishery for longer or put a tax/fee on the fishery as giving out licences to certain people isn't going to make them catch any less.
- Does not support either option. Agree that management should cover the entire State
- Either as commercial effort on the west coast is very much weather dependent
- Supports option 1 as this gives licence holder equal opportunity and incentive to explore this area
- None. The proposal is not fair and equitable. No licences should be given to anyone. The catch should be limited across the board.

Question 10. Do you think the proposed qualifying criteria (areas and amount etc) for each licence are about right?



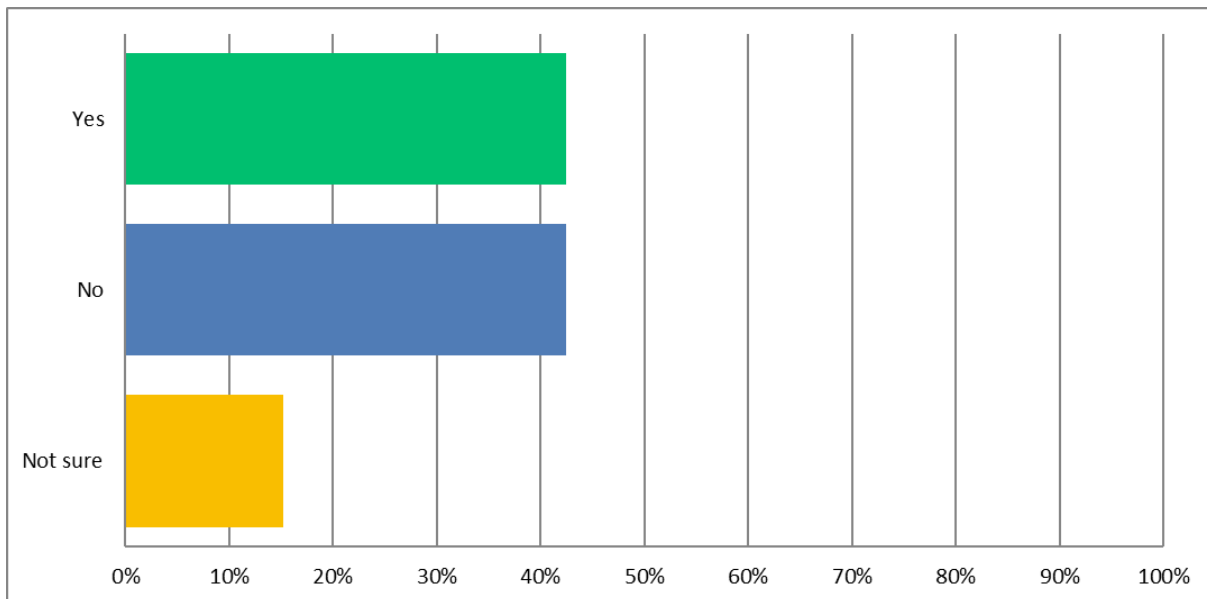
Over 45% of respondents supported the proposed qualifying criteria and licence areas. Those that did not generally did not support introduction of a new licence at all.

Comments include:

- It's fair and catch history should play a part
- Sooner the new licences are introduced the better. The longer this goes on the more angst created.
- New licence and catch limits are unfair to licence owners that purchased their licence before the investment warning but have little catch history.
- No licences as this will not reduce the total catch. Introducing licences will push people out of the industry.
- If the aim is to limit catch and effort to a specific level, then this level should be specified and the number of entitlements calculated so that this limits unlikely to be exceeded and criteria worked out so that this number of entitlements qualify. It seems that the criteria is designed to enable some influential operators to qualify
- Believes that all catch history remains with the supervisor of the licence at the time the fish were caught. The supervisor pays all associated fees plus has put in the effort for their catch history
- Licences should not be given out to anyone. It does not limit the catch of those that have a calamari licence. The daily limit for others is not high enough. The proposal rewards some fishers with a licence and pushes others out completely.
- Supports option 1 of the qualifying criteria and suggest option 3 would exclude the single operators
- Doesn't understand the accrual of catch history criteria at all. If someone can accrue catch history and pass it on or retain it then why can't catch history be passed on from a C to and A or B licence.
- Those who used 1 or 2 deckhands catch a lot more than a single person and is therefore inequitable.

Proposed trip limits

Question 11. Do you support the proposed trip limit for a holder of a fishing licence (personal) who is not the holders of a calamari licence?

