

A decorative illustration of several stylized fish swimming in water, rendered in light blue lines against a darker blue background. The fish are scattered across the upper half of the page, with some larger and some smaller, swimming in various directions. The water is represented by wavy, overlapping lines.

Protected species management
strategy for the east coast inshore
fishery

CONSULTATION DRAFT

Business Unit Owner Management & Reform

Endorsed by Deputy Director General (Fisheries & Forestry) in accordance with delegated powers under Part 2, Division 1 (Harvest Strategies) of the *Fisheries Act 1994*

Approved by Minister responsible for fisheries in accordance with section 16 of the *Fisheries Act 1994*

Revision history

Version no.	Approval date	Comments
1.0	September 2020	Draft protected species management strategy for consultation

© State of Queensland, 2020

The Queensland Government supports and encourages the dissemination and exchange of its information. The copyright in this publication is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) licence.

Under this licence you are free, without having to seek our permission, to use this publication in accordance with the licence terms.



You must keep intact the copyright notice and attribute the State of Queensland as the source of the publication.

Note: Some content in this publication may have different licence terms as indicated.

For more information on this licence, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

The information contained herein is subject to change without notice. The Queensland Government shall not be liable for technical or other errors or omissions contained herein. The reader/user accepts all risks and responsibility for losses, damages, costs and other consequences resulting directly or indirectly from using this information.

1 Introduction

Managing the risks and impacts of fishing activities on non-target species, including protected species, is a principle of the Sustainable Fisheries Strategy. It is a requirement for all fisheries that interact with species listed under the federal *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) to manage these risks to maintain a fisheries Commonwealth Wildlife Trade Operation (WTO) Accreditation.

The East Coast Inshore Fishery (ECIF) is a net and line fishery that extends along the Queensland Coast. Primary target species in the ECIF are barramundi, threadfin salmon, grey mackerel, sea mullet, whiting, bream and school mackerel. In targeting these species, the fishery is known to incidentally interact with a range of protected species (listed threatened species (i.e. vulnerable, endangered or critically endangered), conservation dependent species, cetaceans, listed migratory species and other listed marine species).

The broader community has been focused on the impacts from fishing on non-target species, particularly on those species that have a vulnerable life history. The fishery's ongoing access and community acceptance depends on the commercial fishing industry's ability to demonstrate that it is accountable and takes all reasonable steps to reduce the risk of interactions with protected species to as low a level as possible.

Minimising interactions with commercial netting activities is a key objective for the fishery. To inform this Protected Species Management Strategy (PSMS) the following actions are in place:

- ecological risk assessments (ERA) are undertaken every three years
- protected species determined to be at high risk through ERA have specific management arrangements in place to reduce the risk
- monitoring and reporting to inform management, based on agreed performance indicators, triggers and mitigating actions.

The PSMS outlines the mitigation strategies in place to achieve the harvest strategy objective "to minimise and mitigate high ecological risks arising from fishing related activities on protected species".

2 Ecological Risk Assessment

A foundation of sustainable fisheries management is managing the impact of fishing activities on non-target species and the broader marine ecosystem. An Ecological Risk Assessment (ERA) is an analysis of the best available information about fishery impacts on target species, non-target and protected species and the broader ecosystem. Risk profiles developed through an ERA assist in identifying areas where more information is required, and/or areas where additional monitoring can contribute to our understanding of the impacts of fishing activities. They also identify issues that must be further managed under harvest strategies or a complementary PSMS, where appropriate.

A qualitative (Level 1) ERA has been completed and produces a broad risk profile for each fishery. In the ECIF the Level 1 ERA examined fishing related risks in 16 broader ecological

components including target, byproduct, bycatch, protected species, marine habitats and ecosystem processes. The table below outlines the risk profile developed under the ECIF Level 1 assessment.

