

# Have your say

## Saucer scallop rebuilding and harvest strategy

The Queensland Government is seeking community feedback on proposed reforms to manage saucer scallop (*Ylistrum balloti*) in the east coast otter trawl fishery. These reforms aim to ensure the long-term sustainability of scallop stocks and meet Australian Government wildlife trade operation export approvals for the fishery, while balancing the needs of commercial fishers. Feedback received through this process will inform a 5-year saucer scallop rebuilding strategy and amendments to relevant trawl harvest strategies.

The fastest and easiest way to provide your feedback is to **complete the online survey** on our [engagement hub](#).

The survey questions are also available at the end of the discussion paper if you prefer to **print and post your submission** to:

Scallop fishery discussion paper  
Department of Primary Industries  
GPO Box 46  
Brisbane Qld 4001

**Submissions close 5 pm, Wednesday 8 October 2025.**

**NOTE:** The survey questions are designed to seek your input – they are not a voting tool. Your feedback will be used to help develop options for fisheries management action and provide an insight into the preferences of all stakeholders.

## Background

The east coast otter trawl fishery targets a variety of species, with saucer scallops an historical key target species. However, challenges such as fluctuating scallop populations, inconsistent recruitment and overharvesting have led to unsustainable biomass levels in the major area of the fishery – the southern inshore region.

Current information on the sustainability of saucer scallop stocks:

- Southern stock (southern inshore and southern offshore regions) – The most recent stock assessment (2023) estimated biomass at 15% of unfished levels, below the limit reference point of 20%.
- Northern stock (central region) – A separate stock recently identified by a genetic study following industry feedback (biomass and harvest potential to be determined).

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## Future fishery informed by best available science

Future management of the fishery will be informed by a fishery-independent scallop survey scheduled for October 2025 (pending permit approval). To be co-delivered with industry, the survey will assess scallop densities across 420+ sampling sites, including the southern inshore, southern offshore and central regions.

This data will be used to obtain evidence of the status of the stock. The data collected from the survey will be used to determine whether the southern inshore trawl region's biomass is no longer depleted and exceeds 20% of unfished biomass with high confidence. In addition to this evidence, the data will also inform setting of regional competitive total allowable commercial catch (TACC) limits in a precautionary and adaptive harvesting framework proposed to be applied across all regions.

The target harvest rate for the TACC limits is proposed to be set at 21% of available biomass for the available fishery areas (based on previous studies), noting arrangements for current and new scallop replenishment areas and marine park zoning will not change. This will be updated with future, well-informed stock assessments.

## Proposed management framework

To ensure ongoing sustainability, it is proposed that harvesting of saucer scallops runs from midday 1 March until midday 1 May for all regions, and include reporting of landed product towards regional competitive TACC limits. To support these TACC limits, it is proposed to limit fishing for saucer scallop to one management region per trip and to close scallop shucking areas to ensure scallop are landed whole. We are also seeking feedback on:

- the ability for commercial fishers to electronically report catch under a competitive TACC
- if trip-limits are preferred by industry and, to guide the development of these limits, the length of time an operator currently spends in each region on each trip.

The following 3 options are proposed for each management region:

**Option 1:** Regional TACC limits only

**Option 2:** Regional trip limits and regional TACC limits

**Option 3:** Same trip limit across all regions and regional TACC limits

## Proposed reforms to harvest strategies

Minor amendments to the central, southern inshore and southern offshore A and B trawl fishery harvest strategies will link scallop management decisions to the rebuilding strategy exclusively, ensuring sustainability objectives are prioritised.

## Next steps

Feedback received during this consultation will inform a 5-year saucer scallop rebuilding strategy and amendments to the relevant trawl harvest strategies. The implementation of new management arrangements is expected to commence March 2026.

## Proposed decision tree (following outcomes of October 2025 scallop survey)

