



📷 A six-month fishing ban is being considered to save fish stocks. Credit: Supplied/Supplied

## Six-month snapper and dhufish fishing ban proposed to help restore stocks

Matt Zis | PerthNow - Cockburn  
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A half-year ban on fishing for some of WA's most desired deep-sea delicacies could start this summer as authorities grapple to turn around dwindling ocean stocks.

The ban on recreational fishers chasing prized demersals, including dhufish and pink snapper, would take effect each winter as well as either the popular summer or spring seasons, depending on the option backed by Fisheries Minister Don Punch.

It is one of several measures being floated to help rebuild stocks of all demersal scalefish, which are not rebuilding fast enough under the State Government's 2010-2030 recovery plan.

Mr Punch said all of the measures under consideration were ultimately aimed at halving the State's total catch until fish stocks had recovered.



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“I understand these recovery measures will have an impact on fisher experience and I can assure fishers and the community that the decision to halve total catch limits based on the recent scientific stock assessment was not made lightly,” he said.

“But we must do what is necessary to ensure we still have demersal fish stocks in our waters in 2030.”

He cited the success of herring bag limit reductions several years ago as evidence that short term fishing pain could ultimately result in long term gain for fishers.



*It is vitally important we continue to work together on management measures that ensure the recovery of some of our most iconic species.*

“We know recovery strategies work and that associated management measures are not permanent,” he said.

“The successful recovery of WA's Australian herring resource following the 2015 recovery plan led to increases in commercial catch and recreational bag limits this year.”

Commercial fishing and charter businesses are also facing changes, including a reduction in their total annual catch size.

Charter boats could be asked to introduce a tagging system and given annual catch limits on top of existing daily limits, which Mr Punch said was intended to give operators year-round flexibility.



### **Blood in the water**

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Commercial fishing operations face a year-round reduction in fishing hours.

Mr Punch said that approach would allow the commercial sector to continue supplying fresh local fish all year.

“It is vitally important we continue to work together on management measures that ensure the recovery of some of our most iconic species, including WA dhufish, pink snapper and baldchin groper,” he said.

Public consultation on the options opened on Thursday and continues until September 16.



– **Lawrie R** 2 weeks ago

As the saying goes, the population gets the government it deserves.

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– **Ray P** 2 weeks ago

Learn to use the ocean without the urge of killing the wildlife within it. Find another hobby. Much prefer to free dive with schools of fish, than an empty ocean. Killing animals for recreation? Not the sharpest pastime in the shed is it?

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– **Jay W** 2 weeks ago

In reply to **Ray P**

This may shock you but we also eat the fish. Also I'm not sure if there is such a thing as a "sharp pastime". I think you are mixing your metaphors.

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– **R C** 2 weeks ago

Heaven forbid rec and commercial fisher persons have to go a full 9 months without reducing fish stocks of a beloved species, my heart breaks for them, they will be the first to whine and moan when there isnt enough any more, the first.

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– **Ivor P** 2 weeks ago

THERE IS NOT A SHORTAGE OF DHU FISH OR SNAPPER IN FACT ITS DIRECTLY THR OPPOSITE it is an absolute fallacy and a lie I have finished all my life and in fact there's an increase of these fish stop putting constraints on us as a society this is not a dictatorship the bands that are in place are working you do not need any more please back off our way of life we are sensible and reasonable Fisher people in Western Australia who enjoy fishing and the wonderful Western Australian way of life stop trying to infringe on the good thing about being a Western Australian next it will be the amount of food and fruit you can buy during the year where will it all end stay away from the fishery it is working absolutely fantastic and if you don't believe me just check with the recreational fisherman's lobby or recfish

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– **Hayden D** 2 weeks ago

In reply to **Ivor P**

Hey mate, there's a button just to the right of the space bar called a comma, and next to that is a full stop. If you want to get your point across effectively, use them.

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– **Brian M** 2 weeks ago

In reply to **Hayden D**

Seriously you must have a boring life checking for mistakes in people's comments

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– **R C** 2 weeks ago

In reply to **Ivor P**

Compared to the 1980s is so terrible out there, not that long ago, at the same rate of decline catching fish by 2050 will be neigh non existant, but boomers will be dead by then so does it matter???

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– **Matt S** 2 weeks ago

↩ In reply to **R C**

Boomers will be too scared to fish as to not mess up the gel in their hair. A non threat that.

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– **Matt S** 2 weeks ago

↩ In reply to **Ivor P**

You are missing the point that Mark McGowan wants to destroy the breeding grounds for these fish so he needs to up the stock still so it is way overblown so when he destroys the breeding grounds it wont have as big of a impact

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– **Mark G** 2 weeks ago

↩ In reply to **Matt S**

What?

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– **tim o** 2 weeks ago

↩ In reply to **Mark G**

McGowan wants an outer harbor in Cockburn Sound which is a breeding ground for Snapper along with many other species of fish and crabs. If that is destroyed you wont have to worry about limits as there will be no fish to catch.

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– **Matt S** 2 weeks ago

↩ In reply to **Mark G**

Their are a bunch of new developments and policies which will basically take out breeding grounds from the stretch of ocean from Cockburn Sound down to Albany.

