



**FREE  
NSW  
GUIDE**

# Go Freshwater Fishing

**FEATURED LOCATION:  
WYANGALA  
DAM**

**NSW CENTRAL-WEST  
PREMIER NATIVE  
SPORTFISHERY!**



[dpird.nsw.gov.au](http://dpird.nsw.gov.au)

# FOREWORD

## FROM NSW DPIRD



Throwing a line in at a new spot always makes for a great fishing adventure, whether it's on a family holiday or just somewhere new close to home. No matter your fishing expertise, NSW boasts a wide range of fish species and great places to catch them, including in our many inland rivers, impoundments and streams as well as the productive estuaries, lakes, beaches and rocky headlands on the NSW coast. There are also many inshore and offshore fishing opportunities from your boat or if using one of the many experienced charter fishing services available.

There are many reasons to go fishing, including to unwind and relax, spend time with family and friends, enjoy nature and of course to catch a tasty meal of fresh fish. Over a million people in NSW enjoy this fantastic lifestyle and the great news is that you are never too old or young to take up fishing so get out there and give it a go! Getting into fishing is easy. If you don't know where to start, just head into your local tackle store where the friendly staff can provide tips on tackle, bait and techniques plus point you to a safe, convenient spot to throw a line in.

NSW DPIRD has developed these **Go Fishing** guides as a snapshot of popular NSW fishing locations in both fresh and saltwater to help improve your recreational fishing experiences.

Cover image: Josh Kopp Murray cod.

Image: Josh Kopp; All other images: Josh Kopp, Al McBurnie, Ken Smith. Fish illustrations: Pat Tully.

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For more information on other locations, fish species, size and bag limits, permitted gear and other information not listed in these guides, visit the **DPIRD website** or download the **FishSmart app** to your mobile device.

The **FishSmart NSW app** provides recreational fishers 24/7 access to essential information on fishing in NSW.

**Download the FishSmart NSW app to your mobile device.**



FishSmart  
NSW



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# OVERVIEW



Situated about 30km from Cowra in Central West NSW, Wyangala Dam captures the waters of the Abercrombie and Lachlan rivers for town water and Irrigation supply. Wyangala is part of the Murray-Darling Basin and its flows enter the Lachlan River which eventually joins the Murrumbidgee River and then onto the mighty Murray River further downstream.

At 100% capacity the dam holds 1,220,000 ML of water at 379m elevation having a depth of 79m at its deepest point. The surface area of Wyangala Dam is 5,390 ha (13,300 acres) and the catchment area is 8,300 km<sup>2</sup>.

Construction on Wyangala started in 1928, making it the second oldest dam built for irrigation in NSW. Due to its age, Wyangala is known as one of Central NSW's most productive and popular recreational fishing impoundments.

The rugged mountains surrounding this dam are forested with stands of cypress pine and eucalyptus, making for excellent camping at select locations along the foreshores.

Wyangala  
Dam



Natural campsites which can be accessed by vehicles including the popular Markhams, Oaky Creek, Quart Pot and Gerties.

There are two main tourist parks situated on Wyangala's foreshores. Wyangala State Recreational Area is located at the main wall with accommodation options ranging from campsites, cabins, onsite vans and house boats; the other park is the Grabine State Recreational Area, which is situated on what was the old junction of the Lachlan and Abercrombie rivers.

Grabine is about 20kms from the small township of Bigga and has all the facilities required for an enjoyable family stay.

Bush camping is also allowed on the dam's foreshores and many people take advantage of this by loading up their boats with their camping gear and travelling to remote campsites for peace and quiet.

History is rich in the Wyangala Dam area with the "Wild Abercrombies" a favoured haunt of bushrangers such as Frank Gardiner, John Vane and others like John Piesely, who has the dubious honour of being the first Australian-born bushranger to die on the gallows at nearby Bathurst.



Mining also played a huge part in the development of this area. The hills and gullies in and around Wyangala were once rich with gold, copper, and other minerals; evidence of these past workings can be seen along the banks in some parts of the dam.

The natural structure around the dam is visually impressive with giant granite tors towering above drowned boulders and rock piles which are favoured haunt of big Murray cod.

Drowned forests in various bays and in the arms of the dam attract schools of golden perch which congregate around the sunken trees.

The flats created by sloping banks can fish well early in the spring for species like silver perch and eel tailed catfish. These species are protected in streams and rivers but are available to be caught and kept for a tasty feed in Wyangala Dam.