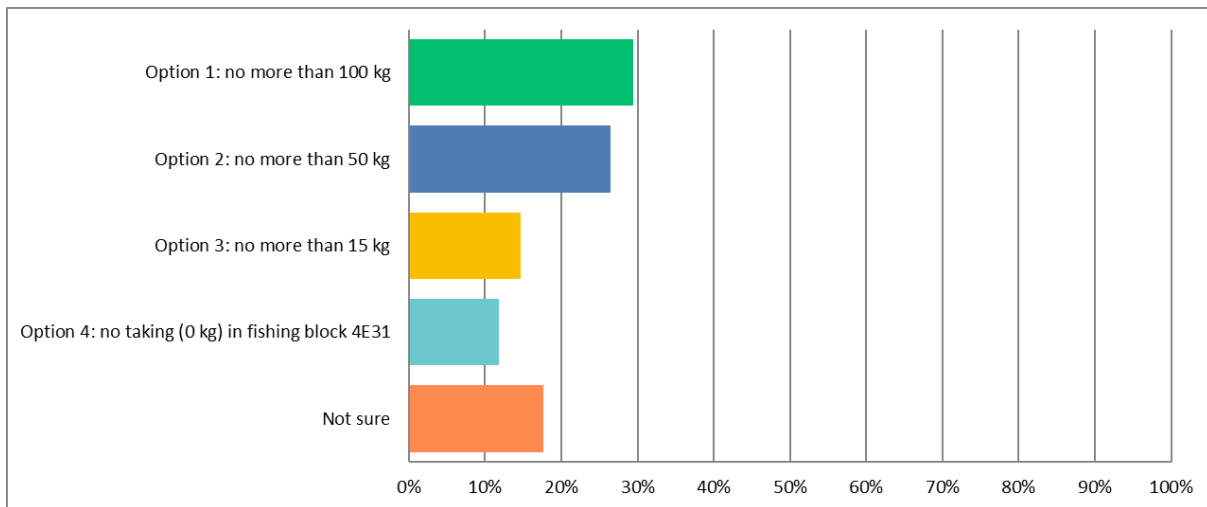


The responses were split between supporting the proposed trip limit as a reasonable amount. Those that didn't felt the amount was too low.

Comments ranged from:

- Enough to supplement other fishing
- 15 kg too low. No licence and have trip limit all commercial fishers to 120 kg per day.
- 15 kg not worth the effort and cost.
- Too low. No point limiting the catch if the closure is extended as the fish are dying anyway.
- 100 kg or 50 fish outside the hotspots/remote fishing blocks to take pressure off the hotspots. This could also apply to seine nets so same rule for all non-calamari licence holders.
- Only have a trip limit prior to the closure
- No point limiting the catch when the fish are dying anyway.

Question 12. Which of the proposed trip limit options for seine licences (including Danish seine) do you support?



There were mixed views as to what the seine trip limit should be. Comments including:

- No option for zero take by seine. Calamari should be restricted to take by jig/hook only
- Mainland Tasmania 50 kg and Furneaux Group 100 kg
- 100 kg or 50 fish outside the hotspots/remote fishing blocks to take pressure off the hotspots. This could also apply to seine nets so same rule for all non-calamari licence holders.
- The holder of a calamari licence can take more than 15 kg but not when there is a seine net on board the vessel
- A trip limit will prevent the targeting of calamari with seine gear. A squid chooses to take a jig but doesn't have a choice when encircled by a net, therefore the biomass can take a substantial hit with seine gear as it just takes all that is in the area where the gear has been set. Then there's the issue of dragging a net around egg mops and damaging the next year's stock of calamari.
- Not against a catch limit for seine gear and supports somewhere in the vicinity of 50-100 kg to prevent specific targeting of calamari by seine nets.

Other comments related to management of calamari

Table 1: Lists other comments (question 13) related to the management of calamari. There were 32 comments received but several respondents did not want their names or comments published in this report and are therefore excluded.