No chance the pro ALP media will ever report it. Gotta find that yourself

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– **Mark G** 2 weeks ago

↩ In reply to **Ivor P**

I have been fishing in Perth since the early eighties and to claim there is more fish now is just ludicrous. There are plenty of places I could catch fish with one cast 30 years ago, where now I can't even get a nibble. Absolutely ridiculous statement.

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– **Benjamin C** 2 weeks ago

↩ In reply to **Mark G**

There are many places I could go camping 30 years ago and not see another person! What's your point I see all your comments in other articles saying we need more people to fill the skills shortage? More in west Aussie more pollution more violence more crime less fish so stop the rubbish comments!! John snow you know nothing

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– **Dirk M** 2 weeks ago

9 months is not 1/2 a year ... and it's ideotic when we pull them.up especially snapper swim.bladders will break .... they will not live after that

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– **Ray S** 2 weeks ago

Ban the charter boats.

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– **John L** 2 weeks ago

Why don't we ban commercial fishing of the endangered species if that is the case ,this does not make any sense at all .

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– **Craig I** 2 weeks ago

Are you guys serious. You may as well ban it completely. We are restricted that much already.

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– **Craig I** 2 weeks ago

Joking joking joking. Are you going to halve our licence fees. Bans for everything. We cannot even crab in the sound any more due to a temp ban over six years ago. Sorry I'm dead against it.

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– **Dirk M** 2 weeks ago

↩ In reply to **Craig I**

Yeah Mindarie won't allow crabbing either

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– **Charlie G** 2 weeks ago

↩ In reply to **Craig I**

All got to do with money Cob... fishing licences what a joke..

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– **Jack R** 2 weeks ago

What a joke, the ocean is big there is plenty of fish out there just have to be at the right spot

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– **Craig I** 2 weeks ago

↩ In reply to **Jack R**

I agree right place right time. Why make it harder. Don't you think it is hard enough.

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– **Benjamin C** 2 weeks ago

I catch one dhuie every 2/3 months if I'm lucky get the odd pinky I've just paid \$45,000 for a new boat pay my license every year, boat and trailer registration fuel bait yet go have a look at inalo fish market, all the pro boats, indo fishing boats that the government does next to nothing to stop ! Then you try to say the average family going out getting one or two quality fish every now and again is the problem I don't think so stop the export market and half the pros quoter stop netting that's why the stocks are dwindling it has nothing to do with the recreational fishing

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– **Alan B** 2 weeks ago

Tash, are you reading this? Tash, will you strip completely naked for this?

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– **The O.G. D** 2 weeks ago

In reply to **Alan B**

Please no, my eyes haven't healed yet after seeing her and her Melbourne friends

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– **Charlie G** 2 weeks ago

In reply to **Alan B**

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– **The O.G. D** 2 weeks ago

Stop someone feeding a family, but allow netting and trawlers to tear the guts out of waterways

This smells of \$\$\$\$

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– **The D** 2 weeks ago

In reply to **The O.G. D**

Commercial operations are also being impacted.

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– **The O.G. D** 2 weeks ago

In reply to **The D**

Rightly so. They are the ones destroying the place. Old mate catching 1 fish at a time should not be punished for the Governments reckless handing out of commercial fishing licences.

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– **Alan B** 2 weeks ago

In reply to **The O.G. D**

Lobby groups always win

Respect 2 Reply Share

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– **Charlie G** 2 weeks ago

In reply to **The O.G. D**

The kick backs McClown will get and his Circus mates Again

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– **James P** 2 weeks ago

How about instead of banning it for half a year you change size limits and lower quantity to 1 of each species of demersal. Size limits at the moment allow people to take the larger breeding population, where as if you set a size say 300mm - 500mm for pinkies that would leave the larger breeders to do their thing. If you ban it people are just going to take them illegally anyway. Not to mention the amount of revenue you'll loose through fishing license sales

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– **Snake P** 2 weeks ago

Ridiculous. Fish stocks taken by recreational fishermen is minuscule in comparison to commercial fishing fleets.

I take it the annual cost of our recreational fishing licences will be reduced ?

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– **Alan B** 2 weeks ago

In reply to **Snake P**

Lobby groups always win

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– **Benjamin C** 2 weeks ago

In reply to **Snake P**

100% agreed what a joke blaming the little man

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– **Barry R** 2 weeks ago

Is this going to be a blanket ban as where I live there are no issues with plenty of demersal fish around. Also perhaps government should be investing more in stopping overseas countries from coming in and taking fish in our waters as this is the biggest threat to our fish stocks. In my opinion and everybody has one the best way is to increase the legal size limits. This allows more breeders to reach maturity.

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– **tim o** 2 weeks ago

Yet they want to build an outer harbor in Cockburn sound which will decimate the Snapper breeding ground??

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– **Barry R** 2 weeks ago

In reply to **tim o**

Yup. Can't stop development apparently.

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– **Snake P** 2 weeks ago

In reply to **tim o**

They put bans on fish species and crabs in the sound in order to protect stock yet 70% of the natural grass beds have been destroyed by run off by big industries along that stretch of the coast.

The Govt bodies are aware of this yet too gutless to act...

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– **Alan B** 2 weeks ago

In reply to **Snake P**

If it protects jobs, you can't complain is the govt policy

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– **Charlie G** 2 weeks ago

In reply to **Snake P**

Yeh bunch of cr ooks Ban everything...

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