As the waters warm during spring and summer, invasive European carp will mooch along the shallow edges, offering anglers excellent sight fishing by casting flies, lures, and baits to cruising fish.

Another introduced pest species, the redfin or English perch, has been unfortunately discovered in Wyangala



**The natural structure the dam is visually impressive with giant granite tors towering above drowned boulders and rock piles which are favoured haunt of big Murray Cod.**

Dam but is yet to be found in large numbers. It is hoped Murray cod and golden perch are predating on the redfin and keeping their numbers in check.

Protected species such as Macquarie perch and trout cod can be found in waters from the dam up in the feeder streams above. Murray crays and the small freshwater blackfish (known locally as “slipperies”) can also be found in the rivers and creeks above the dam. Both are protected from fishing and should be released if caught.

The excellent fishing and camping opportunities offered by Wyangala are the prime reasons why this waterway is rated by many as the No.1 fishing dam in Central Western NSW.

Plan a trip to see for yourself!

# KEY TARGET SPECIES



## MURRAY COD



**SPECIES INFO:** Considered Australia's No.1 native sportfish, Murray cod (aka goodoo or greenfish) are ambush hunters highly regarded by anglers due to their explosive strikes and powerful fighting ability. In dams like Wyangala, Murray cod tend to favour steep rocky banks, cliffs, and drowned timber, although they will move out of cover to hunt in open water and across shallow flats, especially during low light periods and at night. Murray cod are stocked into Wyangala by DPIRD Fisheries. Approximately 50,000 Murray cod fingerlings produced by DPIRD's Narrandera Fisheries Centre are released each year into the dam.

**TECHNIQUES:** Casting spinnerbaits, deep divers, swimbaits and large soft plastics around snags, rocky banks and along drop-offs; trolling deep divers along rocky banks and snags; bait fishing with live yabbies or bardi grubs around snags and along rocky banks.

**TACKLE:** Six-to-eight-kilogram baitcasting or spin outfits with 15kg braid mainline and 15-30kg abrasion resistant mono or fluorocarbon leaders. When bait fishing, use 3/0-6/0 non-offset circle hooks on a running sinker rig.

**HOT SPOTS:** Rocky banks, timber snags, steep cliffs, drop-offs, deep snags.





# GOLDEN PERCH



**SPECIES INFO:** A highly popular sportfishing target, golden perch (aka yellowbelly, yellas or callop) respond well to both lures and baits. A schooling fish, that at times gather in big numbers around sunken trees where the technique known as “bobbing” can prove very effective. Golden perch are stocked into Wyangala by DPIRD Fisheries. Approximately 100,000 golden perch fingerlings produced by DPIRD’s Narrandera Fisheries Centre are released every year.

**TECHNIQUES:** “Bobbing” drowned trees with baits and lures; casting small lipless crankbaits, soft plastics and hard-bodied lures at standing trees, flooded banks and rocky points; trolling rocky points with small deep diving hard-bodied lures; working flats with small vibes and soft plastics; bait fishing from the bank with worms, live shrimp and small yabbies.

**TACKLE:** 2-4kg spin outfits, 2.1m graphite rod, 2500 size spin reel, 8-10lb braided mainline with a rod length of 8lb fluorocarbon leader are ideal when lure and bait fishing for Wyangala’s golden perch.

**HOT SPOTS:** Sunken trees, rocky points, flooded banks.

# OTHER SPECIES

Up until about the mid-1980s, Wyangala was best known as a trout fishery. However, native fish numbers rising due to DPIRD's successful inland stocking program now account for the bulk of the fishing reports for the dam. DPIRD continues to stock rainbow trout into the dam with the cooler months the best time to target these freshwater sportfish. Down rigging small diving hard-bodies or "Tassie Devil" style lures in deep water along the old riverbeds is an effective technique to tangle with Wyangala's elusive trout.

**Redfin** are a Class 1 noxious pest in NSW, and are present in the dam. They are native to northern Europe and were introduced to Australia in the 1860s. It is illegal to be in possession of live redfin in NSW. It is also illegal to use live or dead redfin for bait. There are no bag or size limits on redfin in NSW. They will often take lures and baits meant for other species. Many anglers enjoy catching redfin as they are good sport and a popular table fish.



## European carp

are also available in Wyangala. This introduced species originates from central Asia and can grow to impressive sizes. Carp will sometimes take a lure meant for a cod or yellowbelly but are most commonly caught on baits including worms, shrimps, corn kernels and bread. Some anglers enjoy sight fishing for carp in Wyangala using fly tackle or small soft plastic lures. Carp have spread throughout the Murray-Darling Basin and can cause serious degradation to natural aquatic systems. As with redfin, there are no bag and size limits on carp.



