Redfish

(*Centroberyx affinis*)

**Exploitation Status**
Growth Overfished

Predominantly a Commonwealth fishery. The population is growth overfished and is very much depleted, but a full population model has not been successfully developed. The Commonwealth status has moved from 'Growth Overfished' to 'Uncertain', reflecting the lack of a good assessment of the extent of biomass depletion, but 'Growth Overfished' has been retained as it best describes the status of the stock in NSW.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Standard Name</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Centroberyx affinis</em></td>
<td>redfish</td>
<td>Also known as nannygai.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Background**

Redfish (*Centroberyx affinis*) occur in continental shelf and upper slope waters (depths from 10 to 500 m) from northern NSW to eastern Bass Strait. Juvenile fish occur in the deeper bays and estuaries and over reefs in inshore waters. Redfish is a strongly schooling species, generally occurring in association with hard bottom types and other structures (e.g. shipwrecks).

Redfish are mostly caught in the Commonwealth fisheries, where recent landings have been around 200 t - despite the Total Allowable Catch being about 800 t. Recent landings from NSW-managed commercial fisheries are less than 50 t. Smaller quantities of redfish are taken by recreational fishers off NSW.

Redfish are slow growing and long-lived fish, which may reach a maximum age of about 30 years and 1 kg in weight. Most aspects of the species' biology have been studied and are reasonably well understood. A long time series of monitoring data is available for Commonwealth fisheries and research trawls, and some data are available on the size composition of catches by NSW trawlers in recent years.

Reasonably detailed stock assessments conducted as part of the Commonwealth process indicate that the redfish stock is significantly growth overfished (i.e. on average, fish are caught at too small a size to maximise the yield in weight). The most recent Commonwealth assessment is uncertain as to whether the redfish stock is overfished, however all the main indicators suggest that the stock remains significantly depleted.
Additional Notes

• A schooling species predominantly taken by the Commonwealth trawl fishery. In NSW redfish are taken by the ocean trawl, ocean trap and line, and recreational sectors.

• Redfish is a long-lived (30+ yrs) schooling species and is vulnerable to trawl fishing.

• Discarding of small fish was a serious problem prior to 2005. Gear changes to reduce discarding have been introduced, however in recent years the modal length of redfish in landed catches was just 17 cm fork length (FL).

• Monitoring of the size composition of redfish landed by NSW commercial fishers was recommenced in 2009 and is continuing.

Catch

Recreational Catch of Redfish

The annual recreational harvest of redfish in NSW is likely to lie between 20 and 40 t. This estimate is based upon the results of the offsite National Recreational and Indigenous Fishing Survey (Henry and Lyle, 2003) and onsite surveys undertaken by I & I NSW.

Historical Landings of Redfish

Commercial landings (including available historical records) of redfish for NSW from 1946/47 to 2008/09 for all fishing methods. Note that the decline in reported catch during the late 1990s was due to changes in catch recording requirements for fishers with both NSW and Commonwealth licences.
Further Reading


Please visit the CSIRO website, http://www.marine.csiro.au/caab/ and search for the species code (CAAB) 37 258003, common name or scientific name to find further information.

The modal length of redfish landed by NSW commercial fishers declined from 23-24 cm fork length (FL) in the 1970s to about 20 cm FL by 2000. Recent data for redfish caught by NSW fishers shows a continuation of this trend, with a modal length of 17 cm FL. There is no minimum legal length for redfish in NSW.