Ecological Component	Level 1 Risk Rating	Progression
Target and Byproduct	High	Level 2 ERA
Bycatch	Intermediate/High	Level 2 ERA
Protected species		
Marine turtles	High	Level 2 ERA
Dugongs	Intermediate/High	Level 2 ERA
Whales	Low/Intermediate	Not progressed further
Dolphins	High	Level 2 ERA
Sea snakes	Low	Not progressed further
Crocodiles	Low	Not progressed further
Protected teleosts	Low	Not progressed further
Batoids	High	Level 2 ERA
Sharks	High	Level 2 ERA
Syngnathids	Negligible	Not progressed further
Seabirds	Low	Not progressed further
Terrestrial mammals	Negligible	Not progressed further
Marine habitats	Low	Not progressed further
Ecosystem processes	Precautionary High	Not progressed due to data deficiencies

Given there are a number of high-risk ratings from the Level 1 assessment, a more complex Level 2 assessment is under development for the ECIF. This uses more comprehensive data on the life-history constraints of each ecological subcomponent (e.g. species, species groupings, marine habitats) and the fisheries that they interact with. In Queensland, level 2 assessments will consist of semi-quantitative assessments and, if data permits, low-data quantitative risk assessments. The Level 2 assessment for the ECIF is scheduled for late 2020 and will further inform the PSMS at that time.

The Fisheries Queensland's Ecological Risk Assessment Guideline is published online at <https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/business-priorities/fisheries/monitoring-research/data/sustainability-reporting/ecological-risk-assessment>. ERA's for each of Queensland's fisheries are available online at [daf.qld.gov.au/business-priorities/fisheries/monitoring-compliance/data/sustainability-reporting/ecological-risk-assessment](https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/business-priorities/fisheries/monitoring-compliance/data/sustainability-reporting/ecological-risk-assessment).

3 Wildlife Trade Operation Accreditation

In July 2018, the ECIF was reassessed for WTO accreditation under the EPBC Act. Recognising that major reforms were underway as part of the Queensland Government's Sustainable Fisheries Strategy that were expected to significantly improve the management of the fishery and address many of the issues identified in the fisheries assessment, the ECIF (formerly known as the East Coast Inshore Fin Fish Fishery or ECIFFF) was granted WTO accreditation for three years, until 10 December 2021.

Accreditation is provided by declaring the fishery an approved wildlife trade operation and through amending the list of exempt native specimens under the EPBC Act. The accreditation also outlines a number of additional provisions and conditions for which the fishery is expected to progress against. The accreditation and associated conditions are available at environment.gov.au/marine/fisheries/qld/east-coast-fin-fish, and those relevant to this PSMS are outlined in table 1.

Table 1: ECIF WTO Accreditation conditions relating to this PSMS.

Condition 4	<i>By January 2020 the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries to implement foundational reforms (actions 1.1-1.4) identified in the Queensland Government's Sustainable Fisheries Strategy 2017–2027 for the ECIFFF and collect accurate and reliable data, sufficient to monitor and assess the fishery's impact on target and non-target species, including protected species, with a high degree of confidence.</i>
Condition 5	<i>The Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries progress the development and implementation of an independent data collection and validation program including:</i> <i>a. Assess feasibility and complete proof of concept trials for electronic monitoring by December 2019.</i> <i>b. Implement an independent data collection and validation program in ECIFFF from January 2020 (this may include electronic monitoring or alternative interim solutions).</i>
Condition 8	<i>The Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries to:</i> <i>a. Publish a level 1 ecological risk assessment for the Queensland East Coast Inshore Fin Fish Fishery by July 2019.</i> <i>b. Implement strategies to mitigate risks identified in the level 1 ecological risk assessment by December 2019.</i> <i>c. Develop and publish level 2 ERAs according to the Queensland Government ERA guidelines and implement appropriate risk mitigations strategies.</i> <i>All precautionary risk management strategies should be developed and implemented in consultation with relevant experts and stakeholders, and performance should be monitored and reported annually in accordance with Condition 3.</i>
Condition 9	<i>The Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries to implement by January 2020 harvest strategies that monitor and manage impacts associated with the East Coast Inshore Fin Fish Fishery on target, byproduct and bycatch (including protected species).</i> <i>The harvest strategy must include decision rules and reference points that trigger management actions to ensure the fishery remains ecologically sustainable.</i>

The PSMS has been developed to address these WTO conditions and minimise risk of protected species interactions in the ECIF. Importantly, it also sets out how management of this fishery will transition towards improving individual fisher accountability and implementing more direct measures to reduce the risk of interactions with protected species. Central to this is improved fishing practices, reporting and monitoring.

