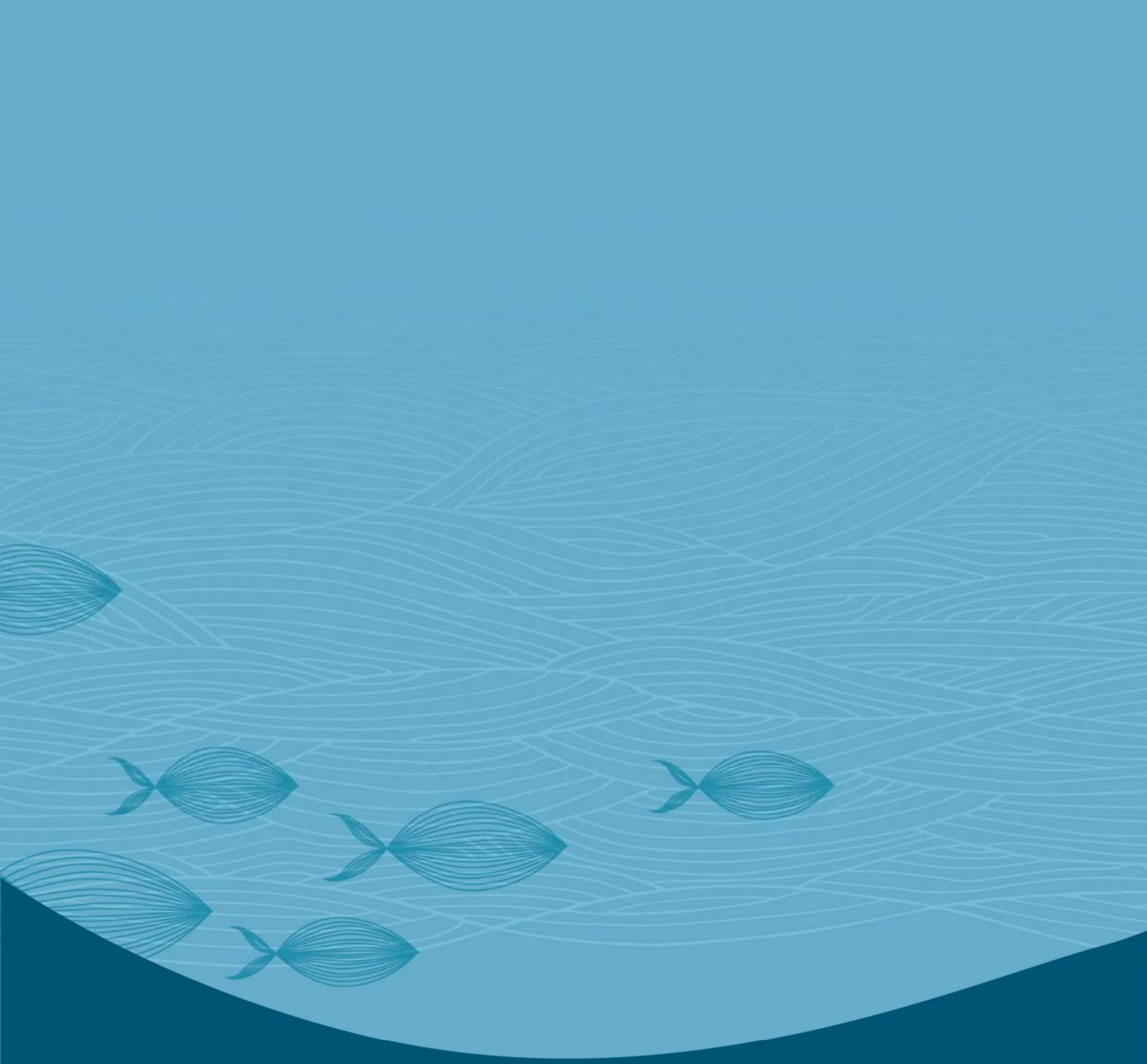

Saucer scallop

Consultation on rebuilding and fishery management reforms

Consultation report

Queensland Government

This publication has been compiled by Fisheries Queensland.

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries proudly acknowledges all First Nations peoples (Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders) and the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the country on which we live and work. We acknowledge their continuing connection to land, waters and culture and commit to ongoing reconciliation. We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Contents

Summary

Fisheries Queensland recently consulted on potential management options to improve on and ensure the long-term sustainability of Ballot's saucer scallop *(Ylistrum balloti)* and maintain the wildlife trade operation export approval for the East Coast Otter Trawl Fishery under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Public consultation on a range of topics to help inform future saucer scallop harvest occurred from 3 September 2025 to 8 October 2025. This consultation was facilitated through the release of the *Saucer scallop rebuilding and harvest strategy discussion paper* which established the science and identified the issues relevant to the future management of scallops in this fishery.

In total, 36 submissions were received, of which 31 were responses to the online survey and 5 were written submissions. Survey respondents included commercial fishers, recreational fishers, seafood wholesalers/marketers and processors, industry peak body and the conservation sector.

The feedback from the consultation paper will assist the Queensland Government in the decision-making process regarding a future scallop fishery.

Feedback was sought on the following overarching topics:

Short-term (5-year) fishery objectives

The strategic objectives of the fishery to inform the development of the rebuilding strategy and a potential adaptive management framework. Focusing particular on the southern inshore trawl harvest strategy, the key short-term objectives proposed were to:

- protect the biomass of saucer scallops by ensuring spawning biomass is maintained above the limit reference point of 20% and increases towards the interim target reference point of 40% within 5 years
- enable some harvest of saucer scallops to support industry using the best available science.

