

Managing Recreational Fishing



GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA

Department of Environmental Protection

Introduction

- Recreational fishing is a major component of fishing effort globally.
- Statistics from other countries show that:
 - Recreational fishing is increasing
 - 33% of food fish landed are caught by recreational fishers
 - For some species in some areas, recreational landings are greater than commercial landings
 - Roughly 33% of those that live near the coast fish.
 - Approximately 60% of recreational fishing is done from shore.
- Recreational fisheries show a skewed distribution of effort.
 - Most people fish a little
 - A few people fish a lot



Local Background

- There is little information on recreational fishing in Bermuda today.
 - Presumed to be different from 20 years ago, when the regulations were created.
 - Changed lifestyles alter the importance of fishing for fun / food.
 - Composition of the local population has changed dramatically.
 - Preliminary information indicates that 30% of households have at least one person that fishes.

This extrapolates to 16,000 fishers

70% of these fish from shore

- Bermuda's responsibilities under ICCAT require reporting of all harvest of Highly Migratory Species such as tunas and wahoo.
- The 2005 White Paper committed to a licensing system for recreational fishing BUT this has not been implemented yet.

Goals and Actions

Goals:

- **To acquire data on recreational fishing** to facilitate better management.
- **To revise the fisheries regulations as necessary** to conserve local fish stocks and reduce conflict between the various sectors.
- **To establish ongoing reporting of harvest by the non-commercial sectors** to assist management and fulfill international reporting obligations.

- **A detailed evaluation of all recreational fishing activities** is required to facilitate proper management and reduce conflict with the commercial fishery.
- **A comprehensive survey of all non-commercial fishing and collecting activities will be conducted.**
- The survey is expected to **highlight discrepancies** between the Fisheries Regulations and current fishing practices. **Regulations will be revised accordingly.**
- **A program for the ongoing reporting of catch** from the non-commercial sectors will be established.

Recreational Fishing Survey

- The Marine Resources Section plans to carry out a comprehensive recreational fishing survey in 2011.
 - Mail survey
 - General and also targeted toward boat owners
 - Telephone survey
 - Street survey
 - Exit survey for visiting yachts and crews of cargo / cruise ships
 - Roving creel survey on shore and on the water
- The survey will ask about:
 - Fishing habits (how often, where, when)
 - Fish species targeted
 - Catch levels and catch rates
 - Attitudes / suggestions regarding regulations and licensing

Possibility of New Regulations

- The results of the survey are expected to highlight discrepancies between existing regulations and current fishing practices.
- The Regulations associated with the Fisheries Act may therefore require revision.
 - More bag limits may be needed to curtail effort at the upper end of the spectrum.
 - Species not traditionally targeted may now benefit from minimum size restrictions.




Ongoing Monitoring

- The survey will provide initial baseline data, BUT ongoing monitoring of the recreational fishery will be needed.
- Monitoring will probably be accomplished through a combination of licensing, gear registration, voluntary logbooks and periodic surveys.
- Waterproof logbooks are now available to record recreational fishing activity and catches on a voluntary basis.
- A licence will be required for spearfishing from September 1st, 2011, to help monitor target species and reduce violations.
 - Based on the recommendations in the 2005 White Paper
 - Licensing system will be similar to that for lobster divers
- Cast nets will need to be registered soon.
- Offshore fishing will likely be licensed, with compulsory reporting, in order to facilitate better reporting to ICCAT
- Any further licensing would be developed based on input from stakeholders to make sure it is practical.
- Fees will be nominal, to cover processing costs.

Other Activities

- Measuring at fishing tournaments
- Signs detailing Fisheries Regulations to be placed on docks and at shoreline fishing locations
- Lectures
- Other outreach activities











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Ministry of Environment and Sports
Department of Environmental Protection







The Bermuda Government Department of Environmental Protection would like to remind the public and our visitors of the following Fisheries Regulations:

Spearfishing is not permitted within one nautical mile of the shore.
Lobsters may only be taken by those with a licence from the Dept. of Environmental Protection.
Fixed fishing gear of any type, including pots, traps or staked nets, is prohibited except under special licence issued by the Dept. of Environmental Protection.

The following species are fully protected, and must not be taken or harmed:

 All types of turtles	 All types of corals	 Queen conch and Harbour conch
 Bermuda scallop and calico scallop	 Calico clam	 West Indian Top Shell
 All species of parrotfishes	 Nassau grouper (Grass hamlet), Red grouper (Deer hamlet), Mutton hamlet, Yellowfin grouper (Princess rockfish), Gag grouper / rockfish, Tiger grouper / gag	

For certain species, there is a minimum size and a limit on the number of fish that may be caught. Any undersized fish or extra fish must be handled with due care and returned to the water alive.

 Black grouper / Black rockfish: min. size 95 cm (37.5 inches), limit 1 per day	 Yellowmouth grouper / Monkey rockfish: min. size 50 cm (20 inches), limit 1 per day	 Lane snapper / Silk snapper / Whitewater snapper: min. size 25 cm (10 inches), limit 30 per day
 Red Hind: min. size 35 cm (14 inches), limit 10 per day between 1 May and 31 August	 Yellowtail snapper: min. size 30 cm (12 inches)	 Hogfish: min. size 45 cm (18 inches)

Remember that abandoned fishing gear and other trash can be hazardous to marine and coastal wildlife, as well as people. If you brought it with you, please take it away with you.

This is a summary of some key Marine Resources regulations. For further information, please contact 2935600.

Conclusions

- There are significant gaps in our knowledge of recreational fishing in Bermuda.
- More information is required in order to improve local management and facilitate international reporting obligations.
- A comprehensive recreational fishing survey in 2011 is the first step.
- HOWEVER, ongoing monitoring will be required.
- Monitoring will likely be achieved through a combination of licensing, voluntary logbooks and periodic surveys.
- The Marine Resources Section is asking for the support of the public, particularly the recreational fishing sectors, in order to facilitate this.
- Bermuda's marine resources belong to us all, and the sustainable management of the marine environment is everyone's responsibility.

