

Western Australian Southern Demersal Gillnet and Longline Fishery

CURRENT STATUS

Gummy shark and dusky shark **fully fished**; school shark (like gummy shark, common to the Southern Shark Fishery) and whiskery shark **overfished**.



CATCH

Total shark catch for the fishery was 829 t in 1999–2000 and 811 t in 2000–01.

MANAGEMENT TARGETS

A Joint Authority between the Australian Government and Western Australian Government manages the fishery under Western Australian legislation. The achievement of target biomass levels of 40% of the initial biomass levels is required by 2010 for whiskery and gummy shark and by 2040 for the dusky shark. The whiskery shark biomass is at present estimated at 26% of initial biomass, with only about 7% probability that the target will be achieved. The gummy shark biomass is estimated at 43%, with a 70% probability that the target will be met by 2010. The dusky shark stock is regarded as sustainable at current levels of fishing.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

There is concern that the incidental catch of dusky shark in the Australian Government-managed Southern and Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery could deplete the population.

Northern Finfish Trawl Fishery

CURRENT STATUS

Underfished by domestic fishers; the impact on shared stocks of fishing in adjacent Indonesian waters is unknown. The diminished significance of the fishery has precluded recent assessment work.



CATCH

1000 t in 2001; targets are preferred species for Australian and overseas markets, namely, saddle-tail snapper or scarlet sea perch (*Lutjanus malabaricus*) and other large red snappers (*L. erythropterus*, *L. sebae*).

MANAGEMENT TARGETS

Managed cooperatively under Queensland and Northern Territory jurisdiction by two separate Australian Government–State/Territory Government Joint Authorities.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Prawn trawling in the adjacent Northern Prawn Fishery (NPF) discards a large percentage of an estimated annual incidental catch of 50 000 t of fish species, some of which are important to the Northern Fish Trawl Fishery. Bycatch-reduction devices, now mandatory in the NPF, should reduce its bycatch markedly.

Northern Shark Fishery

CURRENT STATUS

Probably **underfished** by domestic fishers, although there are signs of local depletion. The extent of the catch taken incidentally in other domestic fisheries, or taken by Indonesian fishers in Australian and Indonesian waters, and the degree to which shark stocks may be shared, are unknown. There has been no stock assessment since 1997.



CATCH

Confidentiality arrangements prevent detailed reporting of catches. The Northern Territory reports 272 t of blacktip shark taken in 2001. Queensland reports a total shark catch of 247 t for Gulf of Carpentaria waters.

MANAGEMENT TARGETS

Managed cooperatively under Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australian jurisdiction by three separate Australian Government–State/Territory Government Joint Authorities.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Stringent net-length restraints to reduce incidental catches of dolphin in effect closed down the operations of gillnetters from Taiwan. Domestic gillnetting is closely monitored.



Indonesian fishing vessels apprehended in the Australian Fishing Zone



Large foreign gillnet vessels fish for shark in waters adjacent to the Australian Fishing Zone