Most responses from all sectors supported the proposed short term fishery objectives for saucer scallops and emphasised that a carefully managed reopening was considered essential for collecting fishery-dependent data to assess stock condition. In addition, feedback received highlighted that the reference limit point of 20% of unfished biomass to closing the fishery is essential for stock viability, as well as that scallop harvesting is an important economic stimulus for commercial fishers and the wholesale and processing sector to support the Queensland Government's *Primary Industries Prosper 2050* goals.

Objectives underpinning a future saucer scallop fishery

Within this topic, the proposed management options consulted on were canvassed as being projected to improve the sustainability of saucer scallops, while allowing small and sustainable harvest to support regional businesses. Discrete feedback encouraged the re-opening of the saucer scallop fishery, must be informed by the best available science and supported management options that could control harvest through reportable total allowable commercial catch (TACC) limits.

Respondents, particularly industry, provided the following overwhelming support for the short-term objective of enabling some scallop harvest as industry wants to demonstrate its commitment to a good, responsible fishing future where catch levels are sustainable, management frameworks are adaptive, and operators are prepared to under-harvest in the short term if it supports rebuilding and ensures long-term viability.

Limiting the take and landing saucer scallop to one region per trip

Addressing this topic was a proposal to support the accurate reporting of saucer scallop and reduce compliance and sustainability risk to the fishery. It was proposed that the regional TACC limits would require all T1 fishers to operate in only one region per trip when taking saucer scallop, noting that fishers will be permitted to transit through another region and T2 operators can only take scallop in southern offshore trawl region B.

All respondents overall did not agree with this proposal stating current operations require flexibility within the fishery to access multiple regions per trip based on target species availability and weather conditions. There was however a 50/50 split of support from industry for being limited to one region per trip when taking saucer scallop to support regional stock sustainability and compliance activities.

Closure of shucking areas

Under the proposed identified new framework for harvesting and reporting saucer scallops, one of the topics covered a proposal to close scallop shucking areas to reduce the risk to quota integrity.

Overall, feedback highlighted that some operators have historically built businesses and markets around the shucking of scallop at sea to maximise profitability per trip. In general, there was less support for closing shucking areas with majority of respondents not supporting the proposal. Some industry respondents were also willing to provide information to assist the department with establishing form requirements, catch disposal procedures and form conversion factors to support the compliance and enable some business diversification opportunities.

Amending the harvest strategies

Another topic highlighted the opportunity to consider amendments to the harvest strategy if necessary. The discussion paper proposed potential amendments would refer any decision rule around saucer scallop to a rebuilding strategy in the appendices in the following harvest strategies to manage saucer scallop separately:

- *Trawl fishery (central) harvest strategy: 2021–2026*
- *Trawl fishery (inshore) harvest strategy: 2021–2026*
- *Trawl fishery (southern offshore A and B regions) harvest strategy: 2021–2026*

The majority of respondents supported the proposal to amend all trawl harvest strategies to reflect future management options. Support from stakeholders had a concurrent theme that amendments are only made with good data and science.

Reporting options supporting a saucer scallop TACC

Under current reporting arrangements, T1 and T2 fishers are required to complete and submit a catch and effort logbook. With the proposal to reopen parts of the saucer scallop fishery under a TACC, T1 and T2 fishers targeting this species will also need to undertake quota reporting. In Queensland, fishers currently have two quota reporting options – electronically via the Qld eFisher app or through the Automated Interactive Voice Response (AIVR) system for quota species.

The feedback provided by respondents from all sectors showed majority agreement (support and strongly support) for electronic reporting as well as indications that industry mostly have internet connectivity while at-sea and for those who don't have reliable connectivity, have stated to not have as it is a luxury for operating currently.

Options to manage a limited sustainable harvest of saucer scallop regionally

The proposed management options in the discussion paper referred to managing scallop harvest in each of the three trawl regions separately under precautionary harvest setting arrangements:

Option 1: Regional TACC limits
Option 2: Regional trip limits and regional TACC limits
Option 3: Same trip limit and regional TACC limits

Within this topic, questions were separated by region and if the southern inshore region could and could not open due to low abundance from the 2025 saucer scallop survey. Regarding if southern inshore could not open, stakeholders were asked which option they supported to take saucer scallop under precautionary harvest arrangements in the central and southern offshore regions from 1 March 2026.

Most respondents in both regions within the survey indicated a support for regional TACC limits only, with less support for regional or same trip limits to not reduce

efficiency of operators. Some written submissions were received which highlighted the preference for trip limits to promote the greatest stock recovery and obtain a higher value at market for each scallop.

If southern inshore region can open, stakeholders were asked which option of the three they support for the respective trawl regions, with all regions showing majority support for regional TACC limits only citing efficiency again. In addition, feedback was received that trip limits within a TACC would mean saucer scallop is considered an incidental bycatch alongside the main sustainable target species of prawns and bugs and that this is the most precautionary approach, allowing limited harvest while prioritising the recovery of the depleted stock.

Ultimately, unanimous support highlighted an importance to ensure regional management reflects actual needs. For instance, despite being the same genetic stock, it was mostly recommended that scallop harvest within southern offshore and southern inshore region should be managed differently.

Background

The East Coast Otter Trawl Fishery (ECOTF) targets a variety of species, with saucer scallop (*Ylistrum balloti*) an historical key target species which had peak contributions to the value of the fishery of around $30 million in 1993.

Current management arrangements for the fishery require access through a total allowable effort unit system (effort units), which allows operators in this multi-species fishery to target a variety of principal and permitted species and employ different fishing business models based on target species abundance, seasonality and availability. While increased flexibility is important for this multi-species fishery, relying solely on effort units has proven difficult in managing the number of trawlers fishing for scallops historically.

There have been long held concerns regarding the sustainability of the stock after periods of high harvest in the 1990s and difficulty in maintaining harvest and supply in subsequent years. With documented declines in the consistency of access to stock through commercial logbook reporting and corroborated with stock assessments, the Australian and Queensland Governments have enacted numerous changes to management and zoning arrangements to address these concerns over the last three decades.