4 Principles

The main purpose of *Fisheries Act 1994* (the Act) is to “*provide for the use, conservation and enhancement of the community’s fisheries resources and fish habitats in a way that seeks to ... promote ecologically sustainable development.*”. Effectively, this means that fishing activities should not be detrimental to the survival or conservation status of any species, or the ecosystem more generally, and fishers are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure that protected species are not killed or injured.

The Act also provides for “... *balancing the principles [of ecological sustainable development]... having regard to ensuring access to fisheries is allocated in a way that maximises the potential economic, social and cultural benefits to the community*”. Effectively, this provides that the management of our fisheries should be proportionate to the risk.

In line with the purposes of the Act, the following principles will underpin management actions under the PSMS to:

- reduce the risk of interaction so fishing is a low ecological risk
- management action is proportionate to the risk to protected species
- promote best practice and stewardship to minimise the need for excessive regulation
- work with industry to provide opportunities to innovate and improve their practices
- ensure accurate and cost-effective reporting of all interactions
- provide increased transparency about level of interactions.

The overarching principle is for Fisheries Queensland and commercial fishers to work together to take all reasonable steps to minimise interactions with protected species. The ECIF Working Group and annual regional harvest strategy workshops will be an ongoing integral part of the PSMS.

5 Objectives

The PSMS aims to pursue the ECIF ecological objectives to “ensure the fishery is a low risk to bycatch and protected species”. Low ecological risk is defined as “*When a fishing activity is unlikely to cause or significantly contribute to an undesirable event for the bycatch species’ population, sub-population, or stock, over the next 20-years.*”

To facilitate achieving this objective, high risk species will be prioritised for management action. For protected species, where populations are already low and vulnerable, the aim is to reduce interactions to as close to zero as possible while allowing sustainable fishing practices.

This PSMS has been developed to be consistent with the principles, and aims to minimise protected species interactions with commercial netting apparatus in the ECIF by adopting an individual responsibility approach to create incentives for fishers to innovate and adopt best practices. It also outlines a continual improvement plan to improve reporting, fishing practice and mitigate strategies.

6 Continual improvement plan

Through a series of management reviews over the last 10 years, a number of measures have already been put in place to minimise the impact of fishing within this fishery. Changes include a series of fishing rules (e.g. attendance rules for commercial net fishing) and Dugong Protection areas along the east coast of Queensland. However, to achieve the objectives of the PSMS further measures are required.

Table 2: Needs and actions to pursue the objectives of the PSMS.

Needs	Actions
<p>Accurate data on protected species interactions and support for fishers to adopt best practice mitigation.</p>	<p>All fishers to complete a protected species (SOCl) report for any interaction in accordance with the Fisheries (Commercial Fisheries) Regulation 2019.</p> <p>Industry and Fisheries Queensland to identify, review and publish best practice mitigation options for commercial netting.</p> <p>Improved education on protected species handling to improve safe release should an interaction occur.</p> <p>Fisheries Queensland and fishers to work together to implement an independent data collection and validation program for the fishery, including through introducing digital observer coverage.</p>
<p>Greater accountability and stronger incentives for individual fishers to minimise interactions.</p>	<p>Recognising that commercial fishers are best placed to adjust their gear, setting of gear and timing of fishing to minimise interactions; more so than layers of regulation, individual fishers are responsible for their actions to minimise interactions.</p> <p>Fisheries Queensland to cross check existing information sources (protected species reports, vessel tracking, confirmed protected species fatalities) to identify non-compliance with reporting obligations and repeated behaviours.</p> <p>Fisheries Queensland to implement a system of proportionate management responses for protected species interactions</p>

