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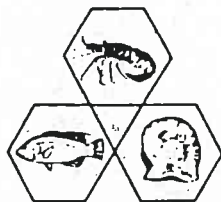
DRAFT
MANAGEMENT PLAN

FOR THE

**PERTH METROPOLITAN
PURSE SEINE FISHERY**

BY
P.J. MILLINGTON

FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PAPER
No 14



FISHERIES DEPARTMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

MARCH 1988

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SUMMARY

As part of a development strategy for inshore purse seine fishing along the Western Australian coast this plan proposes management measures for the purse seine fishing boats operating along the coast near the greater Perth Metropolitan area. Using as a basis the restricted entry Cockburn Sound purse seine fishery, the plan proposes the introduction of a limited entry regime for inshore purse seine fishing between Lancelin to just south of Mandurah. This regime will permit management of the available pelagic fish stocks in the area and also protect the economic position of the existing participants by providing an environment for controlled development.

Included in the participants who will be subject to management are full time purse seine fishermen, rock lobster fishermen and wetline fishermen. The latter two groups operate purse seine nets part time or sporadically. Proposed entry criteria for the fishery are based upon a minimum tonnage taken in the four years prior to 30 June 1986 and having a continuing commitment since then. The bench mark date of 30 June 1986 was used in establishing entry criteria as this time coincided with the commencement of the Fisheries Department's discussions on management with purse seine fishermen. The bulk of the purse seine fishery had already been restricted as part of the overall arrangements implemented for the Cockburn Sound fishery in 1985.

It is proposed that the full time purse seine fishermen should be issued with transferable licences. Purse seine fishing licences issued to the rock lobster fishermen and wetline fishermen should not be transferable. Basic gear specifications are outlined, as is a ceiling on boat size for replacement by the full time purse seiners.

The draft plan is submitted for public comment prior to final recommendations on management for this fishery being submitted to the Minister for Fisheries for his consideration.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That a Notice should be gazetted controlling all types of fishing using a purse seine net, whether hauled by hand or with mechanical assistance off the coast immediately north and south of the greater Perth metropolitan area.
2. That the Metropolitan Purse Seine Fishery be declared to be a limited entry fishery.
3. The boundaries of the limited entry fishery should be in the north at 31°S (Lancelin), on the west at the limit of the 200 mile Australian Fishing Zone, on the south at 33°S (near Cape Bouvard) and should include Cockburn Sound.
4.
 - (a) That the limited entry fishery apply to all small pelagic fish species taken by purse seine net such as pilchards, scaley mackerel, yellowtail scad, Perth herring, whitebait, maray, anchovy and blue sprat.
 - (b) That the taking of white bait and anchovy by vessels using mechanically assisted purse seine nets be reviewed and appropriate controls introduced if required.
5.
 - (a) That a licensed vessel or its replacement which was used to catch 20 tonnes or more per year on average in the four years 1 July 1982 to 30 June 1986 inclusive, by use of purse seine, in statistical blocks 9600, 3115 or 3215, be granted an A class licence for this fishery. This licence to be fully transferable.
 - (b) That notwithstanding (a), a fishing vessel or its replacement licensed for the Limited Entry Western Rock Lobster Fishery, which was used to catch one tonne or more per year on average in the four years 1 July 1982 to 30 June 1986 by use of purse seine in statistical blocks 9600, 3115 or 3215 be granted a B

class licence for this fishery. This licence not to be transferable.

(c) That a licensed fishing vessel or its replacement which was used to catch more than one tonne but less than 20 tonnes per year on average in the four years 1 July 1982 to 30 June 1986 inclusive by use of purse seine in blocks 9600, 3115 or 3215, be granted a C class licence for this fishery. This licence not to be transferable.

(d) All of these vessels to have had a continuing commitment to catching small pelagic fish by purse seine in the metropolitan region (statistical blocks 9600, 3115 or 3215) between 1 July 1986 and 30 June 1987.

(e) Those vessels which held an endorsement for the Cockburn Sound Restricted Entry Fishery which would otherwise qualify under (a), (b), or (c) above but for which the endorsement has lapsed on licence transfer should not be permitted an endorsement for this purse seine fishery.

6. That vessels endorsed with A class licences to operate within the Metropolitan Purse Seine Fishery can only be replaced by another vessel no greater than 16 metres in length. No constraints on boat replacement policy should be applied for B and C class licences at this stage, as a consequence of their involvement in other fisheries.

7. (a) That the maximum permitted dimensions of a purse seine net used in this fishery should be 250 metres in length, but with no minimum mesh size. The depth of net used should be kept under review.

(b) That only those vessels with an A class licence be permitted to operate with mechanical assistance such

as hydraulic rollers or power blocks to set and haul the purse seine net.