The current information on the status of the sustainability of saucer scallop stocks is summarised as:

- 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 genetic stock recently identified through a population structure study published in 2024 with unknown biomass.

Acknowledging the difficulty of sustainable management of the stock with previous management arrangements for the fishery, it has been identified that saucer scallops are suitable for management under a total allowable catch system (within the effort unit system) and with a minimum legal-size limit.

Consultation process

Leading into the development of the discussion paper, initial advice was received during two scallop fishery workshops (held on 7 May and 10 July 2025) and multiple industry-developed proposals provided to Fisheries Queensland. The discussion paper and online survey was released on the DPI engagement hub website on 8 September 2025 and concluded on 8 October 2025. Fishers were notified about the discussion paper and online eHub page in the following ways.

- Trawl fishery working group and trawl region harvest strategy workshop members were notified directly via email.
- All T1 and T2 primary commercial fishers licence holders were notified directly via email.

Survey questions were primarily presented as multiple-choice. An opportunity was provided at the end of each question to add comments and suggest practical alternatives and viewpoints. Written submissions were also received from commercial fishers, peak industry bodies and a representative body of the conservation sector and would be considered alongside the multiple-choice survey responses.

Consultation results and analysis

Respondents

In total, 36 submissions were received between 31 survey responses and 5 written responses. Survey responses and written submissions were received from a variety of stakeholders including commercial fishers, recreational stakeholders, seafood wholesaler/marketers, conservation sector, seafood industry peak body and a regional local council government (Table 1). Many respondents had multiple interests in the fishery and have identified themselves as aligning with more than one stakeholder group.

Table 1: Breakdown of submissions

Stakeholder group	Number of submissions	Percentage of respondents
Commercial fisher	25	69%

Recreational fisher	6	17%
Seafood wholesaler/marketer	3	8%
Industry peak body	1	3%
Environmental, industry peak body or other non-governmental organisation	1	3%
Other (local government)	1	3%
Total	**36**	

Respondents which identified themselves as either a commercial fisher, seafood marketer/wholesaler or peak industry body have been categorised throughout this document as 'industry'. Respondents without nominating these stakeholder groups have been categorised as 'non-industry'.

Short-term (5-year) fishery objectives

Stakeholders were asked if they agreed with the proposed short-term fishery objective of protecting the biomass of saucer scallops by ensuring spawning biomass is maintained above the limit reference point of 20% and increases towards the interim target reference point of 40% within 5 years.

Most responses from all sectors (45%) supported the proposed short term fishery objective for saucer scallops, 39% disagreed with the proposal and 16% neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal. The breakdown of survey responses by industry indicated a 52% agreement with the proposal, 14% disagreement and 34% for neither agreeing nor disagreeing. Non-industry responses indicated an even split of 43% agreement, 14% disagreement and 43% neither agreeing nor disagreeing (Figure 1).

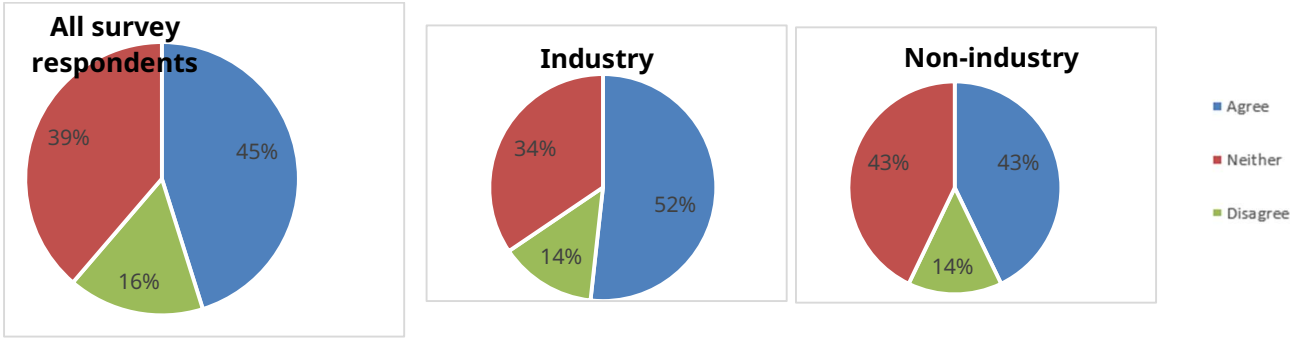

Figure 1: All stakeholders pooled responses to proposed short-term fishery objective survey question, as well as responses to the question separated by industry and non-industry respondents.

Written feedback from stakeholders which supported the proposed short-term objectives for the saucer scallop fishery noted that a carefully managed reopening is essential for collecting fishery-dependent data to assess stock condition. In addition, feedback received highlighted that the reference limit point of 20% of spawning

biomass to closing the fishery is essential for stock viability, as well as that scallop harvesting is an important economic stimulus for commercial fishers and the wholesale and processing sector to support the Queensland Government's Prosper 2050 goals.

Some stakeholders felt the proposal to increase towards the target reference point of 40% was unattainable identifying lack of knowledge and uncertainty around the current modelling and stock assessment process, the benefit of closed areas and the influence of climate change to stock sustainability.

Stakeholders who neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal provided commentary that reopening of southern inshore must be paired with a data-first approach and be used to collect and analyse robust information on scallop stocks, laying the foundation for evidence-based management and ensuring that future decisions are built on fact rather than assumption.

Enabling harvest of saucer scallops

Stakeholders were asked if they agree with the proposed short-term fishery objective of enabling some harvest of scallops to support industry using the best available science.

The majority of respondents (78%) from of all sectors agreed with this proposal, while 22% voiced their disagreement. Responses from industry indicated that 90% agreed with proposal and 10% disagreed. Responses broken down by non-industry showed 29% agreement and 71% disagreement (Figure 2).