Other native species caught in Wyangala include **silver perch** and **eel tailed catfish**. Both species will occasionally take a small lure or fly but a circle hook baited with a bunch of wriggling earthworms cast around sloping banks is probably the most productive way to catch a silver or a cattie.

*Note: silver perch and eel tailed catfish must not be taken from rivers or unlisted dams. See [www.dpiird.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dpiird.nsw.gov.au) for specific rules applying to these species.*



# BOBBING

# IN WYANGALA

Bobbing-is the term for an effective fishing method with lure or bait, it is one of the most successful ways to target fish in the warmer months in Wyangala Dam, especially golden perch.

A basic technique, select a suitable tree in the dam, gently ease the boat up to the trunk and tie off on a handy branch or if you have an electric motor, spot lock to hold next to the tree.

1

The next step is to rig up for bobbing. A 2-4kg 2.1m graphite rod, 2500 size spin reel, 8-10lb braided mainline with a rod length of 8lb fluorocarbon leader, a non-offset circle hook in size 1 to 1/0 with a ball sinker running down to sit on top of the hook.

2

The live shrimp or yabby is fed onto the hook tail first with the point brought out just before the main body. These can be caught with a shrimp trap set overnight, ensure your trap is properly marked to comply with NSW DPIRD Fisheries regulations\*.

3



Lower the bait down to the bottom and let sit for a short period; quite often the bait will be taken on the drop, so be ready. Let the bait hit the bottom, then raise the rod gently around 15-30cm then let it fall back so the sinker and bait hit the bottom again; this is 'bobbing'.

4

Generally, 15-20 bobs and then a pause for around a minute is the preferred technique, if no action after around 5-10 minutes pick another tree and repeat the process till you start catching fish.

5

As with most fishing dawn and dusk are the prime times for this technique, however, fishing deeper trees and at the base of the trunk during the peak of the day can yield results.

6

Another option is a 65-80mm curl-tailed soft plastic rigged up on a 1/4oz jig-head slow rolled up the trunk of the tree. Black-and natural-coloured plastics are popular with many keen native sportfishermen, a smear of scent on the lure can improve results.

7

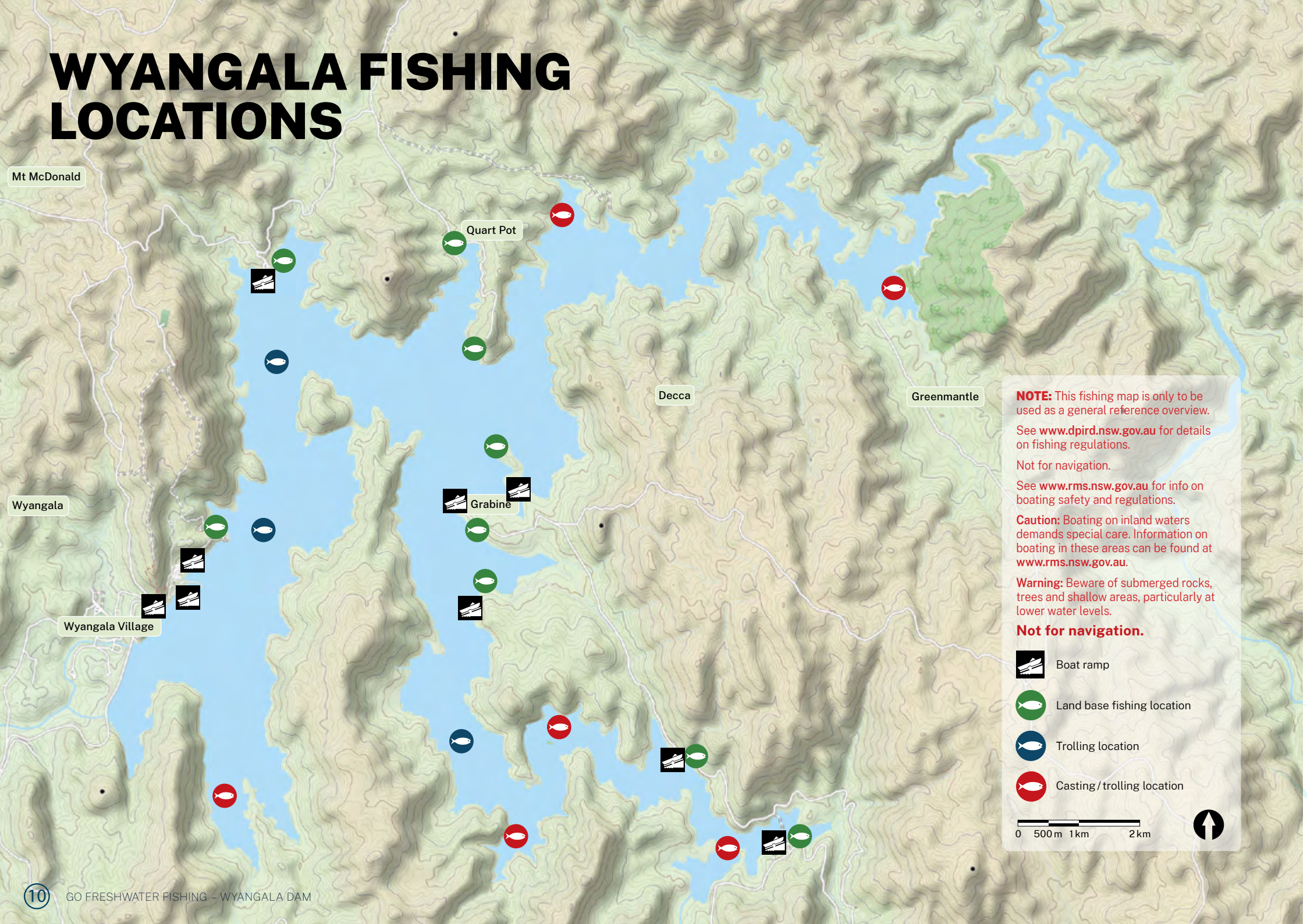
The main target species with this technique in Wyangala Dam is golden perch, it's not uncommon to also catch Murray cod, eel tailed catfish, silver perch or European carp, so next time out give 'bobbing' a go.



