

# **Fisheries (Commercial Trawl Fishery-Fin Fish) Quota Declaration 2015**

Explanatory Notes for SL 2015 No. 141

made under the

*Fisheries Act 1994*

## **General Outline**

### **Short title**

*Fisheries (Commercial Trawl Fishery-Fin Fish) Quota Declaration 2015*

### **Authorising law**

Section 44 of the *Fisheries Act 1994* (the Act)

### **Policy objectives and the reasons for them**

The commercial trawl fishery (fin fish) is managed by an annual quota to ensure the fishery remains commercially and ecologically sustainable.

The policy objective of the subordinate legislation is to provide for the declaration of the 2016 annual quota for taking prescribed whiting, goatfish and yellowtail scad in the fishery.

### **Achievement of policy objectives**

The subordinate legislation will achieve its objectives by declaring the annual quota for taking prescribed whiting at 1090 tonne and for goatfish and yellowtail scad at 100 tonne for each of the species. The declaration will be effective from 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2016.

The quota declared for prescribed whiting for 2016 represents a 60 tonne reduction compared to the quota for 2015. This is not because of declining stocks. Information collected from the monitoring of stout whiting is used to carry out annual assessments of the stout whiting stocks and these suggest the fishery is sustainable, the stock is marginally above the biomass required to support maximum sustainable yield and overall fish survival is trending upwards. Instead the intent of the reduction is to improve the commercial sustainability of the fishery. Catch rates over recent years have been static and slightly below long term averages and may be improved (and hence profitability may also be improved) in the long term by a reduction in total catch.

The quota declared from goatfish and yellowtail scad remains unchanged from the 2015 quota.

## **Consistency with policy objectives of authorising law**

The subordinate legislation is consistent with the main objects of the *Fisheries Act 1994*, which are to ensure the use, conservation and enhancement of the community's fisheries resources and fish habitats whilst applying and promoting the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

## **Inconsistency with policy objectives of other legislation**

The regulation is not inconsistent with the policy objectives of other legislation.

## **Alternative ways of achieving policy objectives**

The objectives of the subordinate legislation can only be achieved through legislation.

Maintaining the quotas at their 2015 levels would also ensure the fishery remains ecologically sustainable but is not as precautionary as the proposed approach and is not as likely to ensure the fishery remains commercially sustainable in the long term.

## **Benefits and costs of implementation**

The State Government will not incur any additional costs in the implementation of this subordinate legislation.

## **Consistency with fundamental legislative principles**

The subordinate legislation is not inconsistent with fundamental legislative principles.

## **Consultation**

Fisheries Queensland will notify all commercial fishers in the Commercial Trawl Fishery (Fin fish) of the commencement of the Declaration.

The Office of Best Practice Regulation (OBPR) of the Queensland Competition Authority was consulted. The OBPR advised that a Regulatory Impact Statement was not required as the proposed changes were excluded from the Regulatory Impact System on the basis that they are of a machinery nature.