



TORRES STRAIT FISHERIES GUIDEBOOK



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This guidebook is your at-sea guide to fishing from vessels in **Torres Strait Protected Zone** fisheries.

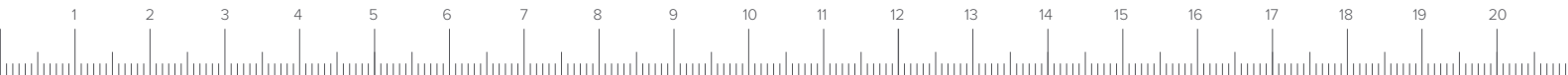
Each card details regulations for catching and carrying species found in the Torres Strait.

Use this guidebook to know the rules and stay compliant on allowable catch, size limits, fishing equipment, boat size and licence restrictions for each species.

(This book - including its measuring ruler edge - should be used as a guide only.)

LICENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMERCIAL FISHING:

- Only Traditional Inhabitants can work on a Traditional Inhabitant Boat (TIB)
- To catch or carry a species, the owner of the vessel must have the correct symbol on their licence (see species cards)
- Fishers must follow any and all conditions on their licence
- Fishers must also comply with all relevant fisheries instruments, regulations and applicable management plans. For more information, contact the AFMA office on 07 4069 1990
- Commercial catch may not be taken across the Australia/PNG border



BECHE-DE-MER (SEA CUCUMBER / ABER / PISLIMA)

LICENCE REQUIREMENT

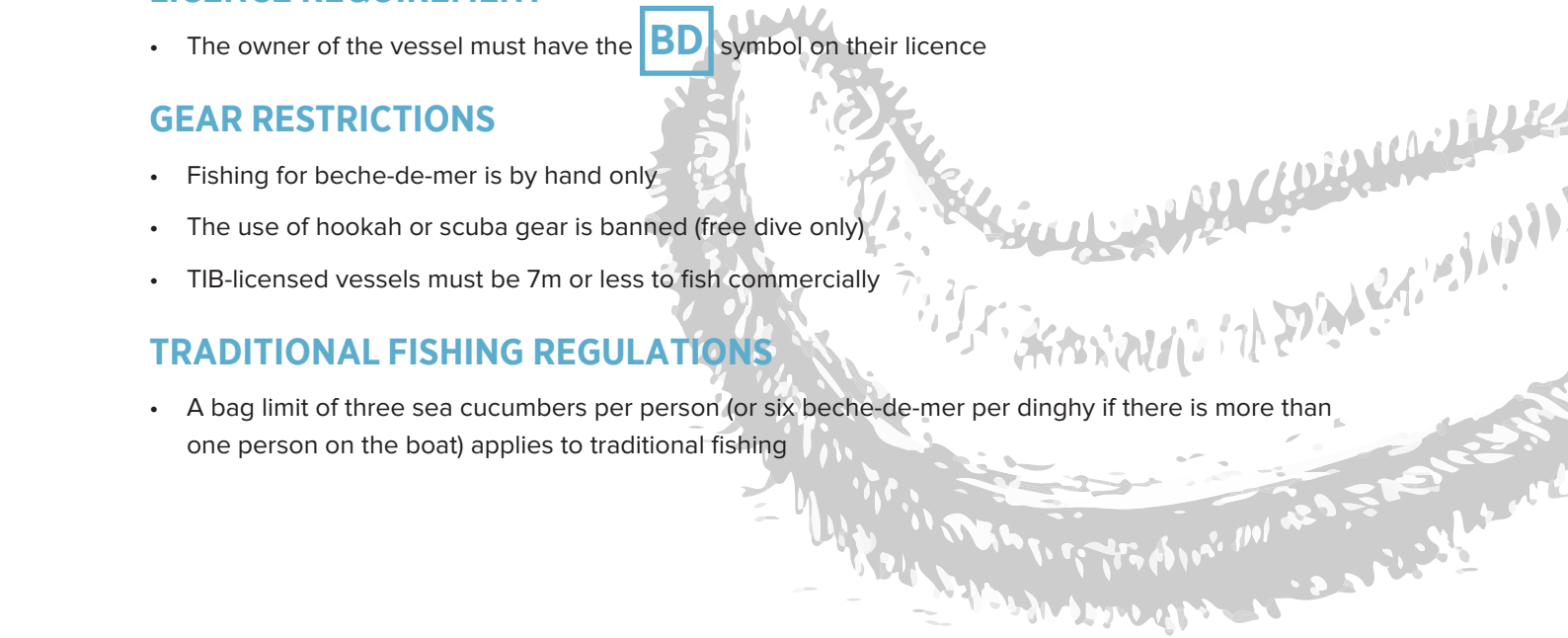
- The owner of the vessel must have the  symbol on their licence