- (c) That the level of use of other types of nets by vessels or operators not licensed for this fishery to catch small pelagic species should be kept under review and additional controls should be introduced if catches increase significantly.
- 8. That the inter-relationship of the Purse Seine Fishery and other development fisheries along the Western Australian coast for small coastal pelagic fish be kept under review.
 - 9. (a) That on the creation of a limited entry fishery a higher level of fee for a limited entry licence be obtained to offset research expenditure into this fishery. That this fee apply only to A licence holders.

(b) That a fee for B and C licences to operate in the limited entry fishery equal to three quarters of one per cent of the gross total value of the catch from the pelagic fishery should be applied.
 - 10. That it be noted that the Minister has the authority to consider applications of a special nature on a case by case basis and to impose special conditions on boats holding authorisations.
 - 11. That an appeal body be established to consider and make recommendations to the Minister for Fisheries on the appeal by each fisherman who holds the view that his boat should have been granted a limited entry licence or a different authorisation to the one he received.
 - 12. That the proposed management plan be implemented as soon as possible.

13. That subject to the recommendations being adopted they be incorporated in a Ministerial Notice to be made under Section 32 of the Fisheries Act.
14. That the operation of this fishery be periodically reviewed by a joint Industry/Government meeting open to all participants.

1. INTRODUCTION

At present there are two major inshore purse seine fisheries off Western Australia: within and immediately north of Cockburn Sound and in King George Sound. Potential exists for similar fisheries in most bays and on the south and lower west Western Australian coast.

A Working Group Report was issued in November 1986 for the King George Sound Fishery recommending the introduction of a limited entry regime. On 23 November 1987 the Minister for Fisheries announced the adoption of most of the Working Group recommendations and the introduction of a limited entry fishery (Appendix 1). The Working Group Report incorporated recommendations for the introduction of a development zone for purse seine fishing in waters adjacent to Albany. With the probable introduction of limited entry measures for Cockburn Sound and adjacent waters, similar development zones for a wider stretch of the west coast were considered necessary. The Minister for Fisheries therefore announced arrangements to develop pilchard fisheries off the Western Australian coast on 23 November 1987 (Appendix 2).

The Minister's announcement indicated that there was already sufficient fishing capacity in the area between Lancelin and Cape Bouvard to develop pelagic fish resources using purse seine nets. This report outlines a management plan to control such development in this area, using as a basis the existing restricted entry Cockburn Sound Purse Seine fishery.

The Cockburn Sound area supports a multi-species, multi-method commercial fishery. Techniques commonly used include beach seine (for species such as mullet and sandy sprat), purse seine (for pilchards and scaly mackerel), mesh nets (for crabs and shark) and lines (for snapper and mulloway).

In recent years there has been a rapid increase in the number of individuals participating in the commercial fishery of Cockburn Sound.

In response to this increase, the Minister for Fisheries announced on 31 October 1985 that Cockburn Sound would be a restricted entry fishery for commercial operations pending further discussions with fishermen on long term management arrangements.

Interim endorsements for Cockburn Sound were restricted to those units which were operating in the Sound in 1984 and were still operating in the fishery as at 30 April 1985.

Based on these criteria 35 endorsements were initially approved for the operation of all types of nets in Cockburn Sound. Of these approximately eight are full time purse seine fishermen using hydraulic power blocks to operate their nets, while there are approximately the same number of rock lobster boats which hand haul purse seine nets during their off season. There are also a few "wetline" fishing vessels which operate hand hauled purse seine nets. It is these three groups of vessels that this plan is intended to cover.

There are several reasons for introducing management measures for this fishery so that development can proceed in an orderly fashion:

1. Overseas experience has shown that unchecked expansion of fishing on pelagic fish stocks can lead to a sudden collapse of the fishery. Introduction of management measures such as a limited entry regime will allow control to be exerted on the inevitable increases of fishing pressure on the resource of small pelagic fish.
2. There will be more opportunity for a research programme to provide a clearer understanding of the

size of the resource of small pelagic fish, as little is known at present either from research or by comparison with similar species elsewhere.

3. The increased stability afforded by a management regime will permit operators to move with greater confidence from the inshore areas they have traditionally fished, to further offshore.
4. The relationship between the purse seine fishery on small pelagic fish and the inshore recreational angling fishery will be better understood.

The measures outlined in later sections were formulated after discussions with research staff at the Western Australian Marine Research Laboratories and District Fisheries Officers at Fremantle and Mandurah. A draft plan outline was also received from the operators of the nine existing purse seine vessels after discussions within that group, and many of their recommendations are reflected in this plan.

2. THE METROPOLITAN PURSE SEINE FISHERY

Approximately nine small purse seine vessels (units) presently operate in the nearshore marine waters off the metropolitan area. Eight of these units have licence endorsements which enable them to operate in the Cockburn Sound Restricted Entry fishing area (ie. Cockburn Sound and Owen Anchorage). The other main area of operation is immediately north of this fishery in Gage Roads, and off the adjacent metropolitan beaches as far north as City Beach (Figure 1). All net fishing within 400 m of the shore is prohibited.

