

Aquaculture Broodstock Collection Policy

Policy Number:	O-111	Version:	5.0
Authorised by:	Director Fisheries and Aquaculture Management	Authorised date:	13 November 2024
Issued by:	DPIRD Fisheries	Effective date:	13 November 2024
Category:	Operations and Industry	Review date:	13 November 2026

Policy Statement:

NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development - Fisheries (NSW DPIRD) issues broodstock collection permits for fresh, estuarine or marine waters to support the object of Part 6 of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* (the Act). The Act has provisions and procedures relevant to granting broodstock collection permits under Section 37 and Section 216 of the Act for aquaculture, research or other purposes prescribed by the regulations.

Scope:

This policy defines under what circumstances NSW DPIRD will grant an application for a broodstock collection permit and what conditions may be placed on these permits. The policy also addresses cancellation of a broodstock collection permit and the return of redundant broodstock back to waterways.

The policy applies to all current aquaculture permit holders and research facilities in NSW that require broodstock for production, research, conservation or meeting the objects of the NSW Hatchery Quality Assurance Scheme (NSW HQAS). Applications for broodstock collection from NSW waters from interstate applicants may also be accepted and assessed under this policy.

Permit conditions applicable to broodstock collection permits have been developed to: meet legislative requirements of the relevant Acts, Regulations and Policy; promote best practice to protect fish health and safety; reduce the impact on threatened species and non-target species; support the control of diseases, noxious or pest species; reduce conflict with waterway users and other stakeholders; assist permit holders to undertake the activity effectively aiming to reduce the amount of time spent setting and attending fishing equipment; facilitate compliance and reporting requirements; facilitate appropriate management of the resource and to meet the requirements of hatchery/stocking programs.

The NSW HQAS currently has broodstock genetic regions for Australian Bass (AB1 North Coast, AB2 Central Coast & AB3 South Coast), whereas Murray Cod and Golden Perch are considered single genetic populations statewide. Ten pairs of broodstock from each genetic area should be collected for a hatchery to comply with the genetic requirements for stocking fish to that zone. Broodstock used in the Scheme may only be used for a maximum of five years.

Permit conditions are based on the following policy points. Standard permit conditions and detailed administrative processes for broodstock collection permits are listed in the Aquaculture Administration Procedures Manual for Broodstock Collection Permits.

Requirements:

Applications for a broodstock collection permit

1. NSW DPIRD may accept applications for broodstock collection permits for the purpose of aquaculture production, research and conservation conducted in NSW or interstate.
2. Broodstock collection permit applications must be duly made on the relevant application form and provide sufficient information for assessment and processing.
3. There is a broodstock collection permit application fee. This may be waived where the Act allows for an exemption.
4. Broodstock collection permits cover the waters that are within the limits of the State.

Broodstock numbers

5. No more than 120 individual Murray Cod and/or Golden Perch broodfish may be collected during any consecutive three-year period per permit holder (not 120 fish per year). If there are extenuating circumstances (e.g. loss of broodstock) leading to a shortfall in broodstock numbers to meet the requirements of the NSW HQAS, an application to collect additional broodstock may be considered. Such an application would need to be accompanied by a Review of Environmental factors (REF).
6. Unless otherwise specified, all broodstock must comply with minimum legal lengths as prescribed in the Fisheries Management (General) Regulation 2019.
7. For Murray Cod, the fish collected can either be between 55cm and 75cm in length, or 60 fish may be of a larger length up to 125cm, with a maximum of 3 of these larger fish between 110 and 125cm to cover incidental capture.
8. Broodstock numbers collected for other species will be considered on a case by case basis depending on whether they are used for aquaculture production, research, conservation or recreational harvest stocking.