GEAR RESTRICTIONS

- Fishing for beche-de-mer is by hand only
- The use of hookah or scuba gear is banned (free dive only)
- TIB-licensed vessels must be 7m or less to fish commercially

TRADITIONAL FISHING REGULATIONS

- A bag limit of three sea cucumbers per person (or six beche-de-mer per dinghy if there is more than one person on the boat) applies to traditional fishing



BECHE-DE-MER (SEA CUCUMBER / ABER / PISLIMA)

SIZE AND CATCH LIMIT

- Total allowable catch (TAC) limits apply to each beche-de-mer species
- Minimum size limits apply to most beche-de-mer species

| Common name | Size | TAC (wet and gutted weight) |
|--------------------|-------|--|
| Sand fish | 180mm | 0 Tons |
| Black teatfish | 250mm | |
| Surf redfish | 220mm | |
| White teatfish | 320mm | 15 Tons |
| Prickly redfish | 300mm | 20 Tons |
| Elephant trunkfish | 240mm | Combined TAC of 80 tonnes across all species |
| Black fish | 220mm | |
| Curry fish | 270mm | |
| Lolly fish | 150mm | |
| Deepwater redfish | 120mm | |
| Stone fish | None | |
| Green fish | | |
| Amber fish | | |
| Brown sandfish | | |
| Leopard fish | | |
| Pink fish | | |



FINFISH FISHERY (SPANISH MACKEREL, DABOR / DUBOI)

LICENCE REQUIREMENTS

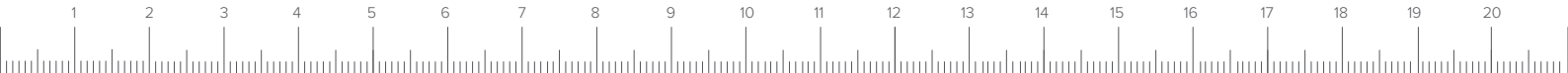
- The owner of the vessel must have the **MK** symbol on their licence

SIZE AND CATCH LIMITS

- Minimum size limits apply to all species taken commercially:

| Common name | Size |
|------------------|-------|
| School mackerel | 500mm |
| Grey mackerel | 500mm |
| Shark mackerel | 500mm |
| Spotted mackerel | 600mm |
| Spanish mackerel | 750mm |

- A person holding a licence allowing take of reef line species may only carry up to 20kg of mackerel
- A person licensed to take mackerel may only carry up to 20kg of reef line species
- A person holding a licence allowing take of commercial species other than reef line or mackerel species (i.e. TRL, BDM, trochus or pearl) can only carry a combined maximum weight of mackerel and reef line species of 20kg



FINFISH FISHERY (SPANISH MACKEREL, DABOR / DUBOI)

GEAR RESTRICTIONS

- Only trolling, handlining or droplining are allowed
- In the Bramble Cay and Black Rocks area, non-TIB fishers can only use trolling
- Commercial fishing vessels must be 20m or less to fish commercially

SEASONAL RESTRICTIONS

- In the area of Bramble Cay and Black Rocks, non-TIB licences are prohibited from taking mackerel between 0930 and 1500 (EST) each day between August and December



FINFISH FISHERY - REEF LINE (WAPPY, WITI / MAMAM LAR)

LICENCE REQUIREMENTS

- The owner of the vessel must have the **LN** symbol on their licence

SIZE AND CATCH LIMIT

- Minimum and maximum size limits apply to some species. Minimum size limits for some commonly caught species are:

| Common name | Size |
|--------------------|-------|
| Coral trout | 380mm |
| Barramundi cod | 450mm |
| Red throat emperor | 380mm |
| Grass sweetlip | 300mm |
| Red emperor | 550mm |
| Tusk fish | 300mm |
| Nannygai | 400mm |