These fishermen target exclusively on bait species. Depending on seasonal availability and market demand, they target on pilchard, scaly mackerel, with some smaller catches of Perth herring and yellowtail scad. On average, 700 tonnes per year are taken from Cockburn Sound alone and an additional 700 tonnes per year in adjacent areas (Table 1).

Technical fishing aids such as echo sounders, and more recently sonar, together with many years of experience in spotting and catching fish enable these fishermen to very successfully identify and net schools of bait species. There is virtually no by-catch of any other species.

The majority of the pilchard catch is sold as angling bait, while the scaley mackerel are primarily caught for rock lobster bait. Some of the catch is now being sold to the pet food market.

In "purse seine" terms, the fishermen use small nets and small boats with no onboard freezing facilities. They transport their relatively small catches of fish quickly to shore-based freezer facilities, ensuring the provision of a high quality product. In order to maintain product quality, as they have no onboard freezing facilities, they are

restricted to fishing in relatively shallow nearshore waters, even though the small pelagic fish resource is distributed abundantly over much of the continental shelf.

At current levels of exploitation, biological over exploitation of these stocks is not considered likely. This relatively small fishery has operated for many years, providing employment for a number of fishermen, crew members and processors, and substantial quantities of quality bait for Western Australia's and Australia's ever increasing number of recreational anglers.

Another component of the fishery which must be taken into account is the activities of a small number of rock lobster boats which have traditionally used hand hauled purse seine equipment to catch bait for their rock lobster potting operations. For them, access to this fishery constitutes a vital part of their total operations.

3. MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

3.1 Definition of the Fishery

A purse seine can be hauled either by using a mechanical aid such as a hydraulic (puretic) block, or by hand. The former method is used by the full time vessels fishing mainly for the recreational bait market while the latter is commonly used by rock lobster fishermen fishing for bait and also by a few "wetline" fishing boats. All three groups target on the same pelagic species, so all should come under this management plan.

Recommendation

That a Notice should be gazetted controlling all types of fishing using a purse seine net, whether hauled by hand or with mechanical assistance, off the coast immediately north and south of the greater Perth metropolitan area.

3.2 Status of Fishery

In the long term, to accord with the Ministerial decision in late 1985 to restrict access to the Cockburn Sound professional fishery, the purse seine fishery should be managed as a limited entry fishery.

This approach is in line with the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council's advice to the Minister for Fisheries which supported controlled access as a management mechanism for the metropolitan purse seine fishery, including Cockburn Sound.

A limited entry regimes also allows for the orderly development of the fishery for the range of reasons outlined in the Introduction (Section 2).

Recommendation

That the Metropolitan Purse Seine Fishery be declared to be a limited entry fishery.

3.3 Boundaries

As described in Section 2, the metropolitan purse seine fishery, although centred on Cockburn Sound (Block 9600) does operate in adjacent areas. As Cockburn Sound forms the basis of the full time fishery, eight of the nine full time purse seine vessels currently operating also have endorsements to fish in Cockburn Sound.

This is essentially a small boat fishery operating inshore or in marine embayments taking the available inshore small pelagic fish stocks. Cockburn Sound has been the centre of an active purse seine fishery for many years due to its proximity to local markets and its protected waters. The full resource potential in immediately adjacent areas is not well enough known to allow the introduction of additional full time purse seine vessels.

To enable effective control over all areas of the fishery outside Cockburn Sound the management plan needs to encompass the full range of the fishery. This includes the offshore and adjacent coastal areas as a result of inevitable expansion of activities in future years as the limited entry fishery develops.

For this reason, the proposed boundaries correspond to the northern boundary of statistical block 3115 and the southern boundary of statistical block 3215.

Recommendation

The boundaries of the limited entry fishery should be in the north at 31°S (Lancelin), on the west at the limit of the 200 mile Australian Fishing Zone, on the south at 33°S (near Cape Bouvard) and should include Cockburn Sound.

3.4 Species

As mentioned previously, the purse seine method as used in Cockburn Sound and adjacent areas targets almost exclusively on pilchard and scaly mackerel, with smaller catches of Perth herring and yellowtail scad.

However, there does appear to be a trend by some fishermen operating with vessels utilizing power blocks to also target upon whitebait and more recently anchovy. Whitebait, commonly found closer inshore and traditionally taken by beach seine fishermen using hand hauled nets, may not be able to sustain heavy fishing pressure of this type. Anchovy is also abundant in coastal waters, particularly in embayments and estuaries. However it is not known how much fishing pressure the stocks of these species can sustain.

Further, offshore stocks of blue mackerel Scomber australasicus and jack mackerel Trachurus declivis may be located. These species would be expected to be exploited by large specialized purse seiners and midwater trawlers not forming part of the existing inshore fleet. Under proposed Offshore Constitutional Settlement arrangements the Western Australian Fisheries Act will have jurisdiction for the management of the fishery for small pelagic species but not jack mackerel or blue mackerel.