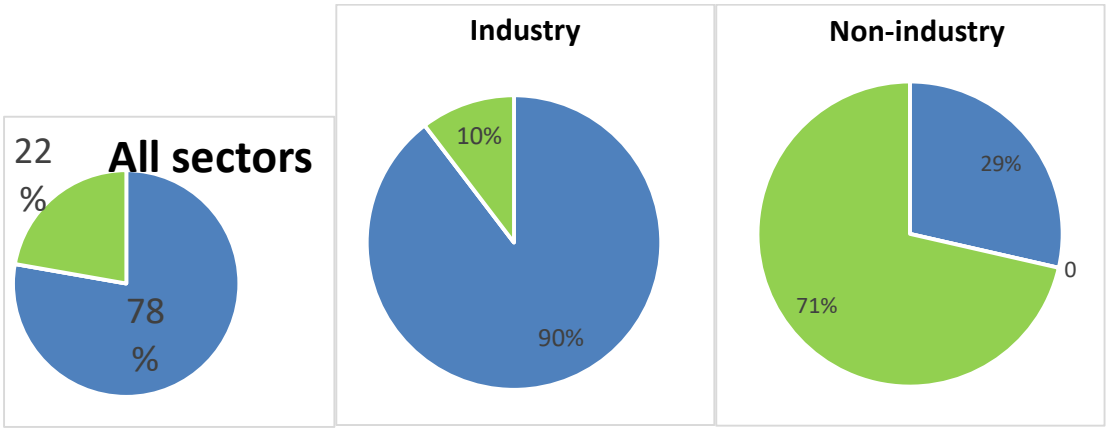

Figure 2: All stakeholders pooled responses to enabling harvest of saucer scallops survey question, as well as responses to the question separated by industry and non-industry respondents.

Stakeholders voiced overwhelming support for the short-term objective of enabling some scallop harvest as industry wants to demonstrate its commitment to a "good, responsible fishing future" where catch levels are sustainable, management frameworks are adaptive, and operators are prepared to under-harvest in the short

term if it supports rebuilding and ensures long-term viability. Additional commentary was provided that the need to rebuild slowly without excess stock flooding limited markets during the rebuilding phase is preferable and further research into the two stocks should be considered given the depleted nature and new genetic knowledge of the fishery.

Stakeholders provided reasons why they did not support the proposal which included that stock assessments have not been conducted in the central or northern region of the fishery and the belief the scallop species spawning pattern is unknown. Some feedback highlighted that the scallop stock is a public resource and should not be put at risk of localised depletion just to allow a very small minority of the population to monetarily prosper. Overall, all submissions which did not support the proposal highlighted that sustainability must come first to protect the fishery and industry's long-term future.

Fishers limited to take saucer scallop from one management region per trip

To ensure regional stock sustainability, feedback was sought for operators to be limited to take saucer scallop from one management region per trip. The rationale for this proposal was to support the accurate reporting of scallop by region and reduce the compliance and sustainability risk to the fishery.

Respondents view overall did not agree with this proposal, and there was a 50/50 split of support from industry for being limited to one region per trip when taking saucer scallop. For non-industry respondents, 33% agreed and 67% disagreed with the proposal (Figure 3).

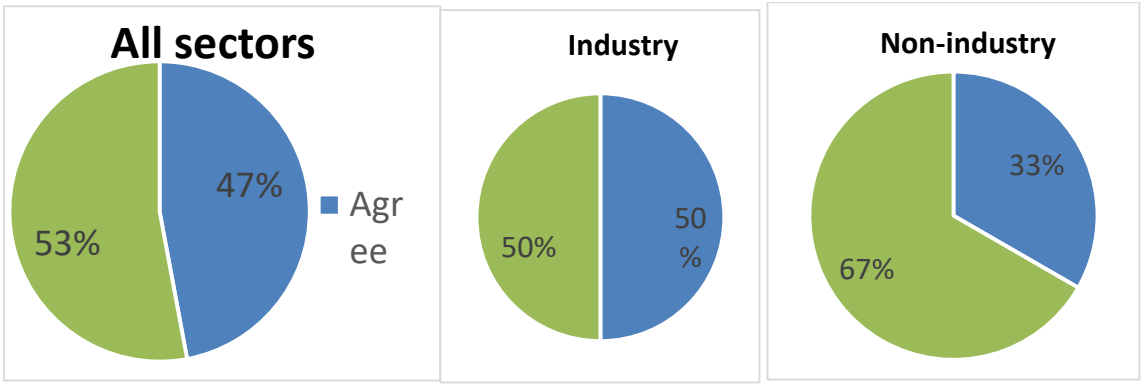

Figure 3: All stakeholders pooled responses to limiting the take of saucer scallops to one management region per trip, as well as responses to the question separated by industry and non-industry respondents.

Regarding disagreement of the proposal, it was noted that fishers would like to reduce the discarding of scallops trawled as a by-product when targeting primary species, particularly when fishing across multiple management regions. Industry feedback also believed being limited to take saucer scallop from one management region per trip

may have impacts to the viability of operating when faced with factors such as weather conditions and high operating costs.

Some stakeholders supported the proposal stating that limiting operators to a single region strengthens compliance and reporting integrity and helps reduce the risk of falsifying harvest if an operator fishes across multiple regions, which may jeopardise the precautionary management needed to rebuild depleted stocks.

Closure of shucking areas

The discussion paper sought feedback on the closure of shucking areas under the proposed precautionary harvest arrangements. Overall, there was not a majority support for closing shucking areas with 54% of respondents not supporting the proposal. Industry respondents did not support the closing of shucking areas at 59% due to business diversification opportunities. Non-industry respondents supported the closing of shucking areas with 67% support and a strong desire to maintain the integrity of any proposed quota system for the scallop fishery (Figure 4).

