

## Aquaculture Broodstock Collection

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AUTHORISED BY: Director Fisheries and Aquaculture Management	AUTHORISED DATE: 20 November 2020
ISSUED BY: Fisheries and Aquaculture Management	EFFECTIVE DATE: 20 November 2020
CATEGORY: Operations and Industry	REVIEW DATE: 15 May 2023

### Policy Statement

NSW Department of Primary Industries - Fisheries (NSW DPI) 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 DPI 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 (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 Hatchery Quality Assurance Scheme currently has broodstock genetic regions for Murray Cod, Golden Perch and Australian Bass. Ten pairs of broodstock from each genetic zone 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 DPI 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 60 individual Murray Cod and/or Golden Perch broodfish from each genetic region may be collected during any consecutive three year period per permit holder. If there are extenuating circumstances (e.g. loss of broodstock) leading to a shortfall in broodstock numbers to meet the requirements of the Hatchery Quality Assurance Scheme, 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 be legal length as outlined in Part 2 of the Fisheries Management (General) Regulation 2019.
7. For Murray Cod, of the 60 fish taken per genetic zone, 40 may be legal length and 20 may be taken up to 110cm in length.
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 appropriate to the target species.
10. Setlines are to use non-offset circle hooks (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, electrofishers) 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 standard recreational fishing techniques in accordance with recreational fishing closures. 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.

#### *Seasonal limitations*

14. Inland freshwater broodstock collection activities for finfish will be approved during the Murray Cod closed season (September – November inclusive) for accredited Hatchery Quality Assurance Scheme 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.Hatcheries not accredited under the Hatchery Quality Assurance Scheme or scientific research permit applications for broodstock collection will not be approved during the closed season for Murray Cod (September - November inclusive).
15. Broodstock collection on weekends and holidays on the western drainage shall not be approved during the Murray Cod closed season and may be approved for these times with local Fisheries Officer input on case by case basis.

16. 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 Yarrowonga Weir downstream to Lock 7.
17. Australian Bass may be taken during the months of May to August (inclusive) each year during the recreational fishing closed season.

#### *Location limitations*

18. 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)).
19. 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).

#### *General Conditions*

20. Permit holders are required to report annually on their collection activities.
21. A broodstock collection permit will be issued for a maximum of three years.

#### *Purchasing estuarine or marine broodstock from commercial fishers*

22. A broodstock collection permit may authorise the purchase of estuarine or marine broodstock off licensed commercial fishers.
23. 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.
24. 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.

#### *Drying Lakes policy*

25. Aquaculture permit holders may also be eligible under the Drying Lakes policy to access broodstock that may perish if left in a drying ephemeral lake.

#### *Cancelling a broodstock collection permit*

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

#### *Release of redundant broodstock*

29. 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.

30. The local District Fisheries Officer must be advised 7 days prior to an intended release of broodstock to waterways.
31. Broodstock not returned to the wild can be: used at another hatchery where offspring are not destined for restocking waterways, released into a catch and release fishout, farm dam, aquarium display, or, humanely euthanised according to animal welfare guidelines.
32. Broodstock collected under a broodstock collection permit may not be on-sold for human consumption. The NSW Food Authority does not recommend the consumption of broodstock treated with spawning inducing chemicals.

## **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 the Fisheries Miscellaneous Permits 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).

## **Roles and responsibilities**

- Policy Officer Aquaculture: undertake procedures set out in this policy.
- Fisheries Management Officer: undertake procedures set out in this policy.
- Fisheries Conservation Officer - 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.

## **Delegations**

- See relevant delegation manual.

## **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*.

## **Legislation**

- *Fisheries Management Act 1994*
- Fisheries Management (Aquaculture) Regulation 2017
- Fisheries Management (General) Regulation 2019

## **Related policies**

- Aquaculture Administration Miscellaneous Permit Administration - Broodstock Collection Permits

## **Other related documents**

- NSW Hatchery Quality Assurance Scheme

## **Superseded documents**

This policy replaces:

- Aquaculture Broodstock Collection Policy – Version 1.2

## 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 2019 (para 6 & 7).	Policy Officer Aquaculture

## Contact

Program Leader Aquaculture  
(02) 4916 3856