A full list of size limits is available in Schedule 1 of the Torres Strait Fisheries Management Instrument No. 8:

www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2011L01837



FINFISH FISHERY - REEF LINE (WAPPY, WITI / MAMAM LAR)

- A person holding a reef line species licence may only carry up to 20kg of mackerel
- A person holding a mackerel licence may only carry up to 20kg of reef line species
- A person holding a licence allowing take of commercial species other than reef line or mackerel species (TRL, BDM, Trochus or Pearl) can only carry a combined 20kg of mackerel and reef line species
- Removal of fins from a shark and then disposing of its trunk at sea is not allowed

GEAR RESTRICTIONS

- Commercial fishing with a net is banned, only the use of a bait net is allowed
- Traditional fishers may use nets no larger than 100m long and 2.5m deep. Mesh size must be greater than 100mm
- Reef line fishing can only be done with a maximum of six hooks attached to each line, and no more than three fishing lines per boat
- Reef line fishing for commercial purposes is not allowed west of longitude 142° 31' 49" (the Western Closure Line)
- Commercial fishing vessels must be 20m or less to fish commercially

SEASONAL RESTRICTIONS

- Commercial fishing for Barramundi is banned during November, December and January each year



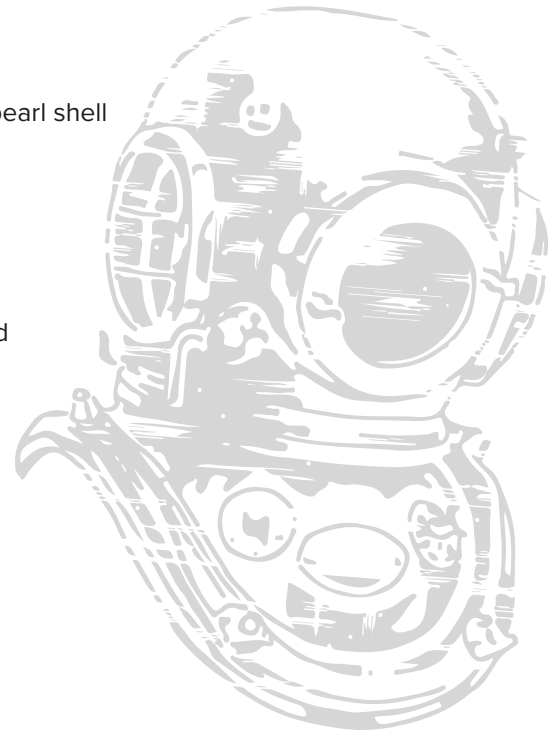
PEARL SHELL (MAI / MAUB)

LICENCE REQUIREMENTS

- A licence is required to catch gold-lipped pearl shell, black-lipped pearl shell and all other pearl shell species

TRADITIONAL FISHING ONLY

- Pearl shell take is allowed for kaikai, cultural and traditional use
- Taking, carrying or processing dead gold-lip pearl shell is prohibited



PEARL SHELL (MAI / MAUB)

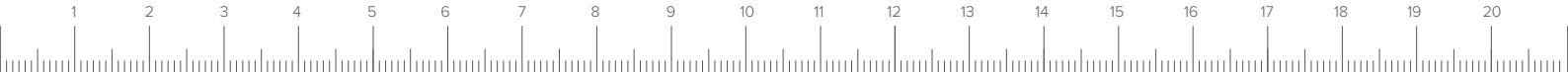
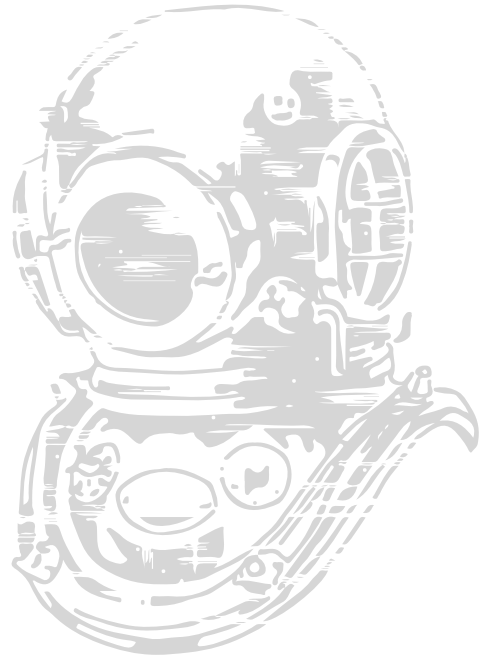
SIZE AND CATCH LIMITS

