Information sheet

Visitor Management

Recreational fishing in protected areas

The purpose of this information sheet is to provide guidance on recreational fishing in protected areas under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*. It provides information on where it may occur and how to comply with the law.

Background

It is an offence under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* to undertake recreational fishing in protected areas, unless it has been specifically authorised for the area and other requirements are met. Information about the areas where recreational fishing is allowed, including the rules and requirements that apply, are detailed in this information sheet.

This information sheet relates to recreational fishing by the general public. It does not impact on the exercise of native title rights and interests, or when Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples fish in accordance with Aboriginal tradition or Ailan Kastom.

Where is recreational fishing permitted?

Subject to meeting the requirements in the 'How do I comply?' section below, recreational fishing may be carried out in the following protected areas unless a regulatory notice, restricted access area or park closure is in effect that prohibits or restricts fishing:

- all resources reserves and conservation parks; and
- some national parks (or limited areas within the national parks), which have been specifically listed as a prescribed place in Schedule 5 of the Nature Conservation (Protected Areas Management) Regulation 2024 (see Appendix A below for a list of the national park areas where recreational fishing is permitted, noting that this is subject to change and may be updated from time to time).

Regulatory notices and restricted access areas

Regulatory notices and restricted access areas may be in force in areas where fishing is normally permitted. Signs are installed near the entrance of a protected area or part of the protected area if a regulatory notice or restricted access area is in effect. They can be installed at short notice in response to a range of operational and management requirements and may restrict or prohibit fishing on a temporary, seasonal or semi-permanent basis. These notices and signs must be complied with and can be enforced by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS).

Park alerts & closures

Some areas may have active park alerts or temporary closures in response to a range of issues, such as extreme weather events, wildfires and planned burns. Please visit the QPWS website at https://parks.qld.gov.au and click on 'Park alerts' to access this information.

Even if fishing is normally permitted in a protected area, you may not enter an area if it is closed, or if access is otherwise restricted. Please abide by all signage and notices.

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How do I comply?

Fisheries rules

All fishing in Queensland, including in protected areas, must be conducted in accordance with the *Fisheries Act 1994* and associated regulations, which are administered by the Department of Primary Industries (DPI).

Please visit the DPI website at www.dpi.qld.gov.au and click on 'Fisheries' to access the most up to date information on recreational fishing rules, including any closed seasons and closed waters in place, the latest size and possession limits, as well as no-take species from fresh and tidal waters.

Species that cannot be taken under the Nature Conservation Act

The Nature Conservation Act allows recreational fishers to take fish and invertebrates from conservation parks, resources reserves and prescribed places in national parks, however you must not take:

- fish and invertebrate animals that are listed as threatened (critically endangered, endangered, vulnerable), and near threatened wildlife under the Nature Conservation Act. Examples include Australian lungfish, silver perch, Mary River cod, grey nurse sharks, largetooth sawfish and scalloped hammerhead. Please visit the Queensland Government website at www.qld.gov.au and search 'protected fish and invertebrates' to access the complete list, which may be updated periodically.
- mud crabs for use as bait (however, mud crabs may be taken for consumption); and
- any species of the genus Euastacus (freshwater spiny crayfish).

All other animals such as frogs, dugongs, turtles, dolphins and crocodiles are protected and cannot be taken. If accidentally caught, they must be immediately and carefully returned to the water unharmed. If the animal is injured and requires treatment, contact the relevant number in the Report problems section below.

Bait

Live bait can only be brought onto a protected area if it is a native species that has been legally caught immediately adjacent to the area where recreational fishing is permitted.

Do not use imported, raw prawns from the supermarket as bait. They may carry diseases which can get into waterways and harm prawn populations.

Fishing gear in protected areas

If travelling through a protected area where fishing is not permitted, fishing gear must be securely stowed, not easily accessible and out of sight within vehicles and boats.

Other considerations

Marine parks

Be aware of the potential for recreational fishing activities on island national parks, or foreshore areas, to extend into an adjacent or overlapping marine park. If this occurs, fishing must be conducted in accordance with any relevant zoning plans or other management arrangements (e.g. regulatory notices) in place under the *Marine Parks Act 2004 and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* (Cth).