	<p>by individual fishers. Including where there are any subsequent interactions, a series of escalating management responses are applied to individual fishers culminating in closures for fishers who are unable to minimise their interactions.</p>
<p>Improved research on spatial distribution of at-risk species to inform improved mitigation strategies and review of existing closures effectiveness</p>	<p>Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Department of Environment and Science to develop a supporting research plan with key scientific experts to support evidence-based decisions on minimising interactions with protected species.</p> <p>As evidence becomes available, Industry and Fisheries Queensland to review management arrangements and fishing rules to implement minimise risks.</p>
<p>Alternative gear and bycatch reduction devices (BRDs) innovation</p>	<p>Fisheries Queensland to develop a clear process for trialling alternative gear, BRDs and other innovations that will minimise the risk of protected species interactions.</p> <p>Industry and Fisheries Queensland to promote and encourage innovation, potentially by leveraging funding for a biannual challenge Smartgear competition.</p>
<p>Develop Best Management Practice</p>	<p>Industry to partner with government and external bodies to develop regionally specific codes of practice that could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fishing locations (avoid high risk areas) • gear usage (shot times, hanging coefficient, how to set) • good handling and safe release practices • vessel design.
<p>Regular information updates and training on protected species risks in Queensland</p>	<p>Industry to partner with researchers and Fisheries Queensland to provide regular protected species information, education and training for all net fishers.</p>
<p>Regular review of fishing rules to ensure their ongoing effectiveness and remove ineffective restrictions</p>	<p>Through the ECIF Working Group and Harvest Strategy regional workshops review fishing rules and closures to ensure they remain effective and where appropriate recommend changes to minimise the risk of interactions and remove unnecessary restrictions.</p>

7 Management measures

7.1 Best Management Practices

It is proposed that a Best Management Practice (BMP) for holders of a Commercial Fisher Licence operating in the ECIF would be developed and rolled out to industry. Longer term, it is intended to develop an accredited BMP program that would be mandatory for:

- new entrants to the fishery
- fishers who have triggered an individual fisher limit
- all fishers in a management area that reaches a trigger.

Fisheries Queensland will work with industry to assist with the development of a BMP by the end of 2020.

7.2 Individual Fisher Limits

In addition to the overall management measures used to reduce the risk of interactions with protected species, individual fisher accountability measures will be used to encourage personal accountability for their fishing impacts. This is a series of escalating management actions that are applied to individual fishers who have an interaction with particular high risk protected species (Attachment A).

Individual accountability limits will ensure that fishers have a measure that allows them to compare their fishing practice to the best practice management standards, and will encourage them to actively work to limit interactions or modify their fishing behaviour to avoid those fishing practices that increase the risk of an interaction.

The individual fisher limits will also provide managers with a range of measures that establish a clear escalating management response to interactions, and will allow those fishers who are able to avoid interactions to continue to fish responsibly.

Table 3 outlines the triggers and related management actions that apply over a calendar year period.

Table 3: Triggers and fisher and management responses for interactions per calendar year. Interaction means any physical contact between fishing gear or a vessel and a protected species. Mortality event means any interaction that results in mortality of one or more protected species.

Individual Triggers	Fisher and Management response
Any interaction An interaction with any protected species.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The fisher must report the interaction by submitting a SOCI logbook report within 15 days after the end of the month to which it relates.• If the interaction is with a marine mammal, the fisher must report the interaction to the Wildlife Hotline on 1300 264 625 within 24 hours.