- Minimum and maximum size limits for gold and black-lipped pearl shells apply:
 - i. Gold-lipped pearl shell must be between 130mm and 230mm
 - ii. Black-lipped pearl shell must be larger than 90mm

(measurements are taken from the butt or hinge to the opposite edge of the lip)


GEAR RESTRICTIONS

- Only diving and collecting by hand is allowed
- TIB-licensed vessels must be 6m or less to fish commercially



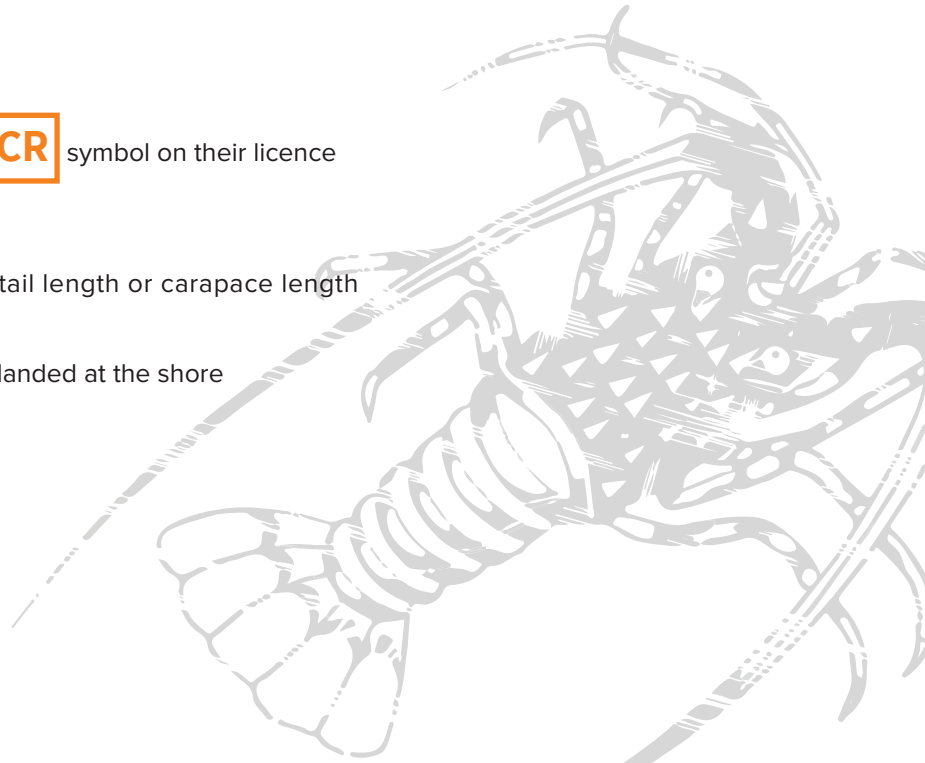
TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER (KEIYAR / KAIAR)

LICENCE REQUIREMENT

- The owner of the vessel must have the  symbol on their licence

SIZE AND CATCH LIMITS

- Taking or spearing Kaiar under 115mm tail length or carapace length of 90mm is banned
- Kaiar meat must remain in the shell until landed at the shore



TROPICAL ROCK LOBSTER (KEIYAR / KAIAR)