Most purse seine operations take virtually no by-catch of any other species, so the fishery is easily separated for management from other pelagic fisheries in the region.

The species to be covered by this plan therefore include:-

Pilchards (mulies)	<u>Sardinops neopilchardus</u>
Scaley mackerel	<u>Sardinella lemuru</u>
Perth herring	<u>Nematalosa vlaminghi</u>
Yellowtail scad	<u>Trachurus novaezelandiae</u>
Australian anchovy	<u>Engraulis australis</u>
Whitebait	<u>Hyperlophus vittatus</u>
Maray	<u>Etrumeus teres</u>
Blue Sprat	<u>Spratelloides robustus</u>

Recommendation

- (a) That the limited entry fishery apply to all small pelagic fish species taken by purse seine net such as pilchards, scaley mackerel, Perth herring, yellowtail scad, anchovy, whitebait, maray and blue sprat.
- (b) That the taking of whitebait and anchovy by vessels using mechanically assisted purse seine nets be reviewed and appropriate controls introduced if required.

3.5 Entry Criteria

There are essentially three types of vessels using purse seines to exploit small pelagic fish off the metropolitan coast at present. There is a group of nine purse seine vessels, most of which have operated for over five years in the area. There is also a small group of rock lobster vessels which use purse seines seasonally to catch bait for use in their rock lobster operations. A third, much smaller group occasionally uses small purse seines as part of their normal range of "wetfishing" activities. There are sound management reasons for treating each of these groups differently and these are outlined below.

The full time purse seiners are characterised by the use of power blocks for hauling their nets. All landed on average, in excess of twenty tonnes in the years 1982/83 to 1985/86 inclusive. Indeed, most landed in excess of 100 tonnes. In contrast the rock

lobster boats most involved in the fishery landed on average, 17 tonnes in the period, mostly by use of a hand hauled purse seine net. The wet fishermen have catches in some years only, usually less than 2 tonnes per year.

The nine full time purse seine operators are totally dependent on this resource. The size of the stock they are exploiting is uncertain, although not apparently under pressure. The relationship of this pelagic resource with their predators which form the basis of the recreational fishery is not known. Neither is the inter-relationship of the stocks being exploited off Perth with those north and south, which are to be exploited further in the near future. Therefore it is prudent to not allow too rapid an increase in fishing effort but to permit controlled expansion if required, following further investigations.

Although the future of this fishery can be seen to centre on the full time purse seine fishery, opportunities must be given to the rock lobster fishermen to continue their customary operations. However, if unchecked, this latter group has considerable opportunity to expand the level of their operations by installation of power blocks, etc. It therefore is reasonable to restrict their mode of operation to hand hauled purse seine nets. Serious consideration should also be given to phasing out these operations when the existing licensees leave the rock lobster industry, as new entrants can make arrangements to purchase bait, as do a large percentage of the existing rock lobster fleet. This will allow the management and enforcement focus to centre upon the full time purse seine fleet. Otherwise there will be a shift from small operators using relatively simple equipment to fish part time to major operators, directly competing at least

seasonally with the group already totally economically dependent on the fishery.

There are also wetline vessels, with or without Cockburn Sound endorsements, whose operators can demonstrate a history of using hand hauled purse seine nets, although their overall impact on the fishery is small. These operators should be permitted to continue to use this equipment but not be able to transfer this right for similar reasons to those outlined for rock lobster fishermen.

However, there is no pressing need to constrain the full time purse seine fishermen in other ways given the limits on gear usage and vessel replacement proposed.

It should be noted that there may be some vessels which formerly were licenced for the Cockburn Sound Restricted Entry Fishery which may qualify for a licence under the criteria proposed below. This would not be seen as equitable as such endorsements have usually lapsed on licence transfer under the existing rules. The new vessel licensees should therefore not be permitted to obtain a limited entry licence for the purse seine fishery.

In developing the criteria below the above three groups fall easily into three segments as a consequence of their catch history. In practical terms the entry criteria proposed recognize the status quo in terms of vessel usage for the qualifying period adopted.

Recommendation

- (a) That a licensed vessel or its replacement which was used to catch 20 tonnes or more per year on average in the four years 1 July 1982 to 30 June 1986 inclusive by use of purse seine, in

statistical blocks 9600, 3115 or 3215, be granted an A class licence for this fishery. This licence to be fully transferable.

- (b) That notwithstanding (a), a fishing vessel or its replacement licensed for the Limited Entry Western Rock Lobster Fishery, which was used to catch one tonne or more per year on average in the four years 1 July 1982 to 30 June 1986 by use of purse seine in statistical blocks 9600, 3115 or 3215, be granted a B class licence for this fishery. This licence not to be transferable.
- (c) That a licensed fishing vessel or its replacement which was used to catch more than one tonne but less than 20 tonnes on average per year in the four years 1 July 1982 to 30 June 1986 inclusive by use of purse seine in statistical blocks 9600, 3115 or 3215 be granted a C class licence for this fishery. This licence not to be transferable.
- (d) All of these vessels to have had a continuing commitment to catching small pelagic fish by the purse seine in the metropolitan region (statistical blocks 9600, 3115 or 3215) between 1 July 1986 and 30 June 1987.
- (e) Those vessels which held an endorsement for the Cockburn Sound Restricted Entry Fishery which would otherwise qualify under (a), (b) or (c) above, but for which the endorsement has lapsed on licence transfer should not be permitted an endorsement for this purse seine fishery.

