

Impact Analysis Statement

Summary IAS

Lead department	Department of Primary Industries
Name of the proposal	Fisheries Legislation (Spanish Mackerel) Amendment Regulation 2026
Submission type	Summary IAS
Title of related legislative or regulatory instrument	Fisheries (Commercial Fisheries) Regulation 2019 Fisheries Quota Declaration 2019
Date of issue	13 January 2026

Proposal type	Details
Machinery and Minor in nature	<p>The <i>Fisheries Legislation (Spanish Mackerel) Amendment Regulation 2026</i> will align regulation with the approved management rules in the amended East Coast Spanish Mackerel Harvest Strategy 2023-2028 by increasing the total commercial quota entitlement for Spanish mackerel mid-fishing season.</p> <p>The proposal is machinery and minor in nature as it does not involve substantive regulatory or policy change.</p> <p>On 4 December 2025 the East Coast Spanish Mackerel Harvest Strategy was amended following completion of a stock assessment for the east coast Spanish mackerel stock. The amendments included increasing the total quota entitlement from 165 tonnes to 250 tonnes for the 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 Spanish mackerel fishing season.</p> <p>Implementing the change mid-fishing season provides commercial fishers with the increased total quota entitlement as soon as possible for improved commercial access to the fisheries resource. The increased entitlements will be distributed proportionately amongst existing unit holders, based on the number of quota units they currently hold.</p> <p><u>Consultation</u></p> <p>Consultation on the amendments to the East Coast Spanish Mackerel Harvest Strategy 2023-2028 included public consultation and targeted consultation with the Sustainable Fisheries Expert Panel and the East Coast Spanish Mackerel Fishery Working Group.</p> <p>There were 470 responses received from online surveys, emails and submissions from commercial fishers, charter fishing operators, First Nations peoples, peak bodies, conservation groups and interested community members. Support for the proposed amendments was as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • amendments to the harvest strategy including 48 per cent biomass target (68-70 per cent of respondents); and • an increase to the total allowable commercial catch (total quota entitlement) (50 per cent of respondents).

	<p>Other comments received included concerns regarding a lack of security of access to the east coast Spanish mackerel stock for commercial fishers through the current individual transferable quota management system.</p> <p>The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority highlighted concerns that the proposed changes may be inconsistent with the World Heritage Committee's expectation of ecologically sustainable use of Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.</p> <p>The Queensland Seafood Industry Association, The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, and the Australian Marine Conservation Society raised concerns regarding the total quota entitlement increase and its scientific justification.</p> <p>Spanish mackerel is one of the most heavily monitored and studied fish species and fisheries in Queensland. Fisheries Queensland conducts catch monitoring of commercial catch on boats and at commercial fish processors where fishers land their catch and for recreational fishers at boat ramps, measuring the size, sex and age of the catch. Fisheries Queensland has a robust stock assessment that integrates this data into a sound understanding of the sustainability and productive capacity of the species.</p> <p>The next stock assessment will be completed in 2027-2028.</p>
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Signed



 Graeme Bolton
 Director-General
 Date: 13/01/2026



 Anthony Perrett MP
 Minister for Primary Industries
 Date: 17/01/2026