



The Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP

Minister for Primary Industries

MEDIA RELEASE

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CHANGES TO SPANNER CRAB FISHERY

Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson, has announced welcome changes to management arrangements for spanner crab fishery in the State's northern zone to commence from 1 July 2015.

"A catch quota system for the northern zone is being implemented following consultation with shareholders and in line with advice from the independent Structural Adjustment Review Committee (SARC)," said Minister Hodgkinson.

"These changes will apply to the spanner crab fishery from Yamba to Tweed Heads and will deliver an improved property right for shareholders in that area. We have held a number of discussions with the spanner crab industry since 2011, and they have requested the move to quota allocations," Ms Hodgkinson said.

An interim total commercial catch limit of 164,124 kilograms will be set for the spanner crab fishery in the northern zone and individual quotas will be allocated to fishers based on their shareholdings, as set out in the Fisheries Management Act.

The interim total commercial catch limit will be converted to a scientifically based Total Allowable Catch (TAC) commencing 1 July 2017.

"During the consultation process, shareholders in the northern zone of the fishery indicated that a catch quota system was the preferred option moving forward in the northern zone, and this has since been endorsed by the SARC."

Ms Hodgkinson said the Government has also accepted the SARC's recommendation that spanner crab fishers in the northern zone should be included in the foreshadowed exit grant program.

"The NSW Government is in the process of rolling out a \$16 million structural adjustment package as part of the commercial fisheries reform program to ensure the long-term viability and sustainability of the commercial fishing industry," Ms Hodgkinson said.

"The NSW Government is committed to sustainable, viable and healthy fisheries for NSW."

The NSW Department of Primary Industries will write to the relevant shareholders shortly with details about implementation of the quota.