

Tiger Flathead (2018)

Platycephalus richardsoni



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STOCK STATUS OVERVIEW

Jurisdiction	Stock	Fisheries	Stock status	Indicators
Commonwealth, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania	Southern Australia	CIF, ITF, N/A, OTF, SESSF (CTS), SESSF (GHTS), SF	Sustainable	Spawning stock biomass, fishing mortality rate

SESSF (CTS) Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery (Commonwealth Trawl Sector) (CTH), SESSF (GHTS) Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery (Gillnet Hook and Trap Sector) (CTH), N/A Not Applicable (NSW), OTF Ocean Trawl Fishery (NSW), SF Scalefish Fishery (TAS), CIF Corner Inlet Fishery (VIC), ITF Inshore Trawl Fishery (VIC)

STOCK STRUCTURE

Tiger Flathead is endemic to Australia and distributed from northern New South Wales to western Victoria, including Tasmanian waters. There is some evidence of regional differences in physical characteristics, growth rates and spawning periods for Tiger Flathead, but biological stock structure has not been studied using genetic techniques. A single biological stock structure is assumed for management purposes [Morison et al. 2013].

Here, assessment of stock status is presented at the biological stock level—Southern Australia.

STOCK STATUS

Southern Australia

Tiger Flathead is primarily caught by the Commonwealth managed Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery with small catches from New South Wales, Tasmania and Victoria. Stock status classification reported here is based on stock assessments conducted for the Commonwealth fishery, which include reported State catches.

The most recent assessment was completed in November 2016 [Day 2016] and updated in January 2017 [Day 2017]. The assessment is based on biological parameters relating to tiger flathead, which accounts for about 95 per cent of the flathead catch [Morison et al. 2013]. However, the assessment and total allowable catch (TAC) include catches of all flathead species because the different species cannot be distinguished in historical data [Helidoniotis et al.

2017]. In 2016, the assessment was updated with catch, discard, catch per unit effort, length and age data, and ageing error data for an additional three years to 2015 [Day 2016]. The final base-case model forecasted the 2017 spawning stock biomass to be 42 per cent of unfished spawning biomass (1915) level, slightly above the target of 40 per cent [Day 2017]. This was a reduction from the spawning stock biomass forecast in 2014, which was 50 per cent of unfished spawning biomass [Day and Klaer 2014]. The 2016 assessment determined that good recruitment since the late-1980s has maintained the stock near the target, allowing recent recommended biological catches (RBC) to be set above the long-term average [AFMA 2016]. The stock is unlikely to be depleted and recruitment is unlikely to be impaired.

In 2013, the Shelf Resource Assessment Group recommended that flathead be managed under a three year multi-total allowable catch (TAC). In 2016, South East Resource Assessment Group recommended adopting a three year RBC of 2 901 tonnes (t) for flathead [AFMA 2016], which was lower than the previous three year RBC of 3 334 t (Day and Klaer, 2014). After taking into account State catches, discards and research quota the AFMA recommended TAC for the 2017–18 season was 2 535 t [AFMA 2017] but later set at 2 712 t (2850 t after over/undercatch) [AFMA 2018] based on a step-down approach. The Commonwealth catch in the 2017–18 fishing season was 2 438 t and the weighted average discards between 2013 and 2016 were 134.3 t, which when combined was below the RBC of 2 901 t. The total Australian commercial catch of Tiger Flathead in 2017 was 2 671.7 t (2 468 t Commonwealth; 126 t New South Wales; 74 t Tasmania; 3 t Victoria), below the three year RBC. This level of fishing pressure is unlikely to cause the stock to become recruitment impaired.

On the basis of the evidence provided above, the Southern Australia biological stock is classified as a **sustainable stock**.

BIOLOGY

Tiger Flathead biology [Klaer 2010]

Species	Longevity / Maximum Size	Maturity (50 per cent)
Tiger Flathead	20 years, males 500 mm TL , females 600 mm TL	3 years, 300 mm TL

DISTRIBUTION



Distribution of reported commercial catch of Tiger Flathead

TABLES

Commercial Catch Methods	Commonwealth	New South Wales	Tasmania	Victoria
Danish Seine	✓			
Demersal Gillnet	✓			
Demersal Longline	✓			
Demersal Pair Trawl	✓			
Dropline	✓			
Gillnet			✓	
Hand Line, Hand Reel or Powered Reels			✓	
Hook and Line				✓
Midwater Trawl	✓			
Net				✓
Otter Trawl	✓	✓		
Unspecified		✓	✓	

