

10 October 2022

# Proposed amendment to commercial fishing regulations

## Consultation Paper 19

### *Ocean Trap and Line fishery – Spanner Crab seasonal closure*

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#### Overview of activity

Spanner crabs are taken using spanner crab nets (or dillies) in the Ocean Trap and Line Fishery between Tweed Heads and Korogoro Point, near Hat Head. The quantity of Spanner Crab allowed to be taken is managed by quotas and the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for this species is reviewed annually. In Queensland, commercial catch of Spanner Crab is also managed by quota.

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#### Current arrangement

Seasonal spawning closures applies.

- Female Spanner Crab cannot be taken between 21 October and 20 January in the following year
- Male Spanner Crab cannot be taken between 21 November and 20 December

These arrangements help to build the Spanner Crab stock by protecting males and females when they are spawning.

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#### Proposed change

Pending consideration of longer-term seasonal arrangement for spawning Spanner Crab, change the male closure so that it only applies from 15 November to 14 December (inclusive).

This change is supported by the Commercial Fisheries NSW Advisory Council (CommFish) and the Spanner Crab Harvest Strategy Working Group.

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#### What is the problem being resolved?

The proposed change will address less than optimum profitability because fishers cannot access the high market prices that are available over the Christmas period.

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#### Outcomes

The proposed change would deliver the following outcomes and benefits:

- Improved access and profitability
  - Investment confidence
  - Equitable access to Christmas markets – recent changes in Queensland provide for Queensland fishers to access the Christmas market
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- No discernible impact on fisheries resources or the environment – annual review of the health of the stock and strong protection measures in relevant jurisdictions apply

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