<p>First mortality event</p> <p>The first mortality event for a species listed in Attachment A within a calendar year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fisher must follow the responses outlined for 'Any interaction'. • Upon notification, Fisheries Queensland will contact the fisher and undertake an evaluation of the event with the fishers to better understand the circumstances of the event ,and discuss options for minimising the risk of further mortality events from fishing.
<p>Second mortality event</p> <p>The second mortality event for a species listed in Attachment A within a calendar year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fisher must follow the responses outlined for 'Any interaction'. • Upon notification, Fisheries Queensland will review the fisher's operation and, prior to recommencing fishing, require the fisher to develop an individual mitigation plan for approval that will apply for 12 months under section 118 of the Fisheries Act. Information on mitigation plans are outlined in paragraph 8.4
<p>Subsequent Mortality event/s</p> <p>Subsequent mortality event/s for a species listed in Attachment A within a calendar year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fisher must follow the responses outlined for 'any interaction'. • Upon notification, Fisheries Queensland will review the fisher's operation and individual mitigation plan. In addition to previous requirements, the fisher will be subject to a show cause process and may have the fisher's operation further conditioned. <p>Remedial actions could include further conditioning of the fisher's operation (i.e. gear restrictions to reduce the risk for a nominated period of time), requiring the fisher to have an observer on board to monitor the operation (at fisher's expense) before returning to fishing, or suspension from netting operations for up to 12 months.</p>

8 Rules for commercial fishers

8.1 Species of Conservation Interest (SOCI) reporting

Under the Fisheries (Commercial Fisheries) Regulation 2019 (the Regulation), commercial fishers are required to have on board, make entries, and submit a SOCI logbook of all interactions with protected species. Protected species are defined as:

- a) a protected animal under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*; or
- b) an animal of a listed threatened species, listed migratory species or listed marine species under the EPBC Act.

A copy of the SOCI Logbook is available online at business.qld.gov.au/industries/farms-fishing-forestry/fisheries/monitoring-reporting/requirements/logbooks.

Fisheries Queensland publishes a quarterly summary of all reported protected species interactions to ensure the ECIF continues to meet its accreditation requirements under the EPBC Act. These are available at data.qld.gov.au/dataset/quarterly-reports-species-of-conservation-interest-soci-interactions-from-2006.

Under the provisions of the Nature Conservation (Wildlife Management) Regulation 2006 (NCWM Regulation), the taking of a marine mammal or marine turtle during a lawful fishing operation must also be reported to the Wildlife Hotline on 1300 264 625 operated by the Department of Environment and Science.

8.2 Failure to report

Where a fisher fails to report an interaction, penalties may apply under the Regulation, NCWM Regulation or the EPBC Act.

Accurate information is critical to ensuring the risks of fishing are minimised and commercial fishers maintain access to fisheries generally. Where there is low confidence in reporting, additional fishing rules and validation programs will likely be implemented to improve the accuracy of information. For example, Fisheries Queensland may require higher levels of monitoring in some high-risk fisheries over time to validate protected species interactions.

8.3 Evaluation with fisher

In addition to completing SOCI logbook report, Fisheries Queensland may request additional information through an interaction evaluation report about the circumstances of the interaction. This allows Fisheries Queensland to evaluate any factors that may have contributed to the interaction and provide feedback or suggestions to the fisher. An Interaction Evaluation Report template is at Attachment B.

8.4 Mitigation plan

Where a fisher has had two protected species mortality events in a calendar year, they are required to develop an individual mitigation plan that outlines what actions are being taken by the fisher to minimise interactions. The mitigation plan will apply for 12 months under section 118 of the Fisheries Act. Fisheries Queensland will only approve a mitigation plan where it is satisfied it details actions to minimise interactions being taken in the following areas:

- fishing practices (e.g. how the gear is being set)
- gear setup (e.g. any recent gear changes or modifications)
- mitigation devices (e.g. any mitigation or modifications).

Mitigation plans must be updated by a fisher if there are any changes to actions being taken to minimise interactions within the 12 months it is in effect. The updated version must be approved by Fisheries Queensland before implementation and recommencing fishing.

If there are further mortality events, Fisheries Queensland may require the fisher to carry an on-board observer or electronic monitoring to confirm appropriate mitigation strategies are being used by the fisher.