Spear fishing

Spear fishing is not permitted in waters of protected areas. However, spear fishing may be undertaken in adjacent waters, subject to the provisions of relevant marine park zoning plans and fisheries legislation. Spear guns must be dismantled when in a protected area.

Boundaries of protected areas

It is the responsibility of fishers to ensure they are aware of the boundaries of protected areas in which they fish. For information on national park, conservation park and resources reserve boundaries, please visit the QPWS website at https://parks.qld.gov.au and search the name of the area you intend to go fishing and then select 'Maps and resources'.

Print a hard copy or download a copy to your mobile device for quick reference.

Safety

Fishers are to take responsibility for their own safety and be aware of the safety of other park users. Fishing from walking tracks, boardwalks, viewing platforms and areas used for swimming is strongly discouraged.

Commercial fishing, tours and charters

Commercial fishing, fishing tours and charters are not recreational fishing. These are not permitted in protected areas unless specifically authorised under the Nature Conservation Act and the Fisheries Act.

Fishing competitions

The fishing component of fishing competitions is not permitted on protected areas. However, there are circumstances such as on K'gari (formerly Fraser Island), where a protected area is used as a base for fishing competitions and the fishing occurs outside of the boundary of the protected area. In such circumstances, the organisers will require appropriate prior approvals from QPWS.

Fishing in dams

To fish in some dams in Queensland, you need a Stocked Impoundment Permit. To identify whether you require a Stocked Impoundment Permit for the location you are visiting, please visit the Queensland Government website at www.qld.gov.au and search 'Fishing in dams and weirs' to access this information.

Fish stocks

Fish stocking for the purposes of facilitating recreational fishing will not be authorised in a protected area.

Aquarium fish collecting

Collecting fish for aquariums is not recreational fishing. It is not permitted in protected areas unless specifically authorised under the Nature Conservation Act and the Fisheries Act.

Wongari (dingoes) on K'gari (formerly Fraser Island)

QPWS has developed resources on how to be 'dingo-safe' on K'gari. This is essential information for visitors undertaking activities such as beach fishing. Please visit the Queensland Government website at www.qld.gov.au and search 'dingo-safe' to access this information.

Crocodiles

QPWS has developed resources on how to be 'Crocwise' around the water. This is essential information for visitors undertaking activities such as fishing in areas inhabited by crocodiles. Please visit the Queensland Government website at www.qld.gov.au and search 'Crocwise' to access this information.

It is an offence to intentionally feed crocodiles or discard food items in a way that may attract crocodiles to an area, for example, leaving fish frames or unused bait near a boat ramp.

Wildlife

Do not approach nesting seabirds. If disturbed, adult birds can abandon their nests, leaving eggs and chicks vulnerable to heat, cold and predation.

Report problems

- If you encounter a sick, injured, or orphaned wild animal (except marine animal strandings), call 1300 ANIMAL (1300 264 625) for advice between the hours of 7am and 7pm. Outside these hours, visit the RSPCA website at www.rspcaqld.org.au and search 'after hours' to find your closest wildlife rescue organisation.
- To report marine animal strandings (of sick, injured or dead turtles, dolphin, dugongs or whales) call 1300 130 372.
- To report suspected unlawful fishing activities, call the 24-hour Fishwatch hotline on 1800 017 116.
- To report oil and other spills, or suspected illegal dumping, phone 13 QGOV (13 74 68).
- To report suspected unlawful feeding of crocodiles, phone 1300 130 372.

Make a difference

- Know the rules and keep up to date with the latest information.
- Come clean, go clean. Help protect our parks by ensuring you don't carry plant seeds, soil or pests in footwear, clothing, boats, vehicles and fishing gear.
- Aim to use environmentally friendly fishing products.
- Only bring home what you intend to eat.
- Clean up after yourself. Don't leave litter or bait scraps behind. If you take it in, bring it back.
- If you witness or suspect a problem, please report it.
- Treat fish humanely, look after the fisheries, protect the environment and respect the rights of others.

Human Rights Act 2019 compatibility

The department is committed to respecting, protecting and promoting human rights. Under the *Human Rights Act 2019*, the department has an obligation to act and make decisions in a way that is compatible with human rights and, when making a decision, to give proper consideration to human rights. When acting or making a decision under this Information sheet, officers must comply with that obligation (refer to Comply with Human Rights Act).

