

Consultation

Application for a developmental commercial fishing permit Octopus

The NSW Department of Primary Industries is considering an application for a developmental commercial fishing permit to harvest octopus using trigger traps. A description of the proposed fishing activity is provided below for your information.

Species

- Target
 - Gloomy octopus (*Octopus tetricus*)
 - Maori octopus (*Macroctopus maorum*)
- By-product (not targeted but may be retained)
 - Pale octopus (*Octopus pallidus*)
 - Hammer octopus (*Octopus australis*)

Fishing gear

The proposed fishing activity will use a single vessel to set octopus trigger traps. Trigger traps are a highly-selective gear type that are baited with a rubber crab lure and/or a LED light. The traps have a single opening and a closing door mechanism at the front of the trap. More information on trigger trap design can be found at www.occotech.com.au

Two trigger traps are placed side-by-side on a baseplate. The total assembly (termed a 'cradle') weighs approximately 26 kg (Figure 1). A string of cradles will be set and deployed on a demersal setline with a mooring rope and buoy at each end of the line (Figure 2). The cradles act to weigh the setline to the seabed.

Between 25 and 50 cradles are set on a line, cradles will be spaced 10 to 40 metres apart. The demersal setline will range from 250 metres to 2,000 metres (surface float to float) in length. It is proposed that traps will remain in the water between two and seven days before retrieval.

A very small number of cradles may be deployed as individual units for the purpose of testing fishing areas.



Figure 1 Cradle of three trigger traps (Hart *et.al.*, 2016)

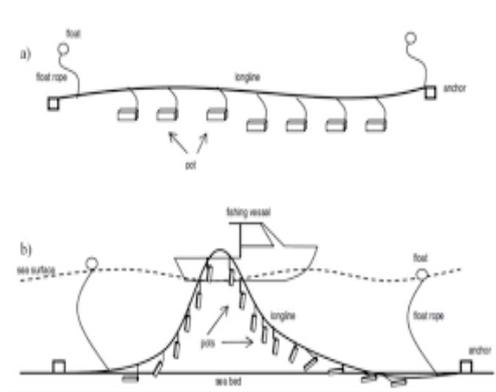


Figure 2 Traps set on a demersal setline (Hart *et.al.*, 2016)

Fishing area

The proposed activity would occur in NSW ocean waters, excluding any marine protected areas.

Traps will be set on sandy or silty substrates adjacent to, but no less than 30 metres from reef edges. Exploratory fishing will occur in depths from 10 – 80 metres, with most effort focussing on the 20 – 40 metre depth zone.

Have your say

DPI invites written submissions on the proposed fishing activity. **The closing date for submissions is 4 November 2019.** Send your submission to:

Email: fiona.mckinnon@dpi.nsw.gov.au

More information: Fiona McKinnon, Senior Fisheries Manager: (02) 6691 9625

References

Hart, A.M., Loporati, S.C., Marriott, R.J. and Murphy, D. 2016. Innovative development of the Octopus (cf) tetricus fishery in Western Australia. FRDC Project No 2010/200. Fisheries Research Report No. 270, Department of Fisheries, Western Australia. 120pp.

Reference number INT19/157422

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