9 Species specific review and mitigation

Assessment of the recovery capacity of protected species indicates that many species, particularly inshore dolphin and dugong populations, can only sustain extremely low levels of mortality. It is therefore critical that fishing related risks are at a low level and that ongoing fishing activity does not impair or impede recruitment potential. The PSMS specifies additional review for interactions with protected species that have been identified as at a higher conservation risk, including inshore dolphins, dugongs, sawfish (dwarf and green) and turtles.

These reviews will be triggered following any interaction with these species and may involve Fisheries Queensland convening a regional workshop to discuss with commercial fishers the significance of the interaction, the need to actively minimise the risk of further interactions, and species-specific information to assist with mitigation, safe release techniques and remind about reporting obligations.

Each review will inform what management action may be appropriate to minimise the ongoing risk to those species and region.

In addition, Fisheries Queensland will review all protected species interactions annually and as part of the annual Harvest Strategy working group meeting to discuss any trends in interactions and to determine appropriate management arrangements for the following fishing season to minimise the ongoing risk.

9.1 Mitigating interactions with Dugongs

There are a number of regulatory requirements designed to mitigate the risk of fishing interactions with dugongs in Queensland. This includes Dugong Protection Areas (legislated under the Fisheries Declaration 2019), gear restrictions and attendance rules.

Complementing this is a network of Commonwealth and State marine park zoning and net free zones in Queensland which prohibit the use of netting apparatus.

The highest risk fishing activities are associated with mesh nets. All other fishing activities (tunnel net, ocean beach seine and line) have been assessed as low risk.

9.2 Mitigating interactions with Dolphins

There are a number of regulatory requirements designed to mitigate the risk of fishing interactions with dolphins in Queensland. This includes existing restrictions on net length,

mesh size and attendance rules and could include the use of mandatory bycatch reduction devices. Complementing this is a network of Commonwealth and State marine park zoning and net free zones in Queensland, which prohibit the use of netting apparatus.

Fisheries Queensland is collaborating with universities to develop projects focussing on the identification of movement patterns and residency for the high-risk species.

The highest risk fishing activities are associated with large mesh netting apparatus. All other fishing activities (tunnel net, ocean beach seine and line) have been assessed as low risk.

9.3 Mitigating interactions with Sawfish

There are a number of regulatory requirements designed to mitigate the risk of fishing interactions with sawfish in Queensland. This includes gear restrictions and attendance rules. Complementing this is a network of Commonwealth and State marine park zoning and net free zones in Queensland which prohibit the use of netting apparatus.

The highest risk fishing activities are associated with large mesh netting apparatus. All other fishing activities (tunnel net, ocean beach seine and line) have been assessed as low risk.

9.4 Mitigating interactions with Turtles

There are a number of regulatory requirements designed to mitigate the risk of fishing interactions with turtles in Queensland. This includes gear restrictions and attendance rules. Complementing this is a network of Commonwealth and State marine park zoning and net free zones in Queensland which prohibit the use of certain apparatus.

The highest risk fishing activities are associated with large mesh netting apparatus and tunnel netting apparatus. All other fishing activities (ocean beach seine and line) have been assessed as low risk. While net fishing highest risk of interacting with turtles, most turtles caught are reported as released alive.

9.5 Mitigating interactions with protected sharks and rays

There are a number of regulatory requirements designed to mitigate the risk of fishing interactions with sharks in Queensland. There is a Total Allowable Commercial Catch in place and a specific fishery symbol which allows broader access to the fishery. Additionally, there is a TACC in place for Hammerhead shark species. Other shark species identified as high risk include:

- Blacktip species complex – spot tail shark (*Carcharhinus sorrah*), Australian blacktip (*Carcharhinus tilstoni*), and common blacktip (*Carcharhinus limbatus*)
- Pigeye shark (*Carcharhinus amboinensis*)
- Tiger shark (*Galeocerdo cuvier*)
- Winghead shark (*Eusphyra blochii*)
- Grey reef shark (*Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos*).