Response no.	Name of respondent	Comment
1	Names withheld (response #41)	<p>Commercial vessels are often outnumbered by recreational vessels 15-1 – with multiple people on board recreational vessels and the same boats fishing day after day.</p> <p>Should be a 50m+ exclusion zone for [between] recreational to commercial fishing vessels</p> <p>Consideration of opening up northern Maria for limited periods for commercial fishing only</p> <p>Consideration of opening up D’Entrecasteaux Channel for commercial fishers for certain periods as it is a large area and the fishing would not have a big impact on breeding and stock levels.</p> <p>Recreational fishing and their ability to fish with the costs and responsibilities of licensing and that they out fish commercial vessels is a huge issue.</p>
2	Name withheld (response #40)	<p>Needs to be clear in the accrual of catch history criteria that if you bought a licence before the investment warning that the catch history is automatically included in the previous holder is in no position to claim the catch history.</p>
4	Greg Quinn (response #37)	<p>Does not support proposed licences or areas.</p> <p>There has been 3 great years of fishing due to the closures.</p> <p>Supports making closure longer for another 3-4 years with further research a must.</p> <p>Need to stop both commercial and recreational fishers from taking calamari before they have had the opportunity to spawn as these eggs are the fish that will return next year.</p>

5	Angela Matthews (response #36)	<p>Does not support proposed licences or areas.</p> <p>There has been 3 great years of fishing due to the closures.</p> <p>Supports making closure longer for another 3-4 years with further research a must.</p> <p>Need to stop both commercial and recreational fishers from taking calamari before they have had the opportunity to spawn as these eggs are the fish that will return next year.</p>
7	Name withheld (response #21)	<p>Fair and just is the preference. Has supported research and participated in research at every opportunity.</p>
8	Name withheld (response #33)	<p>Licences should be introduced. This is the only way of controlling the number of fishers in certain areas, which in conjunction with a closure will make the fishery very sustainable.</p>
10	Paul Graham (response #31)	<p>Purchased fishing [seine?] licences to one day use and compliment rock lobster fishing business.</p> <p>Doesn't want to find themselves in trouble for possessing calamari above the limit after hauling in the net.</p>
13	Paul McKenzie (response #27)	<p>These licences should have been introduced 3 years ago when fishing pressure was minimal i.e., 4-5 fishers targeting calamari on the NE coast. Since that date we have seen the number of vessels increase to 10-12, with fishers travelling to the NE from as far away as Hobart.</p> <p>This increase in fishing pressure has seen a rapid decline in calamari stocks in the NE.</p>
14	Adam Strachan (response #26)	<p>Does not support proposed new licences. Scalefish licences are restricted enough without taking more off them with no compensation.</p> <p>Catch history is a joke – how are commercial fishers supposed to target every species, so they have catch history?</p> <p>Put a daily limit on the fishery and close the spawning for longer.</p>

15	Name withheld (response #24)	<p>Questionnaire too short and specific to address issues with the proposed management.</p> <p>Issues are also around the management of the scalefish fishery generally so that operators in the fishery can be profitable.</p>
16	Paul Aulich (response #23)	<p>Believes there is a small number of people driving the scare campaign in the north west and he science is largely compiled from certain fishers and is designed to suit their requirements.</p>
17	Steven Chaffey (response #20)	<p>The 24 hour trip should be defined as a single day – i.e., from 12:01 am to 11:59 pm.</p>
18	Mark Marrable (response #19)	<p>Commercial access to calamari resources should be for all and not a limited lucky few based on catch history and should be managed to an applicable sustainable biomass, catch limits and closed seasons so that the resource is shared and managed sustainably by and for all.</p>
19	Nick White (response #18)	<p>Believes the calamari stocks have returned to pre-2018 levels.</p>
20	Name withheld (response #17)	<p>We need more information on stock status and biology and more reporting from recreational fishers.</p>
21	Michael McLeod (response #16)	<p>Management has lost the trust of recreational fishers.</p> <p>After seeing what has been done with rock lobster — where recreational bag limits were halved and the commercial boats suffered no reductions.</p>
30	Joe Dowde (response #4)	<p>Needs to be more research conducted by IMAS. Decisions should be properly investigated and made by people without bias or interest in the calamari fishery or ties with the calamari industry.</p> <p>The proposals made by those currently on the board [SFAC] have a [vested] interest in calamari and will benefit so should not be in any way involved in decision making.</p> <p>All those with personal ties within the Department who will gain financially from these decisions should also be excluded from the decision making process.</p> <p>Any restrictions should be fair and equitable.</p>