SEASONAL RESTRICTIONS

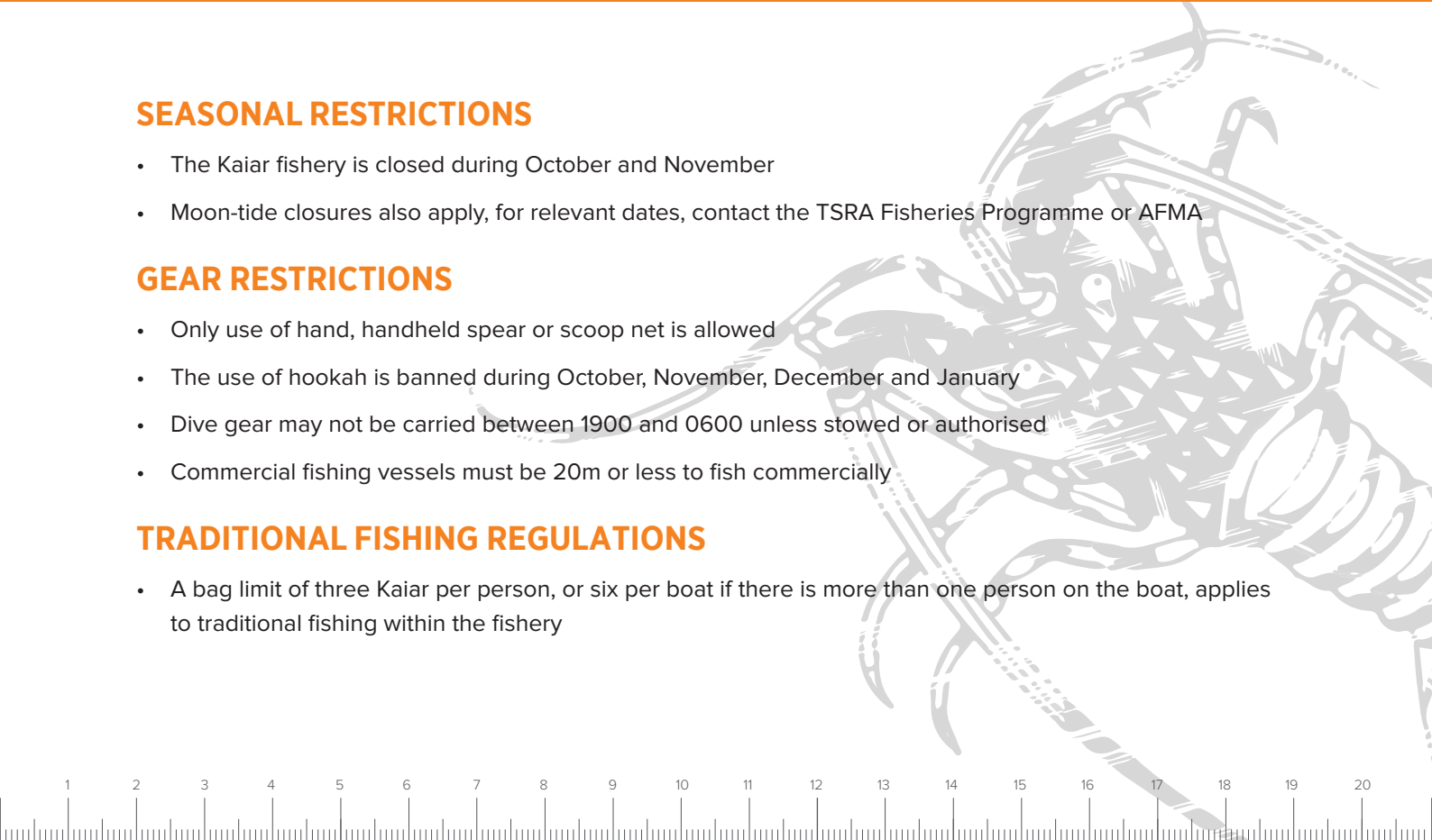
- The Kaiar fishery is closed during October and November
- Moon-tide closures also apply, for relevant dates, contact the TSRA Fisheries Programme or AFMA

GEAR RESTRICTIONS

- Only use of hand, handheld spear or scoop net is allowed
- The use of hookah is banned during October, November, December and January
- Dive gear may not be carried between 1900 and 0600 unless stowed or authorised
- Commercial fishing vessels must be 20m or less to fish commercially

TRADITIONAL FISHING REGULATIONS

- A bag limit of three Kaiar per person, or six per boat if there is more than one person on the boat, applies to traditional fishing within the fishery



