

Marine Matters

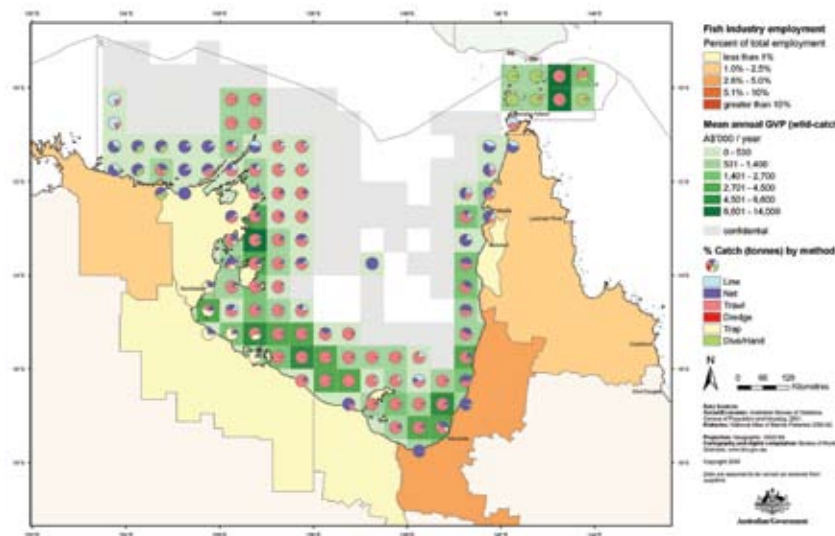
THE ATLAS OF AUSTRALIAN MARINE FISHING AND COASTAL COMMUNITIES

Information on Australian fisheries and the communities that rely on fishing activity.

Northern Planning Area

Area

The Area extends from the Goulburn Islands, Northern Territory across the Gulf of Carpentaria to Torres Strait.



Population

The Area has a population of approximately 48,900 persons, with an annual growth rate higher than the coastal Australian average.

Importance of Fishing Related Activity

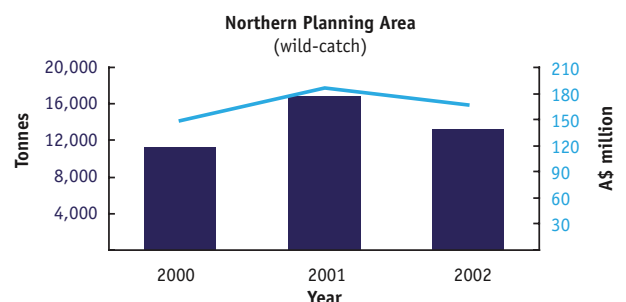
Indigenous and recreational fishing activities are prominent across the Area, while employment within the fish industry comprises largely commercial fishing activities, with a small number engaged in wholesaling and processing activities. Much of the commercial fishing sector employment occurs around Karumba, Cooktown and on Thursday Island. A distinctive characteristic of the fishing industry in the Area is the high level of activity undertaken by fishers with home ports outside the Area, reflected in a lower regional level of fishing-related employment.

Key Commercial Fisheries

Major commercial fisheries in the Area include: the Northern Prawn and Torres Strait prawn trawl fisheries; mud crab trap fisheries; barramundi net fisheries; mackerel line fisheries; and a variety of tropical finfish fisheries utilising trap, line, net and trawl methods. All are Northern Territory and Queensland managed fisheries, except the Northern Prawn and Torres Strait prawn trawl fisheries which are managed by the Australian Government.

Economic Value of Fisheries

The total commercial wild-catch fisheries production for the Area in 2002 was estimated at 13,200 tonnes with a gross value of production (GVP) of \$167m, down from \$187m in 2001.





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Where are the fish and who's catching them?

Fishing activity makes a vital contribution to Australia's economy and is important to the social fabric of many coastal communities.

The Atlas of Australian Marine Fishing and Coastal Communities is the first comprehensive national overview of fishing activity in Australia.

The Atlas shows where fish are caught in Australia, the value of those catches, where different fishing gears are used and the species that are taken. It also provides information on the socio-economic characteristics of coastal communities in eight Marine Regions around Australia.

The Atlas includes two products – a hard copy version and a companion website featuring an interactive online mapping system.

www.brs.gov.au/fishcoast

DID YOU KNOW?

- The Australian Fishing Zone covers nine million square kilometres, and extends 200 nautical miles from shore.
- The Zone takes in tropical to subantarctic waters and reaches one quarter of the globe – from the Indian Ocean in the west to the Pacific Ocean in the east.
- High value fisheries include southern bluefin tuna in the Great Australian Bight, rock lobster off Western Australia and abalone in south western Tasmania.
- Rock lobster accounts for nearly one third of the GVP of all Australian wild-catch commercial fisheries, at \$390 million. Prawns are second, with a GVP of \$93 million which is 20% of the GVP total.
- Commercial fishing, aquaculture, fish processing and wholesaling are important to local communities, particularly in more remote regions.
- Gone Fishing? You're not alone. 3.36 million people, or 19.5% of the population over the age of five years, fish recreationally at least once each year. Participation rates are highest in the Northern Territory, Western Australia and Tasmania.

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