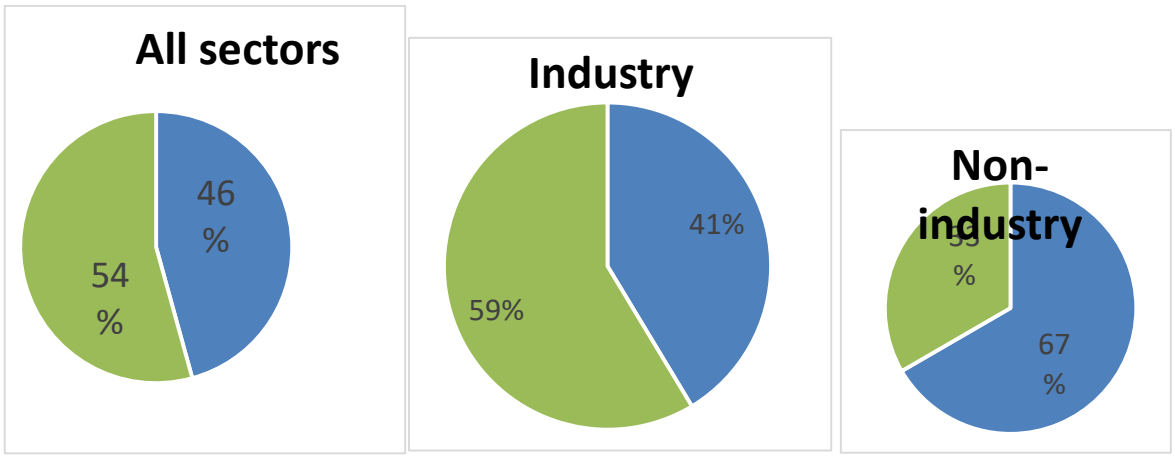

Figure 4: All stakeholders pooled responses on the proposal to close scallop shucking areas, as well as responses to the question separated by industry and non-industry respondents.

Stakeholders provided a few reasons why they did not support the proposal including that cultural change since the pandemic has resulted in smaller operators diversifying their markets by selling scallops (from southern offshore) straight to consumers. There was concern that closing shucking areas effected smaller operators more and an opportunity exists to process half shell saucer scallop at sea to get a premium price.

Some commentary was provided that any future quota reporting of scallops may pose equal or greater risks to quota integrity and that the need for balanced regulatory approaches needs to be prioritised.

Stakeholders provided several comments in support of the proposal including that allowing shucking at sea poses significant risks to accurate quota monitoring and enforcement and maintaining quota integrity is critical to both sustainability and

industry confidence until sufficient information is collected to support stronger long-term management decisions while protecting the credibility of the fishery.

Amending the three trawl region harvest strategies

Overall, there was strong support for amending the three trawl region harvest strategies to reflect identified future management for saucer scallops in the rebuilding strategy with a range of 71-77% of all respondents agreeing to each of the regional proposals, and industry averaging around 79% support and non-industry showing 50% support (Figure 5).

Figure 5: All stakeholders pooled responses for amending each of the three trawl region harvest strategies, as well as responses to the questions separated by industry and non-industry respondents.

Most respondents supported the proposal to amend all trawl harvest strategies to reflect future management options. Support from all stakeholders had a concurrent theme that amendments are only made supported by good data and science.

Some of the reasons for support of amendment of the harvest strategies included that the reopening of the southern inshore scallop fishery must be highly precautionary, particularly if biomass is estimated at 20-30%, as targeted fishing pressure could risk the fishery becoming depleted again and the harvest strategy does not account adequately with current decision rules setting.

Respondents in support believed any future management arrangements should aim to correct past strategy flaws and establish an evidence-based, adaptive, and sustainable management framework to ensure scallop stock recovery and the long-term future of the industry. Feedback was also received that supported the central, southern inshore and southern offshore strategies to be updated to incorporate the revised stock structure and future precautionary management approach.

Stakeholders of the 23% respondents provided several reasons why they did not support the proposal including that premature management adjustments risk undermining rebuilding efforts, highlighting the need for a cautious, evidence-based approach to protect both stock and industry.

Respondents felt that amendments should not allow take below the 20% limit reference point and that the northern stock (from central region) should be acknowledged as being separate, particularly in stock assessment biomass calculations and future management arrangements.

Electronic reporting

To enable reporting under a competitive total allowable commercial catch system, feedback was sought regarding the level of support for electronic reporting when taking and landing saucer scallop. Respondents were asked their level of support for electronic reporting of saucer scallop ranging from strongly support, support, neither and strongly unsupport proposal around reporting electronically. The feedback provided by respondents from all sectors showed 65% agreement (support and strongly support) for electronic reporting. Only 12% of survey respondents from all sectors did not support electronic reporting (unsupport and strongly unsupport) (Figure 6).

Broken down by industry survey respondents, there was 40% agreement and 36% disagreement for electronic reporting. There were higher levels of agreement from non-industry with 83% of respondents either supporting or strongly supporting electronic reporting.

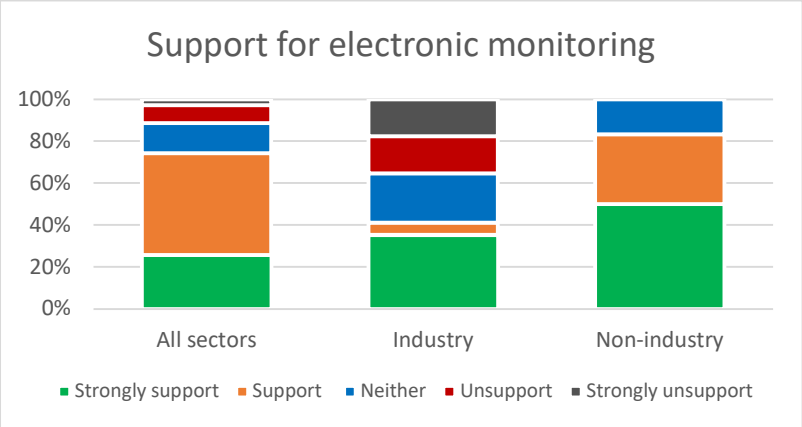

Figure 6: All stakeholders pooled responses for supporting electronic reporting of saucer scallop, as well as responses to the questions separated by industry and non-industry respondents.