3.6 Vessel Replacement Policy

There is a need to restrict the potential for fishing effort to escalate in this fishery once it becomes limited entry. One way this can occur is by larger

and more efficient vessels being used. While most aids to fishing efficiency eg. sonar etc, are difficult to legislate against (even if this is desired) vessel length can be controlled.

All of the existing full time purse seine vessels are less than 16 metres. Average vessel size is 13 metres. A strict replacement policy forcing a fisherman to replace his vessel with one of exactly the same size or smaller would severely limit his ability to obtain a second hand boat. A 16 metre limit is considered a reasonable maximum length, as it would allow some expansion of activities outside the existing limited range centred on Cockburn Sound without allowing a massive increase in fishing capacity. It will allow expansion of activity to deeper waters offshore and also adequate carrying capacity for the fish caught.

It is practically possible to pull a considerable amount of purse seine net by hand and the larger the vessel, the worse the sea state in which work can continue. Thus theoretically some limit should be placed upon boat replacements for B and C licencees. However it is considered this would place unwarranted constraints on these licensees where their major fishing activity is outside this fishery and where that other fishery may be subject to a separate boat replacement policy. It is not likely that they will significantly increase their purse seine fishing operations, especially if they are not allowed to use mechanical assistance in net pulling. This situation should be kept under review to ensure the current relationship between the catching groups does not substantially change, eg. catches by B & C licensees significantly increasing at the expense of the A

licences and having a much greater impact on the resource.

Recommendation

That vessels endorsed with A class licences to operate within the Metropolitan purse seine fishery can only be replaced by another vessel no greater than 16 metres in length. No constraints on boat replacement should be applied for B and C class licences at this stage, as a consequence of their involvement in other fisheries.

3.7 Permitted Gear

Another source of increased effort in a limited entry fishery is by the use of more gear or equipment to haul it. Therefore controls on the length of purse seine nets are necessary in this fishery.

From information supplied by the fishermen, none of the full time vessels (ie. potential A class licences) are using nets greater than 200 fathoms (365 metres) in length. Most use nets less than 150 fathoms (274 metres). Net depths vary between 35 and 50 fathoms (64 and 91 metres).

The maximum length recommended for the King George Sound Fishery is 130 fathoms* (238 metres). There is no recommendation on maximum permitted depth. Given that the introduction of a limited entry regime is likely to result in a considerable increase in fishing effort if past experience in other fisheries is taken as a guide, some constraint is necessary.

Net depth is not an issue at this stage but similar constraints may also be necessary in the future.

Presently if fishermen wish to develop their operations further offshore in deeper water, some potential for increasing net depth is desirable. However the situation should be kept under review.

If the permitted gear size is set too high there will be a natural tendency for all fishermen to gradually adopt this gear. Therefore, although it may temporarily disadvantage a few of the fishermen, it is advisable to set a gear size at the average used, not the greatest. Given the desirability of uniform mesh regulations along the coast a maximum dimension of 250 metres in length appears appropriate. Net depth should, as mentioned, be kept under review.

A large purse seine net can only be realistically used by vessels equipped with a hydraulic roller or power block. In order to stop escalation of effort by the part time operators (ie. potential B and C class licensees) hydraulic rollers or power blocks should not be permitted on their vessels.

These gear controls are aimed at purse seine nets which utilize a bottom rope or "purse string" to close the bottom of the net prior to hauling. They are not meant at this stage to cover the nets used by many beach fishermen, commonly labelled "lampara" nets. The use of such nets will be kept under review and if fishermen not licenced for this limited entry fishery start to take significant quantities of the target species for the fishery, either by increasing their activity or the size of net used then controls on these "lampara" nets will be introduced.

Recommendation

- (a) That the maximum permitted dimensions of a purse seine net used in this fishery should be 250 metres in length but with no minimum mesh size.

The depth of net used should also be kept under review.

- (b) That only those vessels with an A class licence be permitted to operate with mechanical assistance such as hydraulic rollers or power blocks to set and haul the purse seine net.
- (c) The level of use of other types of nets by vessels or operators not licenced for this fishery to catch small pelagic species should be kept under review and additional controls should be introduced if catches increase significantly.