Fishing methods	Commonwealth	New South Wales	Tasmania	Victoria
Charter				
Hook and Line		✓		
Rod and reel		✓		✓
Commercial				
Danish Seine	✓			
Demersal Gillnet	✓			

Demersal Longline	✓			
Net				✓
Otter Trawl	✓	✓		
Unspecified		✓	✓	
Indigenous				
Hook and Line		✓	✓	
Rod and reel		✓	✓	
Recreational				
Hook and Line		✓	✓	
Rod and reel		✓	✓	✓
Management Methods				
	Commonwealth	New South Wales	Tasmania	Victoria
Charter				
Bag and possession limits		✓		✓
Bag limits		✓		✓
Gear restrictions		✓		✓
Licence		✓		
Marine park closures		✓		
Size limit		✓		✓
Spatial closures				✓
Commercial				
Catch limits		✓		
Gear restrictions	✓	✓	✓	✓
Limited entry	✓	✓	✓	✓
Marine park closures		✓		
Mesh size regulations		✓		
Size limit		✓	✓	✓
Spatial closures	✓	✓	✓	✓
Total allowable catch	✓			
Vessel restrictions		✓		
Indigenous				
Bag and possession			✓	

limits				
Bag limits		✓	✓	
Gear restrictions			✓	
Native Title		✓		
Section 37 (1d)(3)(9), Aboriginal cultural fishing authority		✓		
Size limit			✓	
Recreational				
Bag and possession limits		✓	✓	✓
Bag limits		✓	✓	
Gear restrictions		✓	✓	
Licence		✓	✓	✓
Marine park closures		✓		
Size limit		✓	✓	✓
Spatial closures				✓
Active Vessels				
	Commonwealth	New South Wales	Tasmania	Victoria
	39 Vessels in SESSF (CTS),	38 Fishing Business in OTF, 13 Fishing Business in OTLF,	9 Vessels in SF,	1 Licence Holders in CIF, 7 Licence Holders in ITF,

SESSF (CTS) Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery (Commonwealth Trawl Sector)(CTH)

OTF Ocean Trawl Fishery(NSW)

OTLF Ocean Trap and Line Fishery(NSW)

SF Scalefish Fishery(TAS)

CIF Corner Inlet Fishery(VIC)

ITF Inshore Trawl Fishery(VIC)

Catch	Commonwealth	New South Wales	Tasmania	Victoria
Commercial	2466.62t in SESSF (CTS), 1.78634t in SESSF (GHTS),	2.346t in N/A, 124.784t in OTF,	73.9826t in SF,	2.9695t in ITF,
Indigenous		Unknown	Unknown	Unknown (No catch above permit)

Recreational		20.5 t (2013–14)	12 t (2012–13)	Unknown
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SESSF (CTS) Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery (Commonwealth Trawl Sector) (CTH), SESSF (GHTS) Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery (Gillnet Hook and Trap Sector) (CTH), N/A Not Applicable (NSW), OTF Ocean Trawl Fishery (NSW), SF Scalefish Fishery (TAS), CIF Corner Inlet Fishery (VIC), ITF Inshore Trawl Fishery (VIC),

Commonwealth - Commercial (Catch Totals) Catch data provided for Commonwealth align with the 2017 calendar year.

Commonwealth – Recreational (Management Methods) The Australian Government does not manage recreational fishing in Commonwealth waters. Recreational fishing in Commonwealth waters is managed by the state or territory immediately adjacent to those waters, under its management regulations.

Commonwealth – Indigenous (Management Methods) The Australian Government does not manage non-commercial Indigenous fishing in Commonwealth waters, with the exception of the Torres Strait. In general, non-commercial Indigenous fishing in Commonwealth waters is managed by the state or territory immediately adjacent to those waters.

New South Wales – Commercial (Catch Totals) Catch data provided for New South Wales align with the 2016–17 financial year.

New South Wales – Recreational (Catch Totals) Recreational catch estimate of 20.5 t is based on (i) an estimated recreational catch of 39 417 tiger flathead by NSW resident recreational anglers in 2013–14 [West et al. 2015]; and (ii) an assumed mean weight of kept tiger flathead of 0.521 kg/fish.

New South Wales – Indigenous (Management Methods) (a) The Aboriginal Cultural Fishing Interim Access Arrangement allows an Aboriginal fisher in New South Wales to take in excess of a recreational bag limit in certain circumstances, for example, if they are doing so to provide fish to other community members who cannot harvest themselves, (b) The Aboriginal cultural fishing authority is the authority that Indigenous persons can apply to take catches outside the recreational limits under the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* (NSW), Section 37 (1d)(3)(9), Aboriginal cultural fishing authority, and (c) In cases where the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) applies fishing activity can be undertaken by the person holding native title in line with S.211 of that Act, which provides for fishing activities for the purpose of satisfying their personal, domestic or non-commercial communal needs. In managing the resource where native title has been formally recognised, the native title holders are engaged with to ensure their native title rights are respected and inform management of the State's fisheries resources.