Stakeholders who showed support for electronic reporting and provided additional information felt that it would help to manage the fishery better with improved accuracy and accountability and assist faster fishery management and industry decision making. Some respondents felt that accurate and mandatory reporting systems are essential for the reopening and regardless of the mechanism, the system must deliver reliable and timely data to support both scientific research and compliance. In addition, feedback was provided that enabling regional harvest levels to be monitored in real time ensures that fishers stay within their allocated catch limits if mandatory reporting was implemented.

Stakeholders who were not in favour of electronic reporting stated a strong opposition to the phasing out of paper logbook reporting, and advocated for both paper and digital options to be accepted to ensure flexibility for operators particularly during busy periods.

Connectivity at sea

To ensure compliance with, and be informed electronically of, the status of proposed regional total allowable commercial catch limits, industry was asked whether they currently have internet connectivity at sea.

The majority (74%) of industry-based respondents indicated they had internet connectivity at sea. Around 26% of industry-based respondents indicated they do not have reliable internet connectivity at sea and stated it was expensive and a luxury for operating currently.

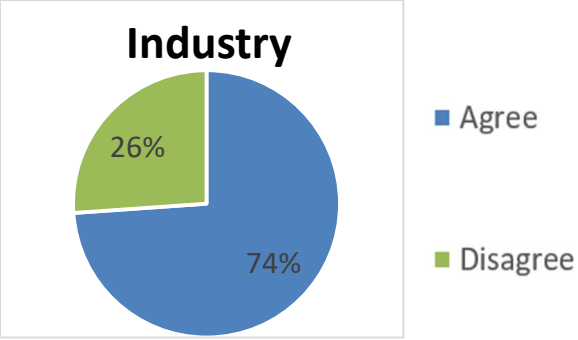

Figure 7: Industry's response to currently having internet connectivity at sea, noting non-industry's responses are not included due to relevance of the question.

Fishing trip duration per region

To determine any potential future regional trip limits, industry was asked for the average number of days for a fishing trip in each region currently. This question was misinterpreted by many respondents who provided the total number of days fished

per region per year, rather than the average amount of days a trip would consist of per region.

Responses to the question based on the number of fishing days provided in the survey were pooled to represent regional effort of interest for survey respondents (Figure 8). Respondents who fished southern inshore represented the majority of effort days provided (38%), with central (35%) closely following and southern offshore the least represented (27%).

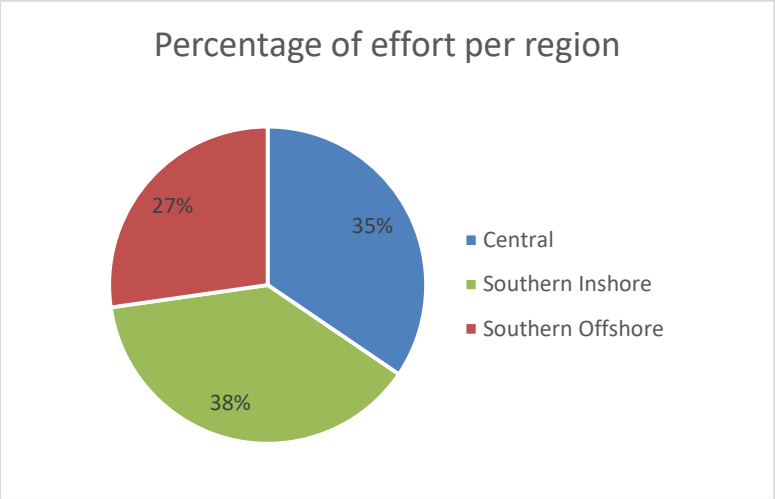

Figure 8: Industry's response to survey question scaled up to represent regional effort, noting non-industry's responses are not included.

As a result of the misinterpretation, the Department will consider advice from industry to represent potential trip limit setting arrangements if appropriate, as opposed to one guided by feedback from this survey.

If southern inshore cannot open, central and southern offshore region precautionary measures

If the southern inshore trawl region cannot open due to low abundance, stakeholders were asked which option they supported to take saucer scallop under proposed precautionary harvest arrangements in the central and southern offshore regions from 1 March 2026.

For central region, the all-sector response to this question indicated that 66% of all respondents supported regional TACC limits only while 34% were in favour of regional trip limits and regional TACC limits. For southern offshore, the responses were 73% and 27% respectively. Focusing specifically on interest groups, industry had more preference to regional TACCs (69% support in central and 78% for southern offshore) while non-industry were 50/50 split on support for either option.

