

# Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery

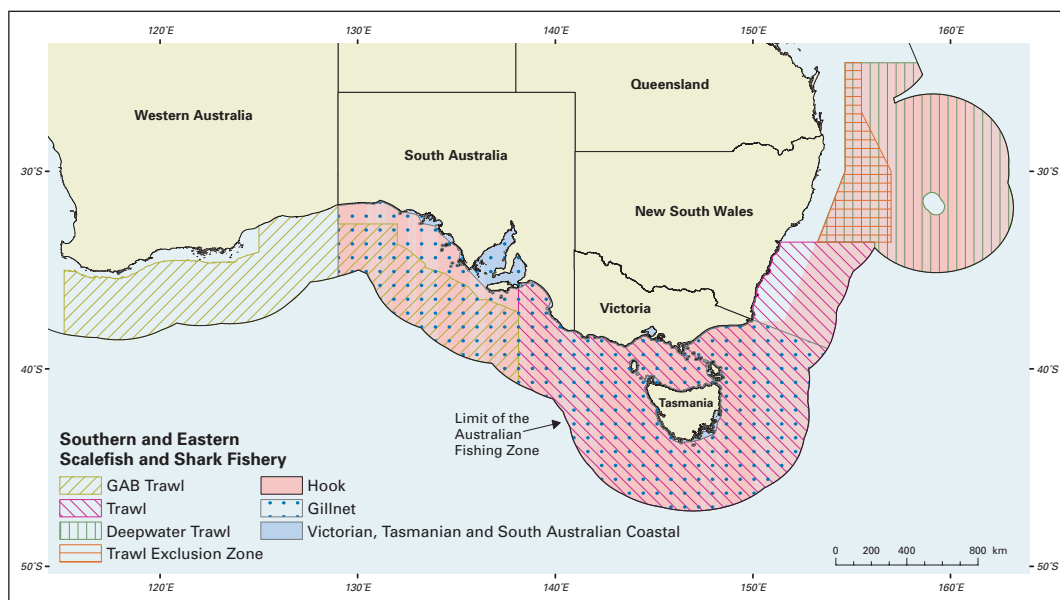
The Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery (SESSF) was created in 2003 through the amalgamation of four fisheries previously under separate management arrangements. A management plan for the fishery is due to come into operation in 2005. The SESSF is a complex multi-sector, multi-gear and multi-species fishery targeting scalefish and shark stocks of various size, distribution and composition. It extends from waters off southern Queensland south and then west to Cape Leeuwin in Western Australia. Almost half the waters of the Australian Fishing Zone off southern mainland Australia and Tasmania are in the fishery management area. The fishery operates in both Commonwealth and State waters under complex jurisdictional arrangements due to different Offshore Constitutional Settlements with State Governments.

The SESSF is one of the most important Commonwealth-managed fisheries, with landings of over 35 000 t annually at a value of around \$95 million. The SESSF has four main sectors: the Commonwealth Trawl Sector, derived from the former South East Fishery trawl sector (which includes the Danish-seine fleet); the Commonwealth Great Australian Bight Trawl Sector derived from the Great Australian Bight Trawl Fishery; the Commonwealth Shark Gillnet Sector or Commonwealth Shark Hook Sector derived from the Southern Shark Fishery; and the



*Bringing a trap-load of ling aboard.*

Commonwealth Scalefish Hook Sector derived from the South East Fishery non-trawl sector. The latter two sectors are often referred to as the Gillnet, Hook and Trap Fishery. Another sector is the East Coast Deepwater Trawl



Sector near Lord Howe Island. In addition, comparatively minor sectors include the South Australian, Tasmanian and Victorian Coastal Waters Sectors. The areas of all these sectors are shown in the map above. Another sector is the Tasmanian Rock Lobster Sector, created to allow for a traditional small catch of fish by these fishers. This is a very minor sector in terms of total fish catch and is not shown on the map.

The Commonwealth Trawl Sector contributes about 80% of the landed catch and 75% of the value of the SESSF. Catch records show that a large number of species are regularly landed throughout the SESSF. Management in the SESSF is primarily through output controls in the form of total allowable catch limits allocated as individual transferable

quotas—quota species comprise around 84% of the total commercial landed catch. In the Great Australian Bight Trawl Sector, input controls in the form of limited entry and gear limitations are used instead of quota management for the primary target species. In addition to quotas, the SESSF uses other input controls, including limit entry; gear restrictions such as mesh size, net length, depth setting, hook limits, trap dimensions; bycatch and size limits for certain species; and some localised closures.

As the SESSF has yet to be fully integrated, its status is reported here under the banners of the former fisheries: the South East Fishery trawl sector and South East Fishery non-trawl sector (which have many quota species in common); the Great Australian Bight Trawl Fishery; and the Southern Shark Fishery.