		<p>Extend the closure to include September and limit the catch for everyone and do not give those with catch history a free licence and a free for all fishing ticket.</p> <p>The current proposal will cause many fishers to lose their businesses and will give others a huge financial gain.</p>
31	Name withheld (response #3)	<p>Commercial fishers should have a trip limit of no more than 100 kg per day and no more than 200 kg taken from one area over 10 days for inshore operations.</p> <p>Too many areas in tourist towns and popular recreational spots have seen heavy commercial fishing in past years and the stocks have yet to recover.</p>
32	Name withheld (response #2)	<p>Commercial and recreational fishers should be subject to the same closures.</p> <p>Recreational fishing plays a large part of the Devonport economy and with differences in rules for commercial and recreational fishers, it may turn recreational fishers off.</p>

Interviews with commercial fishers

On 25-29 October 2021 and 18 November 2021 fishery managers conducted interviews with 36 commercial licence holders/fishers on the content of the discussion paper. The purpose of these interviews was to allow interested commercial operators an opportunity to talk about the discussion paper frankly with fishery managers without the pressure of being in a public meeting. These meetings were conducted individually or in small groups.

Below is a summary of the views expressed by topic.

Accrual of catch history

Summary

- Unsure about the accrual of catch history. Concerned this may cause problems.
- Believes catch history should disappear if a person sells the licence it was accrued on and doesn't remain in the fishery via another licence.
- Should not be able to transfer catch history to another licence that did not accrue the catch history. Concerned this puts a lot of power in the hands of people who hold the history. Concerned about the view where the catch history dies rather than remains on the licence it was accrued on.

Recreational limits

Summary of comments

- Leave recreational bag limit as is (10 fish) but introduce a boat limit x 3. This should restrain the catch but not disadvantage a small number of people on a recreational boat.
- Bag limit should be reduced – the meat recovery for calamari is around 90% so for 10 fish that's around 9 kg meat based on average 1 kg calamari. Definitely should be a boat limits especially with the large boats that can carry a large number of people. 20 per boat is a lot of calamari.
- Supports reducing the bag limit and introducing a boat limit. Not much recreational effort in the far NE, most at Tamar.
- Feels the proposed bag limit probably a bit low, should stay as 10. Supports a boat limit and suggests this limit should be 25 calamari.
- Supports a reduction in bag limit and introduction of a boat limit.
- Supports a cut of bag limit and introduction of a boat limit. Those proposed still exceed the proposed commercial trip limit.
- Doesn't see a problem with recreational bag limits as they stand. Cutting them to 5 is a bit steep. Does support a boat limit of 30.
- Bag limits should be reduced to 5 and a boat limit of 25 introduced.
- Need to do something on recreational catch if doing something to commercial sector. If leaving bag limit as is then should introduce a boat limit.
- Support reducing bag limit to 5 and introducing a boat limit of 20.
- Fishes alone 90% of time and sees recreational boats come out 3 times a day. More conflict between commercial and recreational fishers at Devonport rather than Robbins Island where not so many recreational fishers are present. At Devonport its pretty obvious that people knock off work at 4pm to go calamari fishing. Stops commercial fishing when the recreational boats arrive. Supports a boat limit and suggests 30 maximum as that is a commercial quantity of fish.
- Sees some fairly professional recreational fishers targeting calamari and doing multiple trips. Recreational fishers are taking commercial quantities of calamari. Supports a boat limit of 10 calamari but leave bag limit at 10.
- Supports reduction in bag limit and introduction of a boat limit.
- Recreational sector needs a bag limit. Doesn't matter if bag limit stays the same as long as there is a boat limit.
- Concerned about the level of high grading recreational fishers do—there is a lot of waste.
- Recreational bag limit too high. How many can you eat—supports a bag limit of 5. Knows some recreational fishers do multiple trips. Should also be a boat limit.

Compliance

Summary of comments

- Concern that recreational fishers are taking calamari during the east coast closed season and Marine Police do nothing about it.
- At boat ramps recreational fishers are displaying more aggressive behaviour to commercial fishers.
- All new entrants to the Tasmanian Scalefish Fishery should be educated on the basics on how the fishery operates (limits, gear, areas etc). Would like to see TSIC, IMAS and DPIPWE work together on this. Marine Police need to be better educated too.
- Recreational fishers catch a lot and are not policed very well. Needs more compliance. Low Head and Devonport the hot spots for recreational fishers.
- Compliance strong on commercials but less so on recreational fishers.
- Issues with rules relating to possession of squid jigs. Need to be able to carry spares.
- Fishers should be limited to five rods with a squid jigs attached.
- Sees recreational boats doing multiple trips and this is a compliance issue.
- Compliance poor on recreational fishers. Sector needs to be policed better. A few commercial fishers are blatantly using more jigs than are allowed.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Prior consultation on the proposals

