

ABALONE QUOTA YEAR 2010

TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH AND NEW MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

RELEASED: DECEMBER 2009

TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH (TAC)

The TAC for the 2010 fishing year is 2,660 tonnes.

The breakdown between parts of the fishery is as follows:

Eastern	256 kg/Unit	TAC of 896 tonnes
Western	264 kg/Unit	TAC of 924 tonnes
Central Western	87 kg/Unit	TAC of 304.5 tonnes
Northern	95 kg/Unit	TAC of 332.5 tonnes
Bass Strait	20 kg/Unit	TAC of 70 tonnes
Greenlip	38 kg/Unit	TAC of 133 tonnes
Total	760 kg/Unit	TAC of 2,660 tonnes

SUSTAINABLE CATCH TARGETS

Fishing effort needs to be distributed across the fishery to reduce the likelihood of localised overfishing. Each year, therefore, a number of areas in the fishery have catch caps applied to them. During 2009, the Fishery Resource Advisory Group (FRAG) and the Abalone Fishery Advisory Committee (AbFAC) recommended a number of sub-block catch caps for refining the spatial management of the fishery. The Minister approved these caps and six areas were duly closed at some point during 2009. Sub-block catch caps for 2010 have yet to be set. A recommendation to the Minister as to 2010 sub-block catch caps will follow from the first FRAG and AbFAC meetings of 2010. At this stage, however, it is anticipated that the following areas will have catch caps applied to them in 2010:

Blacklip:

- Strahan: sub-blocks 9A, 9B and 9C: (a catch cap of 166 tonnes of abalone in total in 2009).
- North-west blacklip: sub-blocks 5A, 5B and 5C: (a catch cap of 152.5 tonnes of abalone in total in 2009).

- Northern zone excluding sub-blocks 5A, 5B and 5C: (a catch cap of 180 tonnes of abalone in total in 2009).
- Actaeon Island: sub-blocks 13C, 13D and 13E: (a catch cap of 340 tonnes of abalone in total in 2009).
- South coast: sub-blocks 12B, 12C, 12D, 13A and 13B: (a catch cap of 300 tonnes of abalone in total in 2009).
- Sub-block 30A: (a catch cap of four tonnes of abalone in total in 2009).
- Blocks 7 and 8: sub-blocks 7A, 7B, 7C, 8A, 8B and 8C: (a catch cap of 108 tonnes of abalone in total in 2009).
- Blocks 10, 11 and 12A: sub-blocks 10A, 10B, 10C, 10D, 11A, 11B, 11C, 11D, 11E and 12A: (a catch cap of 458 tonnes of abalone in total in 2009).

Greenlip:

- King Island: sub-blocks 1A, 1B, 1C, 2A, 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B, 3C, 4A, 4B and 4C: (a catch cap of 30 tonnes of abalone in total in 2009).
- North-west greenlip: sub-blocks 5A, 5B, 5C, 49A, 49B, 49C, 47A, 47B, 48A, 48B and 48C: (a catch cap of 30 tonnes of abalone in total in 2009. Within this area, a sub-cap applied to sub-blocks 47A, 47B and 48A (Perkins Bay) of 20 tonnes of abalone in total in 2009).
- North-east: sub-blocks 31B, 39A, 39B, 40A, 40B and 40C: (a catch cap of 23 tonnes of abalone in total in 2009).
- Furneaux Group: (a catch cap of 42 tonnes of abalone in total in total in 2009).

Divers and processors will be informed in writing once caps are confirmed. When an area is to be closed due to its cap having been reached, divers and processors will again be informed in writing.

ALTERATIONS TO SIZE LIMITS

As in 2009, there will be two experimental size limits for the 2010 quota year. The hypothesis being tested is that the area on the north-west coast between Woolnorth Point and Arthur River (sub-blocks 5A, 5B and 5C) has significant numbers of abalone which may be more appropriately fished with a reduction in size limit to 127mm. In

addition to this area, the area from Arthur River to Wild Wave River (sub-blocks 5D, 6A, 6B and 6C) may be better utilised at a size limit of 132mm. There is at present insufficient information on growth and size at maturity to implement a permanent reduction in size limits in these areas. A controlled trial with collection of specific research data is a cost effective way to assess the reduction in size limits.

To participate in these experimental size limit fisheries, divers will be required to have a depth logger and GPS unit issued by TAFI for the collection of fine scale spatial catch rate data. A permit will not be required for 2010. For more information please telephone Wild Fisheries Management Branch on (03) 6233 3512.

BIOSECURITY ARRANGEMENTS FOR FISHING AROUND KING ISLAND AND IN NORTHERN BASS STRAIT

Biosecurity remains a high priority for the Department in 2010. Divers and processors are asked to continue to follow the cleaning and disinfecting protocols and procedures available since March 2007. Additional information on biosecurity and abalone viral ganglioneuritis (AVG) can be obtained from www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/abalone.

King Island

All abalone taken in blocks 1-4 may either be landed on King Island or they may be landed at Stanley on mainland Tasmania. If the latter, the same specifications must be followed as for the Northern Bass Strait Region below. Abalone can not be received by processors on mainland Tasmania without the approval of the Chief Veterinary Officer.