3.8 Relationship with the Developing Fishery

As mentioned earlier the metropolitan purse seine fishery is one of several inshore fisheries where management measures are being contemplated or have recently been introduced. All these fisheries essentially operate in State waters. State jurisdiction over purse seining only extends to three nautical miles, and at present there are no controls over the operation of (larger) purse seiners in Commonwealth waters further offshore. This situation is being explored with the Australian Fisheries Service to determine the controls necessary in these waters. Discussions are also underway for an agreement under the Offshore Constitutional Settlement to transfer to this state jurisdiction over all purse seine activity for most small pelagic fish out to the boundary of the 200 mile Australian Fishing Zone. These arrangements are expected to be finalized by mid 1988.

In the interim, the Fisheries Department has prepared plans to control fisheries development within Western Australian waters by purse seiners in areas outside the boundaries of the proposed limited entry fisheries

for Cockburn Sound and King George Sound. These were announced in a Ministerial media statement on 23 November 1987 (Appendix 2). Amongst other objectives, this plan attempts to ensure there is no interference between the developing and established (limited entry) components of the purse seine fishery.

Control over purse seining in inshore waters outside limited entry fisheries is expected to be achieved shortly through the gazettal of a Notice requiring a licence endorsement to operate a power block or purse seine nets.

For the area north of Lancelin and south of Cape Bouvard (Figure 1), it is proposed to call for expressions of interest from fishermen who are prepared to undertake development purse seining in that area. Endorsements to operate power blocks and nets will be issued to successful applicants who will be expected to conform to an agreed fishing plan and operate generally within the gear specifications outlined for this fishery. Future access will be determined on the basis of their performance and the size of the available resource. There may be additional rules for the area south of Cape Bouvard in recognition of the small but historical purse seine fishery in Geographe Bay.

Endorsements to participate in these fisheries will be non transferable during a development period lasting until at least 30 December 1990, at which time the future of the fishery will be reviewed.

Gear controls similar to those of the metropolitan purse seine fishery will probably be imposed.

Recommendation

That the inter-relationship of the Metropolitan Purse Seine Fishery and other development fisheries along

the Western Australian coast for small pelagic fish be kept under review.

3.9 Access Fees

The Minister for Fisheries, in establishing the King George Sound purse seine fishery, set a fee for full time purse seine fishing vessels of \$2,500 per year for each of the first two years of the fishery. This higher fee (compared with past levels determined by calculation of three quarters of one percent of the gross value of production) was set in recognition of the benefits established for individual fishermen by the creation of a Limited Entry fishery and resulting transferable rights. The funds can be used to offset research costs into the fishery. This higher fee should also apply in the Metropolitan Purse Seine Fishery and should be paid by A licence holders. Those not having a transferable right should be charged at a reduced level in accordance with past levels of fees charged.

Recommendation

- (a) That on the creation of a limited entry fishery a higher level of fee for a limited entry licence be obtained to offset research expenditure into this fishery. That this fee apply only to A licence holders.
- (b) That a fee for B and C licences to operate in the limited entry fishery equal to three quarters of one percent of the gross total value of the pelagic catch from the fishery should be applied.

3.10 Ministerial Discretion

In establishing a limited entry fishery with entry criteria there are bound to be some boats which do not meet that criteria, but which should be considered as special cases by the Minister. Similarly there may be instances where, although meeting the criteria, a boat should not receive an authorisation.

It may also be necessary for the Minister to impose special conditions where an authorisation may be granted outside the established entry criteria.

To meet the unusual or exceptional circumstance the Minister has broad discretionary powers.

Recommendation

That it be noted that the Minister has the authority to consider applications of a special nature on a case by case basis and to impose special conditions on boats holding authorisations.

3.11 Appeals

It is recognised that appeals to the Minister for Fisheries may be lodged by fishermen who held the view that their vessel should have been granted an authorisation or a different authorisation to the one they received.

An appeal body would be required to report to the Minister setting out its recommendations for the Minister's final determination.

Recommendation

That an appeal body be established to consider and make recommendations to the Minister for Fisheries on the appeal by each fisherman who holds the view that his boat should have been granted a limited entry licence or a different authorisation to the one he received.

3.12 Implementation

The proposed management plan should be implemented as soon as possible.

Recommendation

That the proposed management plan be implemented as soon as possible.

3.13 Legislation

Subject to adoption of this Report's recommendation that the fishery be a limited entry fishery a Ministerial Notice under Section 32 of the Fisheries Act will be drafted and published in the Government Gazette declaring the Metropolitan Purse Seine Fishery to be a limited entry fishery.

Section 32(2) sets out the details required to be addressed in any Notice and it is these matters which have been given attention in this report.

The following recommendation is based upon the assumption that effective control over the fishery in the short term can be achieved by Notices under the State Fisheries Act for State waters. Measures for the fishery out to the boundary of the 200 mile Australian Fishing Zone will depend upon agreement being reached with the Commonwealth over jurisdiction under the Offshore Constitutional Settlement.

Recommendation

That subject to the recommendations being adopted they be incorporated in a Ministerial Notice to be made under Section 32 of the Fisheries Act.