Date	Action
1 November 2009	<p>Recreational possession limit of southern calamari is reduced from 15 to 10 in South East Waters when new commercial calamari licence was introduced.</p> <p>Commercial trip limit of southern calamari for rock lobster fishers is reduced from 15 to 10 in South East Waters when new commercial calamari licence was introduced.</p>
Late 2013	<p>Outcome of issues paper during the remake of the Scalefish Fishery Management Plan in 2014/15. Resulted in two proposals. Consulted with FACs and fishing bodies on creation of a northern licence zone for southern calamari (TSFA via TSIC) and introducing a closed season on the north coast—Tamar region (recreational fisher).</p> <p>Neither of these proposals were progressed to the statutory stage of the remake of the Scalefish Fishery Management Plan.</p>
1 November 2015	Recreational bag limit of 10 calamari introduced statewide
April 2018	Scalefish Fishery Advisory Committee (SFAC) meeting 64 – a recommendation was made to the Minister to review existing management to ensure the sustainability of the resource, the economic viability of fishing operations, and maximising the value of this resource to the State.
June 2018	The Minister for Primary Industries and Water tasked the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE) with examining the Calamari Fishery and to investigate the use of all management tools—including limiting access to the fishery in regions outside the existing licenced area.
August 2018	<p>As part of this review process, an investment warning was released by DPIPWE for the commercial fishery on Thursday, 23 August 2018 via the DPIPWE website at www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/southerncalamari. The key aspect of the warning is that:</p> <p>“If any access arrangements are introduced based upon historical activity in the fishery in terms of investment or catches in the fishery, any such investment or catches made after 23 August 2018 will not be considered in that process.”</p>
Late 2018	The review of options available to reduce catch and effort was canvassed at both SFAC and the Recreational Fishery Advisory Committee (RecFAC);
	The key options supported by SFAC were limiting commercial access via introduction of two new licences for the north coast and a statewide trip limit for those that do not qualify for a licence.
	The key options supported by RecFAC were a review of the recreational bag limit and potential for introducing a recreational boat limit; and a minimum size limit.

Date	Action
Early 2019	DPIPWE drafted a paper proposing management options for further discussion by both sectors.
October and December 2019	DPIPWE further refined the management options and consulted directly with commercial calamari fishers potentially affected by the proposed management options.
2020	Throughout 2020 DPIPWE consulted with SFAC crafting qualifying criteria for the proposed new commercial licences. DPIPWE also consulted with RecFAC and the Tasmanian Association for Recreational Fishing (TARFish) on the potential for reviewing the bag limit and possibility of introducing a boat limit and minimum size limit.
2021	DPIPWE further refines the discussion paper and aims to release for public comment in October 2021.

Appendix 2 – Calamari investment warning

23 August 2018

Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment

Managing our Calamari Fishery

The Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE) is reviewing the management arrangements for the state’s Calamari Fishery.

The Calamari Fishery is a component of the commercial Scalefish Fishery that operates in Tasmanian coastal waters, predominantly along the south east, east and north coasts.

General Manager of Water and Marine Resources at DPIPWE Fionna Bourne says the review will investigate alternative ways to manage catch and effort.

“This review is about delivering holistic management and sustainability objectives and providing greater certainty for licence holders,” Ms Bourne said.

Ms Bourne said all options for the management of this fishery will be considered and the review does not mean any particular outcome will be pursued in the future.

Any changes to the management plan require the full statutory process for changing the rules which includes mandatory public consultation to allow input from all stakeholders and licence holders.

If any access arrangements are introduced based upon historical activity in the fishery in terms of investment or catches in the fishery, any such investment or catches made after 23 August 2018 will not be considered in that process.

Only catch and effort information recorded up to and including the 23 August 2018 in the Commercial Catch, Effort and Disposal Record book and submitted to the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment is likely to be considered in the event that access is allocated based upon historic catches in the fishery.

More information about the Calamari Fishery can be found on the DPIPWE website at <https://dPIPWE.tas.gov.au/sea-fishing-aquaculture/commercial-fishing/scalefish-fishery/southern-calamari-fishery>



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