Gear limitations

9. Gill nets are to be set to minimise entanglement, checked at a maximum of three hourly intervals and comprise a mesh size stipulated in the permit appropriate to the target species.
10. Setlines are to have no more than five hooks attached to each setline and are to be checked at a maximum of three hourly intervals. Float lines are not permitted.
11. Applications for the use of alternate capture methods (e.g. drum nets, fish traps, haul nets, electrofishing) will be considered on a case by case basis.
12. Applications for taking fish from fishways, fish barriers or fish lifters on lochs or other unprescribed means of broodstock collection will be considered on a case by case basis.
13. A broodstock collection permit may allow the taking of broodstock by lawful recreational fishing methods in accordance with recreational fishing rules. The numbers of broodstock taken must comply with the numbers approved for collection in the permit and be recorded and reported on as per the permit conditions.
14. The use of gill nets is prohibited during the months of July to November (inclusive) in the waters of the Mann River Recreational Fishing Closure, as defined in Schedule 3, Clause 163 of the Fisheries Management (General) Regulation 2019.

Seasonal limitations

15. Inland freshwater broodstock collection activities for finfish will be approved during the Murray Cod closed season (September – November inclusive) as defined in Schedule 3, Clause

149 of the Fisheries Management (General) Regulation 2019, for accredited HQAS facilities. This does not apply to the following waters:

- a. Darling River all waters between Bourke Weir and Brewarrina Weir
 - b. Murray River all waters between the Yarrawonga Weir and the Tocumwal road bridge
 - c. Murray River all waters between the Yarrawonga Weir and 200 metres upstream
 - d. Lachlan River all waters upstream of Cowra Road Bridge
 - e. Murrumbidgee River all waters between the junction with Adelong Creek and the junction with Tarcutta Creek.
16. Hatcheries not accredited under the NSW HQAS or scientific research permit applications for broodstock collection will not be approved during the closed season for Murray Cod (September - November inclusive).
 17. Broodstock collection during weekends and all holidays (school, public or otherwise) on the western drainage shall not be approved during the Murray Cod closed season however may be approved for these times with local Fisheries Officer input on case by case basis.
 18. The use of gill nets is prohibited during the months of November to February in the waters of the Murray River from 200m immediately upstream of the Yarrawonga Weir downstream to Lock 7.
 19. Australian Bass may be taken during the months of May to August (inclusive) each year during the recreational fishing closed season as defined in Schedule 3, Clause 147 of the Fisheries Management (General) Regulation 2019.

Location limitations

20. There is a ban on the taking of broodstock in the Darling River from the Brewarrina Weir downstream to the Bourke Weir (Biosecurity closure due to the detection of Epizootic Ulcerative Syndrome (EUS)).
21. Fishing (use of any net, trap or unattended line) shall not be undertaken in within a 5km radius of major western drainage towns (those with Police Stations). However, collection of stranded fish from drying man-made structures (i.e. irrigation channels) may be allowed at the discretion of the local Fisheries Officer in conjunction with approval/agreement of the structure owner (i.e. irrigation company). The permit holder must contact the local Fisheries Officer and the structure owner to seek approval/permission.

General Conditions

22. Permit holders are required to complete a Broodstock Collection Permit Summary of Collection Activities report annually.
23. A broodstock collection permit will be issued for a maximum of three years.

Purchasing estuarine or marine broodstock from commercial fishers

24. A broodstock collection permit may authorise the purchase of estuarine or marine broodstock off licensed commercial fishers.
25. Aquaculture permit holders do not require a broodstock collection permit to purchase estuarine or marine broodstock from licensed commercial fishers providing the fisher is a registered fish receiver. Alternatively, an aquaculture permit holder can make an application to be a registered fish receiver to allow the purchase of broodstock. The number of broodstock purchased must be recorded as per standard aquaculture permit conditions.
26. Records must be maintained for any fish purchased from licensed commercial fishers as detailed in Division 5 Part 4 of the Act. Relevant catch records must also be completed and

submitted by the licensed commercial fisher and or fishing business owner as required under Sections 121 and 122 of the Act.

Cancelling a broodstock collection permit

27. A broodstock collection permit may be cancelled by the Program Leader Aquaculture for a breach of permit conditions or cancelled at any time.
28. A broodstock collection permit may be cancelled at the request of the permit holder.
29. There will be no refund of fees for a cancelled broodstock collection permits.