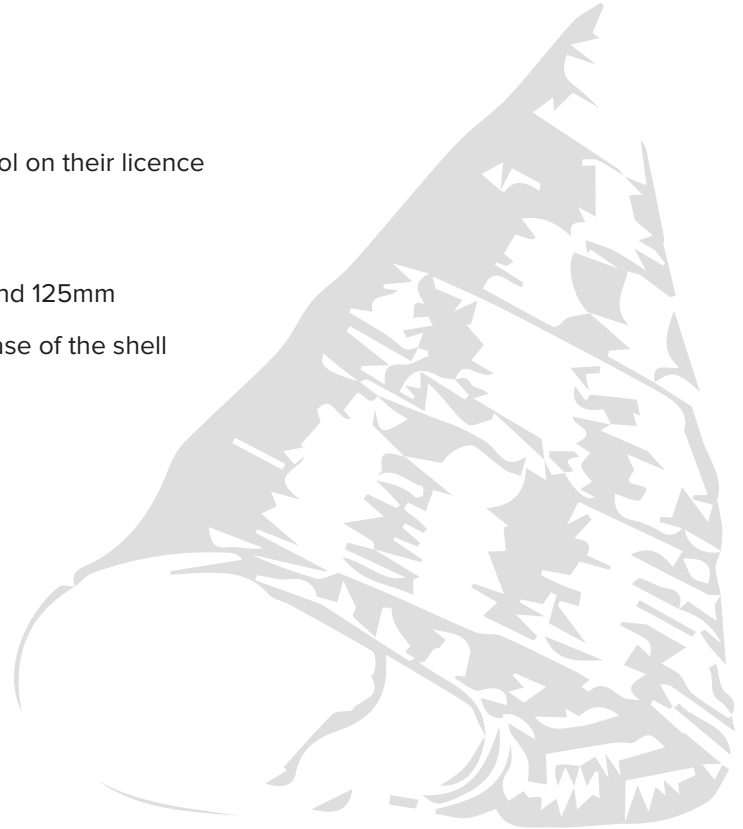
TROCHUS SHELL (KABARR / NAZIR)

LICENCE REQUIREMENTS

- The owner of the vessel must have the **TR** symbol on their licence

SIZE AND CATCH LIMITS

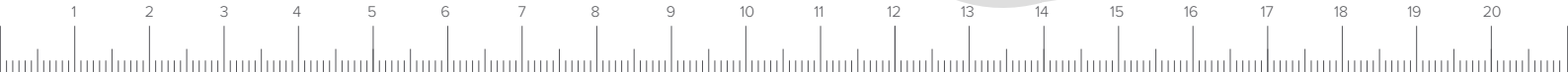
- Harvested trochus shells must be between 80mm and 125mm
- Measurements are taken at the widest part of the base of the shell
- The total allowable commercial catch is 150 tons



TROCHUS SHELL (KABARR / NAZIR)

GEAR RESTRICTIONS

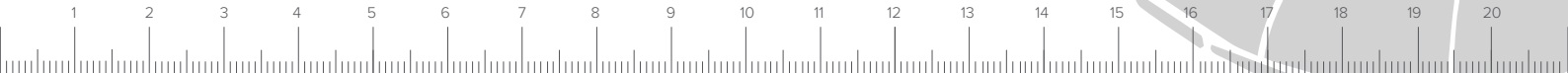
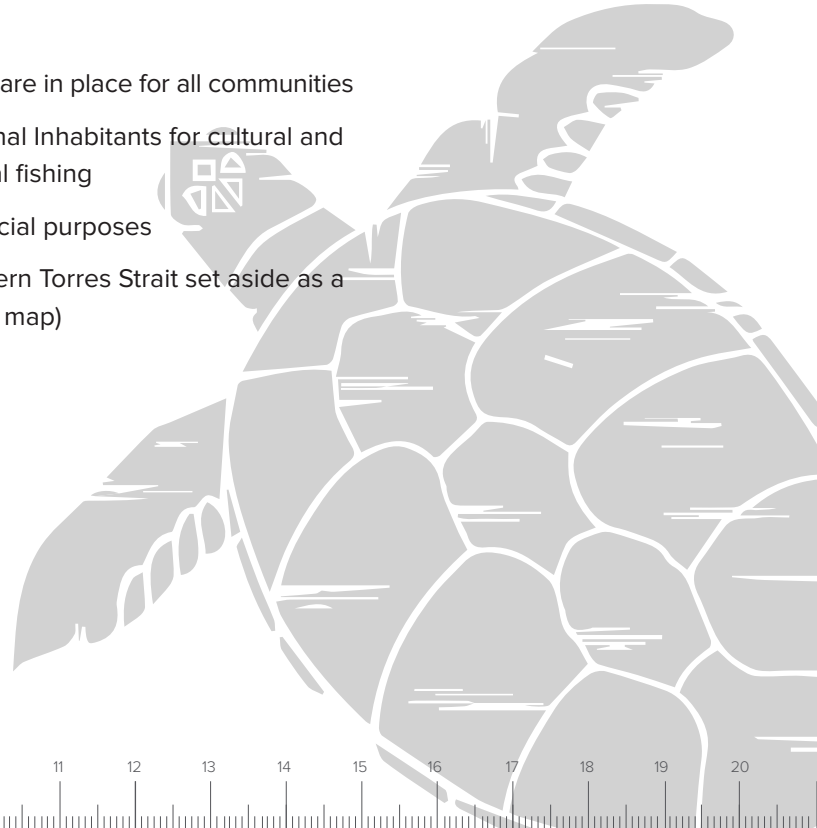
- The taking of Trochus Shell is restricted to hand collection or by handheld non-mechanical implements
- The use of hookah or scuba gear is banned (free dive only)
- TIB-licensed vessels must be 20m or less to fish commercially