Disclaimer

While this document has been prepared with care it contains general information and does not profess to offer legal, professional or commercial advice. The Queensland Government accepts no liability for any external decisions or actions taken on the basis of this document. Persons external to the Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation should satisfy themselves independently and by consulting their own professional advisors before embarking on any proposed course of action.

Approved By

Ben Klaassen	05/10/2026
Signature	Date

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APPENDIX A – National park areas where recreational fishing is permitted

National park	Prescribed places where recreational fishing is permitted
Apudthama National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land)	all parts other than— a) the parts within the Jardine River, and any of its tributaries, that are downstream of the line that is 5km upstream of the point where the river intersects the Old Peninsula Development Road; and b) the part within Eliot Creek
Bladensburg National Park	all parts
Boodjamulla National Park (Aboriginal Land)	the part within the Gregory River
Bowling Green Bay National Park	all parts other than the parts that are inland of the Bruce Highway
Brampton Islands National Park	the parts that are tidal
Bribie Island National Park	the parts within the following— a) First Lagoon; b) Mermaid Lagoon; c) Second Lagoon; d) Welsby Lagoon
Broad Sound Islands National Park	the parts of Wild Duck Island that are tidal
Cape Melville National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land)	all parts
Cape Palmerston National Park	the parts that are tidal
Cape Upstart National Park	the following— a) the parts that are tidal; b) the part within Station Creek
Conway National Park	the following— a) the parts that are tidal, other than Repulse Creek; b) the parts within the part of Repulse Creek between— i) its mouth; and ii) the line that joins the point where Repulse Creek meets the western bank of Boulder Creek and the regulatory notice displayed on the northern bank of Repulse Creek *Note*—The line that joins the point where Repulse Creek meets the western bank of Boulder Creek and the regulatory notice erected on the northern bank of Repulse Creek is about 4.2km upstream from Repulse Bay, at about latitude 20°25.406' south, longitude 148°45.664' east.
Currawinya National Park	all parts
Daintree National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land)	the parts that are tidal, south of Cape Tribulation, other than— a) the parts within Coopers Creek; and b) the parts within Mossman Gorge
Davies Creek National Park	all parts
Diamantina National Park	all parts
Dryander National Park	the parts that are tidal

Ella Bay National Park	all parts
Endeavour River National Park	all parts
Errk Oykangand National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land)	all parts
Eurimbula National Park	the parts that are tidal
Girramay National Park	all parts other than— a) the parts that are south of Cardwell; and b) the parts that are inland of the Bruce Highway
Girringun National Park	all parts
Gloucester Islands National Park	the parts that are tidal
Great Sandy National Park	the following— a) the parts that are on the mainland; b) the parts of K'gari that are tidal and north of the line that joins Eli Creek and Tenimby Creek
Grey Peaks National Park	all parts
Hinchinbrook Island National Park	the parts that are tidal other than the parts within Channel 9
Homevale National Park	all parts
Japoon National Park	all parts
Juunju Daarrba Nhirrpan National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land)	all parts
Kurrimine Beach National Park	all parts
Lindeman Islands National Park	the parts that are tidal
Lochern National Park	all parts
Maria Creek National Park	all parts
Millstream Falls National Park	all parts
Molle Islands National Park	the parts that are tidal
Newry Islands National Park	the following— a) all parts that are tidal; b) the part within Rabbit Creek
Northumberland Islands National Park	the parts that are tidal
Oyala Thumotang National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal land)	all parts other than the part within Peach Creek
Paluma Range National Park	the part within Crystal Creek
Percy Isles National Park	the parts of North East Island and South Island that are tidal
Poona National Park	the part within Kalah Creek
Reliance Creek National Park	all parts
Repulse Islands National Park	the parts that are tidal
Rinyirru (Lakefield) National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land)	all parts
Russell River National Park	all parts
Smith Islands National Park	the parts that are tidal
South Cumberland Islands National Park	the parts that are tidal

Sundown National Park	all parts
Swain Reefs National Park	the parts that are tidal
Tully Gorge National Park	the parts within the Tully River and Koolomon Creek that are downstream of Elizabeth Grant Falls
Welford National Park	all parts
West Hill National Park	the part within Bone Creek
Whitsunday Islands National Park	the parts that are tidal
Wooroonooran National Park	all parts other than— a) the part within Beatrice River Falls; and b) the part within Behana Creek