Release of redundant broodstock

30. Broodstock that have been used may be released back to waterways if the broodstock are:
 - a. wild stock not hatchery reared stock
 - b. returned to the waters from where they were taken from
 - c. that if tagged for identification, were tagged with an approved food safety tag (e.g. not a glass PIT tag)
 - d. only treated with chemicals approved by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority or by a veterinary authority and are disease and injury free.
 31. The local District Fisheries Officer must be advised 7 days prior to an intended release of broodstock to waterways.
 32. Broodstock not returned to the wild can be: used at another hatchery, released into a catch and release fishout, farm dam, aquarium display, or, with the exception of threatened species, humanely euthanised according to animal welfare guidelines.
 33. Broodstock collected under a broodstock collection permit may not be sold for human consumption. The NSW Food Authority does not recommend the consumption of broodstock treated with spawning inducing chemicals.
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Procedures:

1. A duly made broodstock collection permit application will be assessed by a relevant: Aquaculture Policy Officer, Fisheries Management Officer, Fisheries Compliance Officer and if required the Fisheries Threatened Species Group and/or a Marine Park Authority Officer for compliance with this policy and administrative processes.
 2. Permit conditions may apply to species collected, numbers, equipment used, locations and timing of collection, disinfection of equipment, quarantining of broodstock prior to release, reporting requirements, etc.
 3. For each broodstock collection permit the following collection summary details will be stored in a records management database: species and numbers collected; locations of collection areas; the dates of collection activities; interaction with target and non-target fish (deaths/injuries/removal of noxious species).
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Roles and responsibilities:

- Policy Officer Aquaculture: undertake procedures set out in this policy.
 - Fisheries Management Officer: undertake procedures set out in this policy.
 - Fisheries Compliance: undertake procedures set out in this policy.
 - Threatened Species Group - Fisheries Conservation: undertake procedures set out in this policy.
 - Marine Park Authority Officer (should the activity be undertaken in a Marine Park): undertake procedures set out in this policy.
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Delegations:

- Refer to relevant Delegation Manual.
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Definitions:

- **Broodstock:** the parent fish used for breeding purposes in a hatchery, aquaculture farm or research facility.
 - **Fish:** has the same meaning as in the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*.
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Legislation:

- *Fisheries Management Act 1994*
 - Fisheries Management (Aquaculture) Regulation 2024
 - Fisheries Management (General) Regulation 2019.
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Related Policies:

- Aquaculture Administration Miscellaneous Permit Administration - Broodstock Collection Permits
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Other related documents:

- NSW Hatchery Quality Assurance Scheme
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Revision History:

Version	Date issued	Notes	By
1.0	12/08/2011	Original policy developed.	Program Leader Aquaculture
1.1	05/09/2012	Replacement of references to 2007 Regulation with references to 2012 Regulation. Renumbered and formatted for consistency with other Aquaculture Policies.	Program Leader Aquaculture
1.2	03/10/2012	Amendment to setlines checking period following industry consultation (from 2 to 3 hours).	Program Leader Aquaculture
2.0	24/04/2018	New version as part of Policy review. Document updated to reflect the changes to Regulations and permit conditions.	Ryan Jefferson (Fisheries Management Officer Aquaculture) Program Leader Aquaculture
3.0	20/11/2020	Amendment to number and length of Murray Cod broodstock and reference to legal length of all broodstock per General Regulation 2010 (para 6 & 7).	Policy Officer Aquaculture
4.0	19/1/2022	Update DPI roles, text, contact details and remove reference to drying lakes policy	Policy Officer Aquaculture

5.0	13/11/2024	Routine revision and amended in accordance with changes to genetic regions/zones for Murray Cod and Golden Perch. Cond 14 of this policy added as per advice from Threatened Species Group (RDOC24/199429).	Policy Officer Aquaculture Program Leader Aquaculture
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