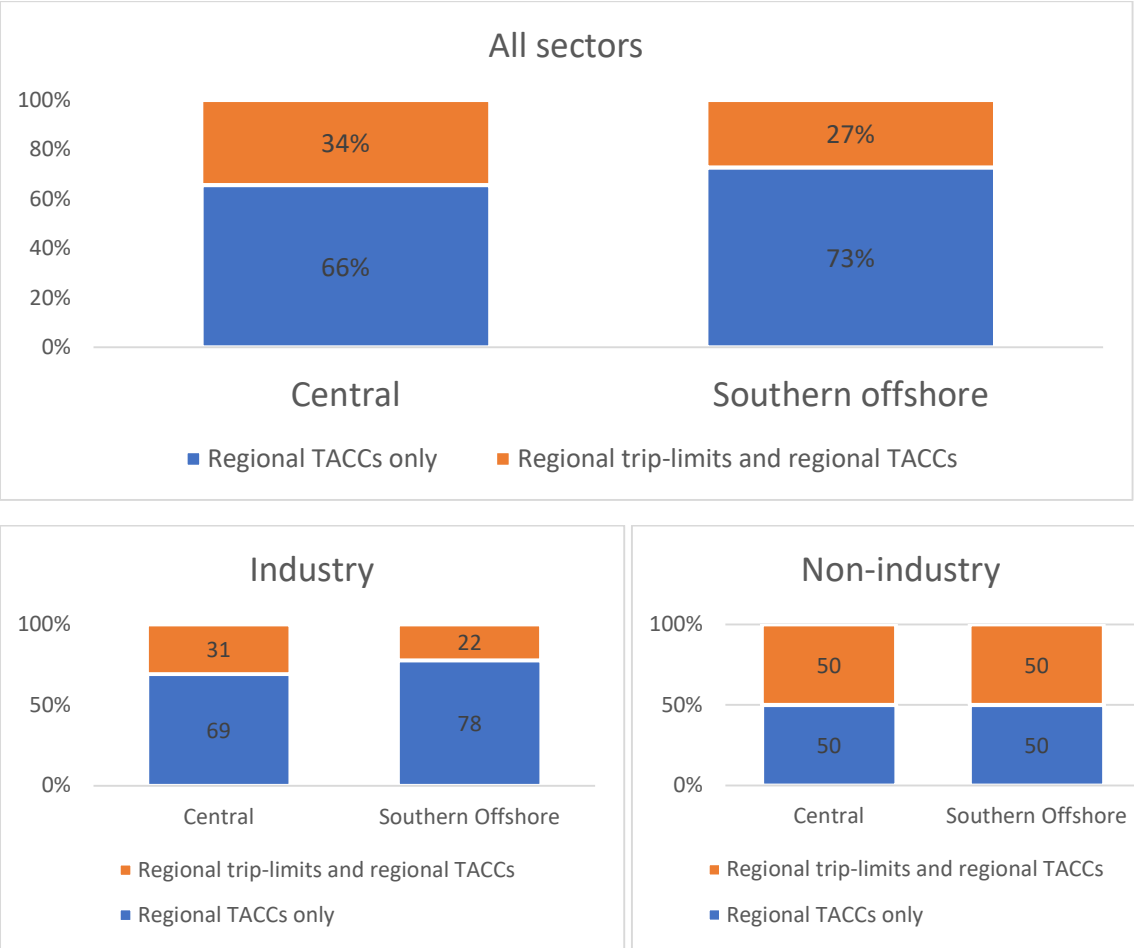

Figure 9: All stakeholders pooled responses for a management option by region if southern inshore region cannot open, as well as responses to the questions separated by industry and non-industry respondents.

Stakeholders provided several reasons for support of regional TACC limits only, mostly citing that trip limits restrict the efficiency of operators and that a TACC is considered precautionary-enough for regulating saucer scallop take as it limits harvest totally which will assist the recovery of the depleted stock.

Respondents who supported regional trip limits and regional TACC limits gave the following commentary that this combined approach would address issues such as short, competitive seasons that have historically favoured larger vessels and created a race to fish which might jeopardize scallop beds and operator safety.

It was commented that trip limits within a TACC would mean saucer scallop is considered an incidental bycatch alongside the main sustainable target species of prawns and bugs and that this supports a precautionary approach, allowing limited harvest while prioritising the recovery of depleted and uncertain stocks.

If southern inshore can reopen, management options for each trawl region

If southern inshore region can open due to evidence of a recovery, stakeholders were asked which option they supported for each respective trawl region, with the three options as:

- Regional TACC limits only,
- Regional trip limits and regional TACC limits, or
- Same trip limit and regional TACC limits.

The all-sector response to this question indicated that 73% of respondents supported regional TACC limits only while 27% were in favour of regional trip limits and regional TACC limits.

The industry-only response to this question indicated that 74% of respondents supported regional TACC limits only while 22% were in favour of regional trip limits and regional TACC limits and 4% supported regional TACC limits and same trip limits (Figure 24). Non-industry stakeholders showed 60% support of regional TACC limits only, and an even 20% each for the other two options (Figure 10).