\* You can find all the relevant info at [www.dpiird.gov.nsw.au](http://www.dpiird.gov.nsw.au) and in the DPIRD NSW Recreational Freshwater Fishing Guide.



# WYANGALA FISHING LOCATIONS



**NOTE:** This fishing map is only to be used as a general reference overview.

See [www.dpiird.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dpiird.nsw.gov.au) for details on fishing regulations.


Not for navigation.


See [www.rms.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au) for info on boating safety and regulations.


**Caution:** Boating on inland waters demands special care. Information on boating in these areas can be found at [www.rms.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au).


**Warning:** Beware of submerged rocks, trees and shallow areas, particularly at lower water levels.

**Not for navigation.**

 Boat ramp

 Land base fishing location

 Trolling location

 Casting/trolling location

0 500 m 1 km 2 km



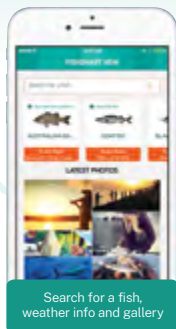


# Check out the app: FishSmart



DPIRD has created an app that provides recreational fishers with 24/7 access to essential information they need to know to fish in NSW, such as:

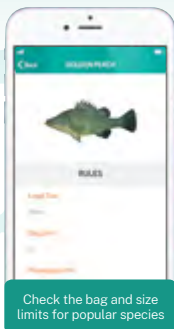
- ❑ a pictorial guide of common recreational species, bag & size limits, closed seasons and fishing gear rules
- ❑ real-time maps to locate nearest FADs (Fish Aggregation Devices), artificial reefs, Recreational Fishing Havens and Marine Park Zones
- ❑ local weather, tide, moon phase and barometric pressure to help choose best time to fish
- ❑ guides on spearfishing, fishing safely, trout fishing, regional fishing
- ❑ DPIRD contact for reporting



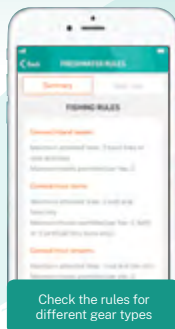
Search for a fish, weather info and gallery



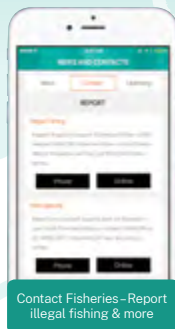
See your location in relation to FADs, Marine Park Zones, RFHs & more



Check the bag and size limits for popular species



Check the rules for different gear types



Contact Fisheries - Report illegal fishing & more



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