DUGONG AND TURTLE (DHANGAL / DEGER, WARU / NAM)

TRADITIONAL FISHING ONLY

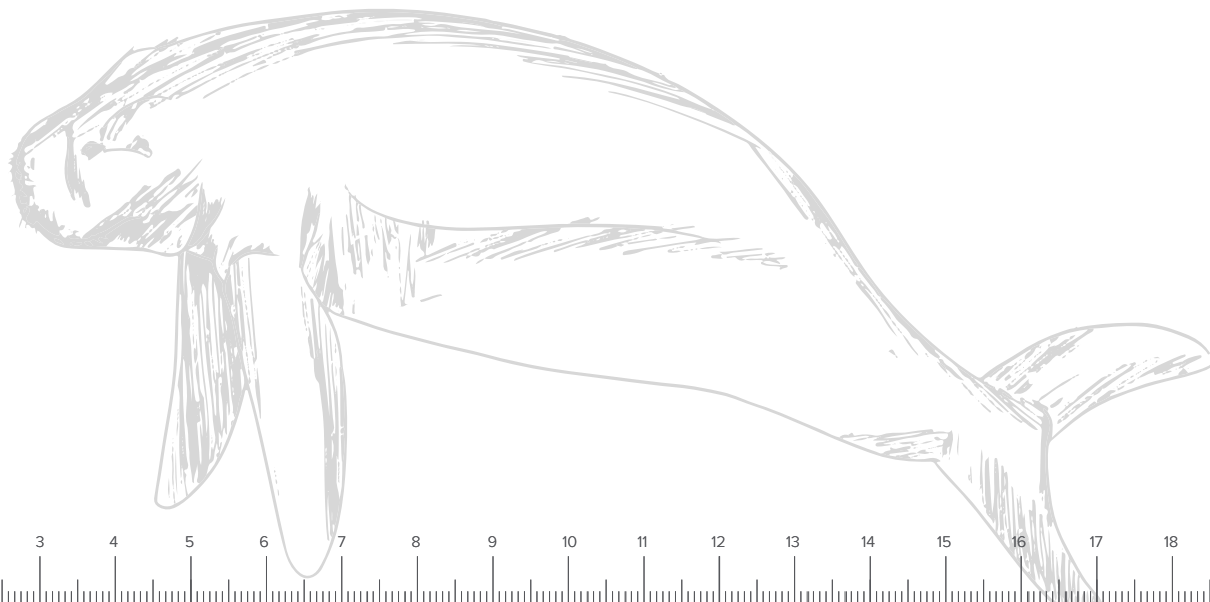
- Dugong and turtle Community Management Plans are in place for all communities
- Dugong and turtles may only be taken by Traditional Inhabitants for cultural and traditional practices and in the course of traditional fishing
- Dugong and turtles cannot be hunted for commercial purposes
- Dugong hunting is banned in a large area of western Torres Strait set aside as a dugong sanctuary (contact TSRA for a copy of the map)



DUGONG AND TURTLE (DHANGAL / DEGER, WARU / NAM)

GEAR RESTRICTIONS

- Dugong may only be taken using the traditional spear (wap)
- TIB-licensed vessels less than 6m are permitted to take and/or carry turtle and dugong