3.14 Review Procedures

In most restricted and limited entry fisheries there is a review process to ensure orderly management of the fishery. In some large widely dispersed fisheries there is a formally constituted Industry/Government Management Committee eg. the Rock Lobster Industry Advisory Committee. In other fisheries there are annual or more frequent meetings of all the fishermen with the relevant management officer eg. Shark Bay snapper.

Given the limited range of this fishery, the small number of fishermen involved and their coherent

organisation the latter process appear to be the most appropriate.

Recommendation

That the operation of this fishery be periodically reviewed by a joint industry/Government meeting open to all participants.

4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to acknowledge the assistance of Mr R Lenanton, Senior Research Officer, Western Australian Marine Research Laboratories for his assistance in providing background information and commenting on the Report.

Thanks are extended to Mrs Lois Portelli for outlining details on the operations of the Cockburn Sound fishery and Mr Jim Mendolia for showing the practical side of the fishery.

Special thanks is also extended to Ms Heather Brayford for her input into this document.

TABLE 1

CATCHES BY PURSE SEINE VESSELS OFF THE
METROPOLITAN COAST (IN TONNES)

TOTALS

<u>AREA</u>	<u>YEAR</u>			
<u>BLOCK</u>	<u>1982/83</u>	<u>1983/84</u>	<u>1984/85</u>	<u>1985/86</u>
3115	168	170	255	236
3215	334	492	633	551
9600	<u>382</u>	<u>532</u>	<u>1 103</u>	<u>923</u>
	884	1 194	1 991	1 710

BY SPECIES

Pilchard	599	830	468	364
Scaly Mackerel	227	292	1 492	1 218
Yellowtail Scad	-	19	7	8
Other	<u>58</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>120</u>
	884	1 194	1 901	1 710

BY BLOCK - 3115

Pilchard	73	165	60	76
Scaly Mackerel	91	-	188	110
Yellowtail Scad	-	3	7	-
Other	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>50</u>
	168	170	255	236

- 3215

Pilchard	266	365	142	111
Scaly Mackerel	41	108	484	379
Yellowtail Scad	-	4	-	2
Other	<u>27</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>59</u>
	334	492	633	551

- 9600

Pilchard	260	300	266	177
Scaly Mackerel	95	184	820	729
Yellowtail Scad	-	12	-	6
Other	<u>27</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>11</u>
	382	532	1 103	923

Notes

Block 9600	Cockburn Sound
Block 3115	Between 31°S and 32°S
Block 3215	Between 32°S and 33°S



MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE; FISHERIES; AND THE SOUTH WEST

P87/59

MEDIA STATEMENT

11 November 1987

ALBANY KING GEORGE SOUND PURSE SEINE FISHERY WILL BE DECLARED A LIMITED ENTRY FISHERY.

Fisheries Minister and Minister for the South West, Julian Grill, said today that the declaration followed the recommendations of the King George Sound Purse Seine Fishery Working Group's Report released last November.

The Working Group, which met four times in 1986, comprised two staff from the Fisheries Department and six pilchard (mulie) fishermen from Albany.

Mr. Grill said the new arrangements were part of the Government's overall strategy of responsible fisheries management. They also reflected the benefit of involving representatives of local professional fishermen in drawing up management strategies.

"The role of local people is important, not only to gain a consensus, but also to take advantage of their intimate knowledge of the area," he said.

Access to the fishery would be granted to those vessels that had been used to take a minimum of 50 tonnes of pilchards before 30 April, 1985 and had continued to operate in the fishery.

Mr. Grill said 17 vessels would be eligible under this criteria which would be known as a Category A authorisation.

Category B authorisations would be granted to vessels which had been used to take a minimum of 50 tonnes of pilchard before June, 1986 and had continued to operate in the fishery.

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There were eight vessels eligible under this criteria.

Category A vessels would have 12 months' access to the fishery while Category B vessels would operate from 1 March to 30 September.

The new arrangements would take effect from 1 March, 1988.

Mr. Grill said that the limited entry fishery would include waters enclosed by a line drawn due east from Peak Head and intersecting with a line drawn due south from Cape Vancouver.

Under the arrangements for the fishery purse seining would be prohibited in Princess Royal Harbour.

"The Director of Fisheries, Bernard Bowen, will write to all pilchard fishermen in Albany to advise which vessels meet the entry criteria and explain details of the appeal provisions," Mr. Grill said.



MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE; FISHERIES; AND THE SOUTH WEST

P87/62

MEDIA STATEMENT

23 November 1987

ARRANGEMENTS TO DEVELOP PILCHARD FISHERIES OFF THE W.A. COAST

Fisheries Minister and Minister for the South West, Julian Grill, today announced that he had approved arrangements to develop pilchard fisheries off the Western Australian coast.

Mr. Grill said that he had asked the King George Sound Purse Seine Fishery Working Group to give attention to other pilchard fisheries when discussing arrangements for the King George Sound fishery.

The recommendations in respect of development fishing were included in the Working Group's report released last November.