Northern Bass Strait

Commercial fishing remains possible in the Northern Bass Strait Region (Figure 1). Fishing in the region, however, is only allowed if the specifications detailed on the Department's website are followed (www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/abalone).

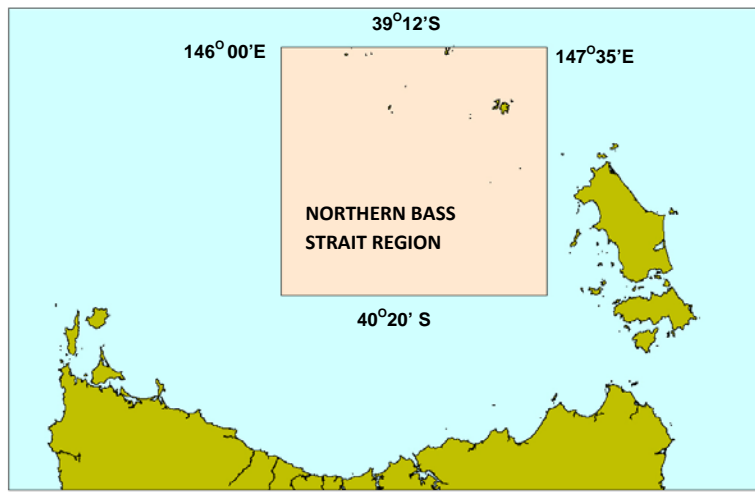


Figure 1 Northern Bass Strait Region

Fisheries (Abalone) Rules 2009

Following the remaking of the management plan for the abalone fishery, which resulted in the *Fisheries (Abalone) Rules 2009*, a number of changes have been introduced.

Over-catch

Payments regarding any over-catch up to 20 per cent, whether the last trip for a quota period for a particular part of the fishery or not, will now be split as follows: for 0-10 per cent over-catch, payment of the beach price for the kilograms of abalone over-caught; for 10-20 per cent over-catch, twice the payment of the beach price for the kilograms of abalone over-caught.

Over-catch more than 20 per cent

There is now provision for a financial penalty in lieu of prosecution regarding a less than 20 kilograms amount of over-catch greater than 20 per cent.

Please note that the administrative penalty is an amount equal to twice the last beach price for the entire percentage of excess abalone, not just for the percentage greater than 10 per cent or greater than 20 per cent.

"Bass Strait area"

The Furneaux Group of islands is now included in the definition of the Bass Strait size limit area. This means that blacklip abalone can be fished to 114 mm legal minimum size in the Furneaux Group.

Please note that the south-east boundary of the Bass Strait Area runs through Banks Strait. The new Bass Strait Area does not include any Northern Area blocks off north-east mainland Tasmania.

Lady Barron has been included as a designated port on Flinders Island to facilitate dinghy fishing in the new part of the Bass Strait Area.

Post fishing report

To reflect the redundancy of a post fishing report in situations where the holder of a fish processing licence is receiving abalone on landing and is required to make a movement report, the holder of a fishing licence (abalone dive) is no longer required to make a post fishing report.

If abalone are not being delivered to the holder of a fish processing licence at the landing area, a post fishing report by the diver is still required.

Possessing a rock lobster pot on vessel

Divers are now allowed to remove from State waters a rock lobster pot in the form of marine debris.

Divers are not allowed to commence a fishing trip with a rock lobster pot on board; and no rock lobster may be possessed on a commercial fishing trip for abalone.

Divers are not to interfere with any rock lobster pot on which is, or to which is attached, a distinguishing mark. In other words, any rock lobster pot recovered must reasonably be considered to have been lost by its owner.

Please bear in mind that a rock lobster pot removed from State waters in this way may be considered under "finding property" in the *Police Offences Act 1935*.

Changing part of fishery report

Having made a prior fishing report regarding either the central western, western or eastern parts of the blacklip abalone fishery, a diver may telephone in a changing part of the fishery report to one of the other of these three parts of the fishery provided no diving has yet occurred on the trip, no abalone have been taken and there are no abalone on the fishing vessel.

The boundaries concerned are between the central western and western parts of the blacklip abalone fishery (approximately the line of latitude running through Strahan), and between the western and eastern parts of the blacklip abalone fishery (the line of longitude running through Whale Head).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

An abalone fishery operational information paper, updated for 2010, is available from the Licensing and Fisheries Monitoring Section of DPIPWE on the ground floor of the Marine Board Building as well as on the DPIPWE website www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/abalone or www.fishing.tas.gov.au. An explanation of the rules in relation to the following points is contained in this paper:

- The parts of the fishery.
- Size limits.
- Arrangements for fishing in the various parts of the fishery for dinghies.
- Mother boat requirements.
- Research areas.
- Processor requirements.
- Docket books.
- Block catch caps.

For further information please contact:

- Wild Fisheries Management Branch (03) 6233 3512.
- For licensing and quota authorization inquiries (03) 6233 3515.
- For docket book and quota balance inquiries (03) 6233 6171.