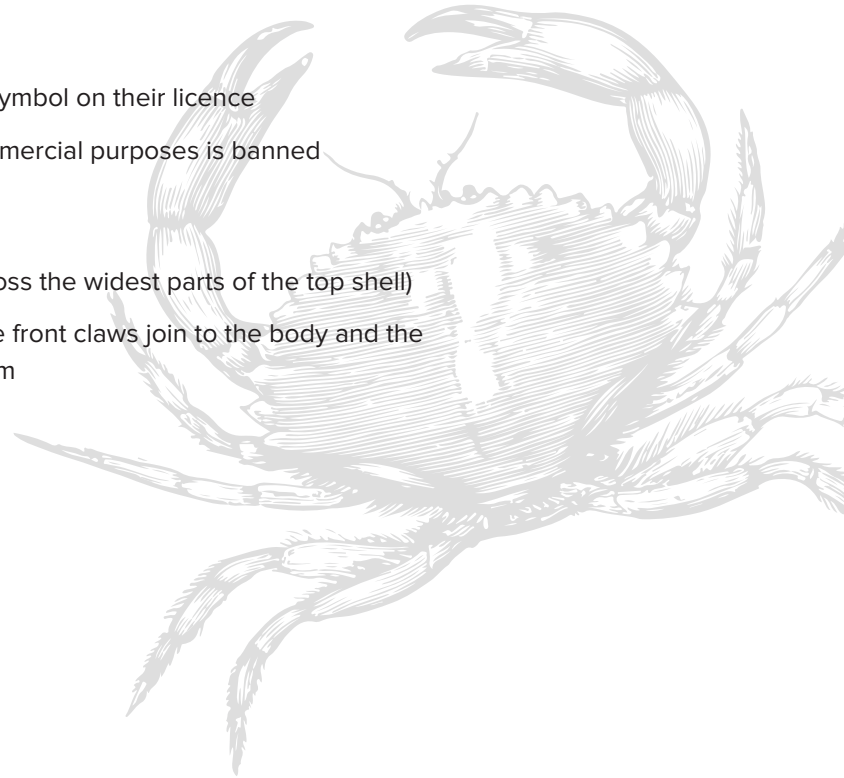
CRAB – (GITHALAI / DAUMA)

LICENCE REQUIREMENT

- The owner of the vessel must have the **CB** symbol on their licence
- The take or possession of female crabs for commercial purposes is banned

SIZE LIMITS

- Each crab must be at least 15cm (measured across the widest parts of the top shell)
- If the top shell is missing, the width between the front claws join to the body and the back legs join to the body must be at least 4.6cm



CRAB – (GITHALAI / DAUMA)

GEAR RESTRICTIONS

- A maximum of 50 crab pots are allowed per boat
- Pots must have tags with the owner's name and light-coloured floats of at least 150mm length or width, each displaying the boat-mark
- TIB-licensed vessels must be 14m or less to fish commercially



ILLEGAL FISHING

Illegal fishing harms the environment, culture and people of the Torres Strait.

You can help stop illegal fishing by reporting when you see commercial fishers fishing outside the rules in this book, including:

- Fishing in closed areas
- Fishing in closed seasons
- Taking more catch than the allowed limit
- Unregistered commercial boats
- Using banned methods to catch fish
- Commercial catch being taken across the Australia/PNG border

If you see or have any information on illegal fishing, FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE STEPS:

1. Record the date, time and area where the activity occurs or occurred

2. Record any boat name or registration numbers and a description of all vessels involved
3. If safe to do so, take photographs or other evidence
4. If you know the person or persons involved, record their names
5. Keep an accurate description of the activity

DO NOT APPROACH the people involved as this can compromise an investigation.

If you suspect **domestic illegal fishing**, report it to the toll-free 24-hour FISH WATCH HOTLINE **1800 017 116**.

If you suspect **foreign illegal fishing** report it to the toll-free 24-hour CRIMFISH hotline **1800 274 634**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Torres Strait Regional Authority
Level 1, Torres Haus, 46 Victoria Parade
Thursday Island, Queensland 4875

Telephone: 07 40 690 700

Toll Free: 1800 079 093

Email: info@tsra.gov.au

www.tsra.gov.au



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