Staff from the Fisheries Department had given particular attention to these recommendations and had identified six broad zones which could be developed as inshore purse seine fisheries. These regions were:

- * North of Lancelin:
- * Lancelin to Cape Bouvard:
- * Cape Bouvard to Cape Hamelin:
- * Cape Hamelin to Point D'Entrecasteaux:
- * Point D'Entrecasteaux to Doubtful Island
(but excluding within the King George Sound Fishery);
and
- * Doubtful Island to 125 degrees E longitude .

"In the areas Lancelin to Cape Bouvard and Cape Bouvard to Cape Hamelin there is already sufficient capacity to develop the resource," Mr. Grill said.

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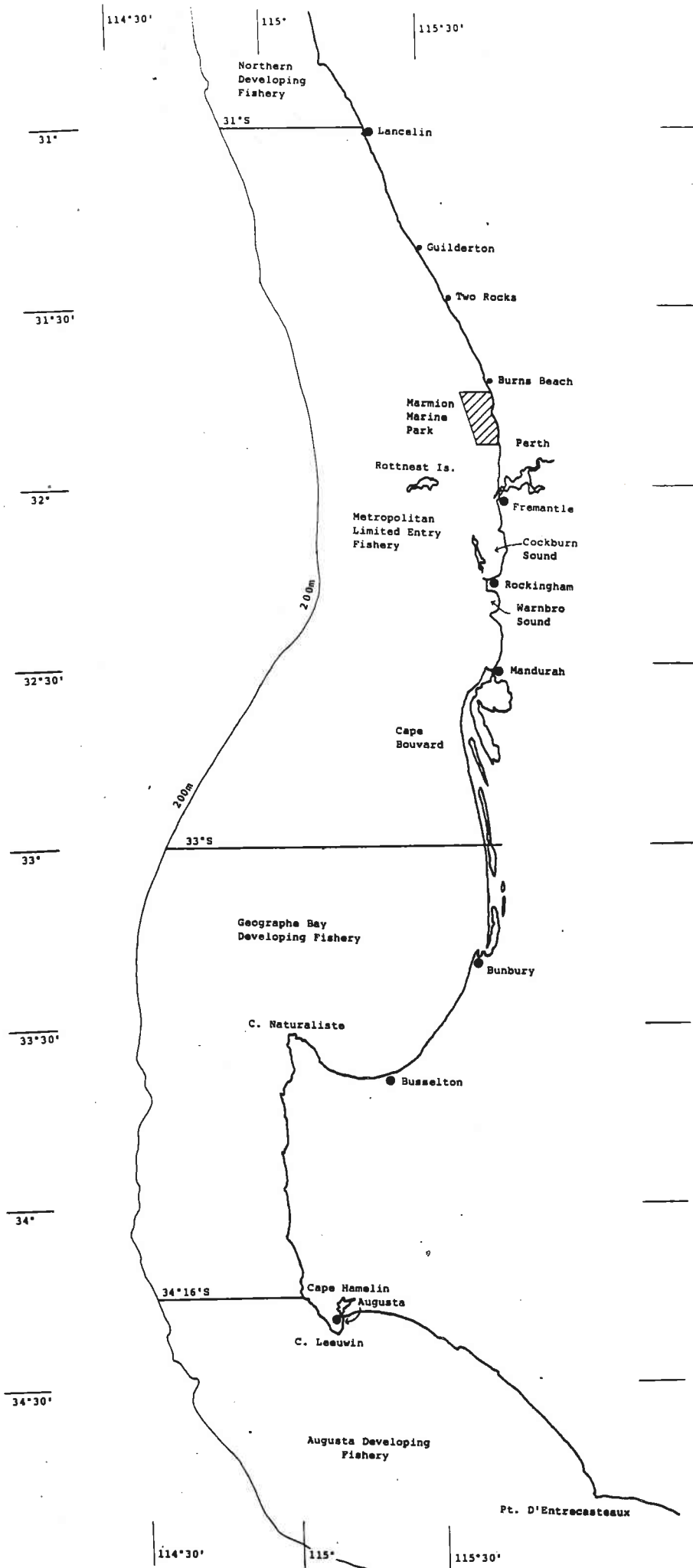
"In the other areas I intend calling for applications from fishermen interested in developing these fisheries.

"Preference will be given to inshore pilchard developments involving small vessels supplying products to shore-based freezing facilities.

"This strategy will ensure the industry does not over capitalise into bigger boats and place excessive pressure on pilchard stocks. It will also ensure adequate supplies of quality pilchard are available for recreational bait.

"Preliminary research results indicate that sufficient stocks exist to increase substantially the Western Australian component of the Australian pilchard catch from the present 8 000 tonnes to possibly 15 000 tonnes in the next three to five years without placing stocks at risk or causing any effect on other fish species that depend on pilchard as a food source.

"The arrangements I have approved should ensure the orderly expansion of the Western Australian Pilchard fishery."



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