Victoria – Indigenous (Management Methods) In Victoria, regulations for managing recreational fishing may not apply to fishing activities by Indigenous people. Victorian traditional owners may have rights under the *Commonwealth's Native Title Act 1993* to hunt, fish, gather and conduct other cultural activities for their personal, domestic or non-commercial communal needs without the need to obtain a licence. Traditional Owners that have agreements under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010* (Vic) may also be authorised to fish without the requirement to hold a recreational fishing licence. Outside of these arrangements, Indigenous Victorians can apply for permits under the *Fisheries Act 1995* (Vic) that authorise fishing for specific Indigenous cultural ceremonies or events (for example, different catch and size limits or equipment). There were no Indigenous permits granted in 2017 and hence no Indigenous catch recorded.

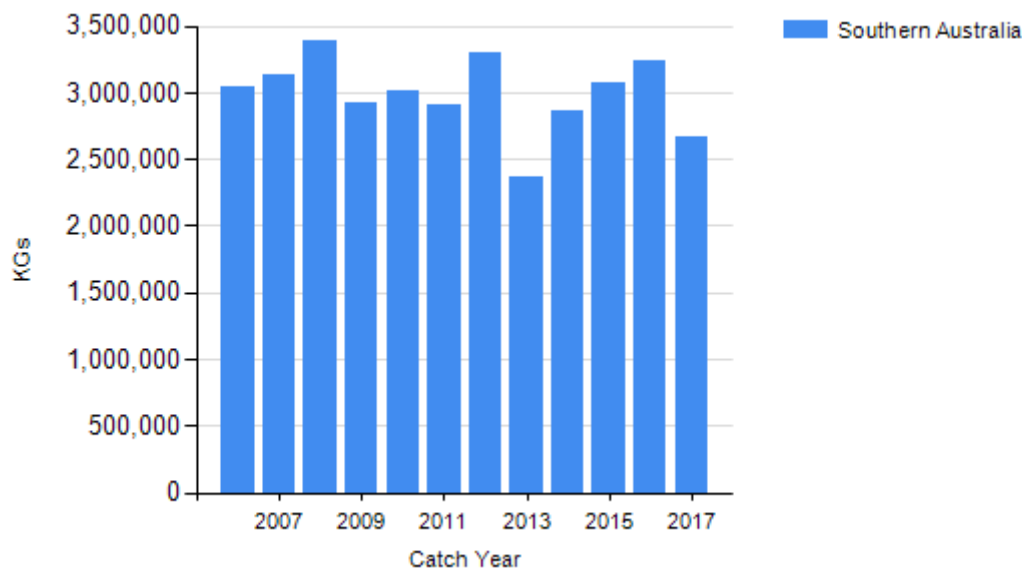
Tasmania – Commercial (Catch Totals) Catches reported for the Tasmanian Scalefish Fishery are for the period 1 July to 30 June the following year. The most recent assessment available is for 2016–17.

Tasmania – Recreational (Management Methods) In Tasmania, a recreational licence is required for fishers using dropline or longline gear, along with nets, such as gillnet or beach seine. A minimum size limit of 320 mm is in place for Tiger Flathead (and Sand Flathead) in Tasmanian waters. A bag limit of 20 fish and a possession limit of 30 fish (Sand and Tiger Flathead) is in place for recreational fishers.

Tasmania – Indigenous (Management Methods) In Tasmania, Indigenous persons engaged in aboriginal fishing activities in marine waters are exempt from holding recreational fishing

licences, but must comply with all other fisheries rules as if they were licensed. Additionally, recreational bag and possession limits also apply. If using pots, rings, set lines or gillnets, Indigenous persons must obtain a unique identifying code (UIC). The policy document Recognition of Aboriginal Fishing Activities for issuing a UIC to a person for Aboriginal Fishing activity explains the steps to take in making an application for a UIC.

CATCH CHART



Commercial catch of Tiger Flathead - note confidential catch not shown

EFFECTS OF FISHING ON THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS on Tiger Flathead

References	
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829	Helidoniotis, F, Koduah, A, Moore, A, Mazloumi, N and Nicol, S 2017, Commonwealth Trawl and Scalefish Hook sectors, in H Patterson, R Noriega, L Georgeson, J Larombe and R Curtotti (ed.s), Fishery status reports 2017, Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, Canberra.
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