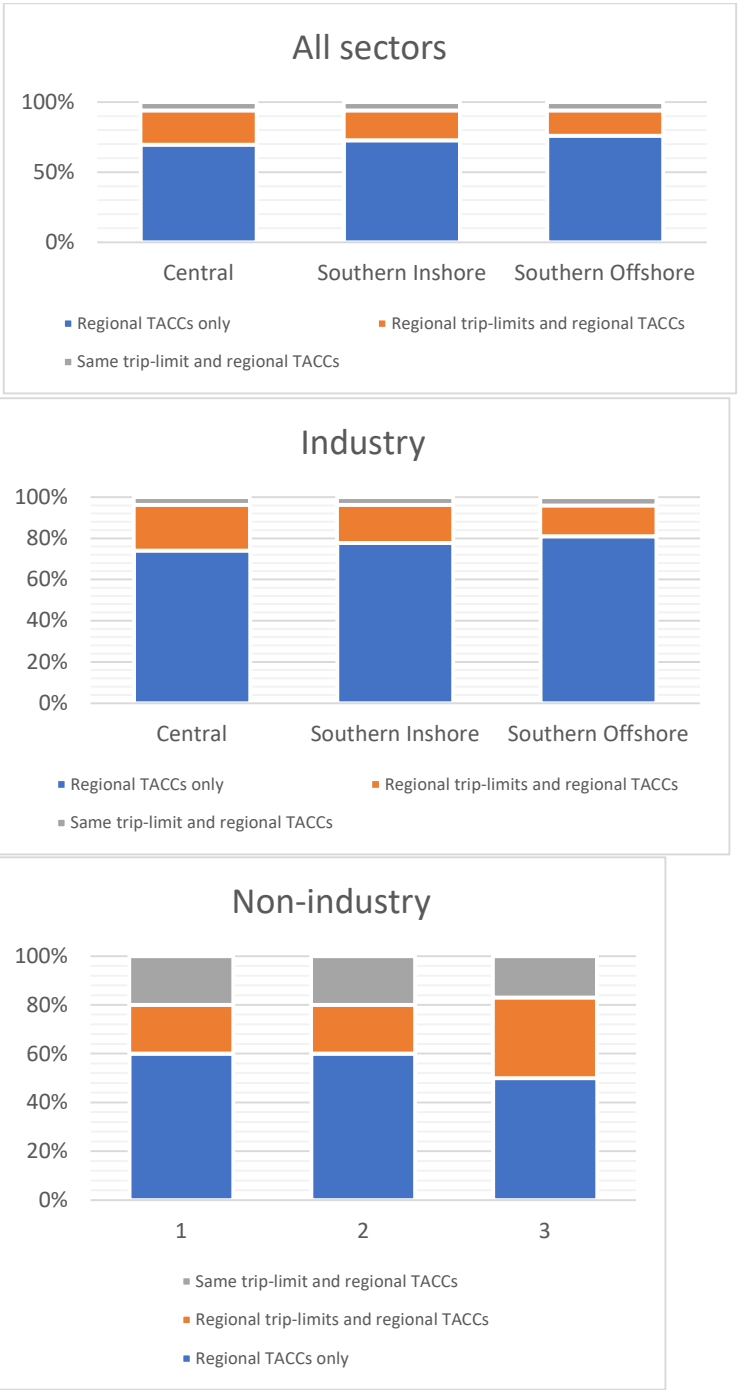

Figure 10: All stakeholders pooled responses for a management option by region if southern inshore region can open, as well as responses to the questions separated by industry and non-industry respondents.

Stakeholders provided several reasons for support of regional TACC limits only if southern inshore can open citing the preferred option within a short fishing window allows scallops to be harvested from beds optimally and efficiently. They also highlighted the importance to ensure regional management reflects actual needs of the fishery. For instance, despite being the same genetic stock, southern offshore and

southern inshore scallops should be managed differently, with separate TACCs proposed in this consultation aligning with how the areas are fished.

Stakeholders supporting regional trip limits and regional TACCs believed this approach would prevent overfishing and support the greatest stock rebuilding scenario. They felt without trip limits, the fishery risks pulse fishing caused by a race to fish, which could lead to overshooting the TACC, poor fishing practices, and inequity of access by the fleet, as larger vessels may dominate viable areas due to weather conditions.

Respondents support for the option of all regions having the same trip limits and regional TACC limits was in the minority. These respondents provided reasons stating operators should not be allowed to deplete one area and then move on to exhaust another and equal trip limits across the sector would take away the incentive to race and allow scallop could become a bycatch of the main catch for all regions.

Some additional feedback highlighted the volatility of scallop stocks and their history of overfishing, stating that future management should consider treating scallops as a secondary or by-product species within the trawl fishery to reduce fishing intensity and create a more resilient and sustainable fishery.

Other issues raised

Respondents to the saucer scallop discussion paper raised several concerns through written submissions that was not directly related to the proposals, however, was important enough for them to be captured as productive feedback to the consultation for consideration. These concerns are summarised in the Table 2 below:

Issues	Feedback from stakeholders
Splitting future proposed central region TACC.	Respondents expressed a desire within the central trawl region that Townsville and Hydrographers Passage should be managed separately under any future proposed TACCs and they should have separate management arrangements as: • most scallop from central region comes from Hydrographers Passage, having a single TACC for central region could lead to overexploitation of the Townsville strata. • Hydrographers Passage should be separated from Townsville and recognised as a distinct target fishery with its own TACC, given it is a dedicated steam-out scallop ground.
Opening of scallop replenishment areas (SRA's).	Respondents raised concerns over the ongoing viability of locking up SRA's as: • SRA's were intended to enhance the fishery, but they have not served their purpose given the current state of the scallop numbers. • no observed increase in scallop numbers in recent years, indicating an environmental shift could be affecting recruitment or something not related to fishing (as fishing has been closed).
Transitioning the fishery to individual transferable quota (ITQ).	Several respondents provided feedback to consider other options to manage the fishery and develop an ITQ system through: • exploring how effort units or similar mechanisms could be linked to scallop access may help distribute fishing pressure more evenly across the season and promote equity between operators. • support for saucer scallop ITQ to be linked to effort unit holdings as historical allocation is not possible.

The proposed 1st of March – 1st of May season	Some feedback was received on the proposed season length of 1 March to 1 May as: • there are concerns that a compressed season could drive intense effort and favour larger, all-weather vessels. • spreading effort over a longer season improves economic outcomes and provides more flexibility to respond to environmental conditions while controlling pulse fishing. • there is a need for additional research to ensure future season timings are further supported by biological evidence, particularly around spawning activity and meat quality, ensuring that harvest periods align with both sustainability and optimum product value
Stock assessment methods	Respondents raised concerns about past stock assessments for estimating biomass of saucer scallop with particular reference to: • past stock assessment modelling having likely underestimated scallop vulnerability and poorly understood complex recruitment dynamics. • future management must be underpinned by transparent and responsive science that can adapt as new data becomes available.

Table 2: Summary of other feedback and comments from respondents to the saucer scallop discussion paper.

Next steps

Feedback received during this consultation process will inform the setting of new management arrangements for the fishery and the publication of a saucer scallop rebuilding strategy. The implementation of new management arrangements is expected to commence in March 2026 and will be informed by the best available science.