Fisheries Queensland is collaborating with universities to develop projects focussing on the identification of movement patterns and residency in several of these high-risk species.

Complementing this is a network of Commonwealth and State marine park zoning and net free zones in Queensland which prohibit the use of netting apparatus.

The highest risk fishing activities are associated with large mesh netting apparatus. All other fishing activities (tunnel net, ocean beach seine and line) have been assessed as low risk.

10 Monitoring and data collection

The success of this PSMS relies on accurate reporting of SOCI interactions to ensure that the management responses are effective. To measure this, Queensland Fisheries collects information on the quantity and nature of interactions (including species identification) as well as spatial and temporal information on interactions.

This information is primarily collected through logbook and wildlife hotline reporting by fishers, as well as through Interaction Evaluation Reports which will be submitted by industry when requested by Queensland Fisheries.

All commercial fishers operating in Queensland's fisheries are required to complete daily catch and effort logbooks and record any interactions with SOCI species during fishing operations (including during down time, steaming, anchoring or drifting), whether or not the animal is harmed.

In addition to the information gathered from logbooks, Queensland Fisheries carries out a range of other fisheries monitoring programs to collect vital information to help scientists assess the status of fish stocks and help to safeguard the ecological sustainability of fisheries. These include:

- Catch Disposal Records and Automated Integrated Voice Response (AIVR)
- at sea monitoring programs
- in port biological sampling programs
- Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS).

As accurate information on protected species interactions are key to the success of the PSMS, improving monitoring and data collection will remain a priority for the ECIF.

11 Schedule of Performance Assessment & Review

The fishery's performance will be reviewed against the ECIF Harvest Strategy annually. This review will include convening the ECIF Working Group to provide operational advice on the fishery's performance and any matters that may need addressing.

While the PSMS provides transparency in terms of management decisions in response to protected species information, there must be flexibility to allow new information or changing circumstances to be considered and implemented.

This PSMS will remain in place for a period of five years, consistent with the ECIF Harvest Strategy, after which time it will be fully reviewed in accordance with the Act. The PSMS may also be subject to further review and amendment as appropriate within the five-year period if the following circumstances arise:

- there is new information that substantially changes the status of a protected species or the risk profile of the fishery; or

- there are new and effective mitigation methods identified to reduce the risk of interactions with protected species
- it is clear the PSMS is not working effectively and the objective of the PSMS is at risk of not being met.

Further explanation and information on the processes for amending harvest strategies and PSMS can be found in the Queensland Harvest Strategy Policy (currently being revised, to be published after consultation).

DRAFT

Attachment A – ECIF High risk protected species

The following ECIF high risk protected species are subject to escalating management responses:

- snubfin dolphin
- Irrawaddy dolphin
- dugong
- dwarf sawfish
- green sawfish
- green turtle
- loggerhead turtle
- hawksbill turtle.

This list may be reviewed as new information becomes available that changes the status of a protected species or the risk profile of the fishery.

Attachment B - Interaction Evaluation Report

SOCI Logbook		Number:			Page:	
How was the SOCI caught (select one)		Meshed	Wrapped by headrope	Wrapped by footrope	Bagged in mesh	Fell out at bow.
Carcass condition		Clean, undamaged.			Lice damaged.	
Shot and haul time		Start:			End:	
Shot depth (m)						
Weather & sea conditions at time interaction:						
Standard shot (if no describe problems / tangles etc)						
Were SOCI observed before setting?		YES			NO	
Were SOCI observed during setting?		YES			NO	
Were SOCI observed during hauling?		YES			NO	
Description of fishing gear	Net type, length and mesh size:					
	Overall mesh condition:	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent	
	Mesh condition either side of interaction location in net:	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent	
	Hanging ratio:					
	Mono ply diameter:					
	Footrope specification:	Weight:			Diameter:	
	Method of anchoring net:	Anchor	Chain	Block	None	
	Mesh colour:					
Additional Comments	Provide any additional comments that may be relevant and not recorded above:					

DRAFT