Reported retained annual catch from Commonwealth fisheries logbooks

**Description**

While at sea, Commonwealth fishers must record all catch and effort in their AFMA daily fishing logbooks. This dataset shows the annual retained catch (meaning the catch that is not returned to the sea) in kilograms, by species and fishery, for Commonwealth fisheries managed by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA).

These data are sourced from AFMA daily fishing logbooks, which fishers complete while at sea, where generally the weights are estimates only. Fish discarded at sea are not included in this dataset. Location of catches within a fishery is not included.

**Appropriate use and limitations of the data**

The catch weight data in logbooks are estimates only, which have been recorded by fishers while at sea. Fishers usually cannot accurately weigh fish at sea, so the estimated weights are mostly based on volume (i.e. the size and number of boxes of fish caught). Catch data are used in combination with gear, effort, and spatial data to inform stock assessments.

These data may differ from other summations over the same time period (such as stock assessment reports) due to differences in data handling procedures. For example, scientists may filter out catches from their assessments because of data quality issues or group species differently. In addition, the data may be different in other datasets with different summations such as catch by season or catch from the date fish were landed at port.

Care should be taken when interpreting trends in this data because there are many factors that can affect catches each year. Catch quantities can be impacted by management measures such as: total allowable catch, closures of fishing areas, reducing boat numbers, or banning the catch of a particular species. Similarly, changes in market demand can affect which species are targeted.

When the fish are landed at port, the accurate weight of fish is recorded in AFMA catch disposal records by both the fisher and fish receiver permit holder. This information can be found in the “*Reported landed annual catch from Commonwealth fisheries catch disposal records*” and its metadata, which is published on *data.gov.au*.

**Disclaimer**

The dataset provided by AFMA is comprised of raw (unprocessed) data as received from fishers, and may contain errors or be incomplete. Errors are more likely in the species caught in low volumes. AFMA makes no warranty or representation that the data is accurate or complete. Those who choose to use this data should make their own enquiries as to its accuracy and completeness, and AFMA assumes no liability for any errors or omissions in the data provided, or for any decision by a person who chooses to rely on the data.

**Metadata**

**Title:** Reported retained annual catch from Commonwealth fisheries logbooks

**Date First Published:** May 2016

**Last Update:** July 2025

**Update Frequency:** Calendar year

**Authoring Agency:** [Australian Fisheries Management Authority](http://www.afma.gov.au/)

**Subject:** Fisheries catch

**Agency Program:** [AFMA daily logbook records](http://www.afma.gov.au/fisheries-services/logbooks-and-catch-disposal/)

**Agency Jurisdiction:** Commonwealth

**Temporal Coverage:** Calendar years 2002 to 2023

**Spatial Coverage:** Australia’s EEZ

**Granularity:** Calendar year, Fishery, Species, Weight (kg)

**Collection Mode:** Self reporting. Logbooks are completed by fishers.

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**Notes:**

Shark weights are trunked weight (headed and gutted).

Weights of other fish are whole (green) weights.

The shaded cells in Table 1 table below show the years for which the logbook catch data is included for each fishery (noting, however, that if a fishery has zero catch for a particular year, no data will appear for that year in the dataset).

Logbook records from High Seas fishing have not been included. Logbook data has not been included for the Northern Prawn Fishery for 2002 to 2003. Catch from the aquarium and hand collection sectors of the Coral Sea Fishery are not included.

**Table 1: Included data by fishery and year**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | BSCZSF | CSF | CTS | ECDW | ESTF | ETBF | GAB | GHAT | High Seas | HMI | MID | NPF | NWSTF | SBTF | SPF | SSJF | STR | WDTF | WSTF | WTBF |
|  | Dredge | Trawl, Hooks, Pots and traps | Trawl, Danish seine | Trawl | Purse Seine | Hooks | Trawl, Danish Seine | Hooks, Gillnet, Pots and Traps |   | Trawl, Hooks, Pots and traps | Trawl, Hooks, Pots and traps | Trawl | Trawl | Hooks, Purse Seine | Trawl, Purse Seine | Squid Jigs | Trawl | Trawl | Purse Seine | Hooks |
| 2002 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2003 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2004 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2005 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2006 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2007 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2008 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2009 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2010 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2011 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2012 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2013 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2014 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2015 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2016 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2017 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2018 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2019 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2020 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2021 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2022 |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2023 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Glossary:**

**Fishery**: A group of fishers and boats that fish under the same set of rules defining an Authority that allows them to operate. Often these rules will specify: the species that may (or may not) be caught; the method(s) that can be used to catch them; and/or the area of waters that the fishers/boats can operate in. There are many variations on this and while many Commonwealth fisheries have restrictions on all three variables (species, method, area), some are only a mixture of two of them. Many fishers hold Authorities to operate in more than one fishery, and fishery areas can overlap when they catch different species using different methods. Fisheries can also change names over the years. The fisheries described in this dataset have been normalised to the [current fishery names](http://www.afma.gov.au/fisheries/).

**Fish Species**: The species of fish (including molluscs, crustaceans and sharks) that can be caught in a fishery. Species are described by their standard name (according to the [Australian Fish Names Standard](https://www.fishnames.com.au/)), their CAAB number and their scientific name.

**Fishing gear**: Descriptions and images of [fishing gear](http://www.afma.gov.au/species-gear/fishing-gear/) are available on the AFMA website.

**AFMA daily fishing logbooks:** While at sea, Commonwealth fishers must record all catch and effort details (including gear and spatial position) in their AFMA daily fishing logbooks. The logbook forms are submitted to AFMA and the data is entered into the AFMA database. This information is used to inform stock assessments. The forms used for [AFMA logbooks](http://www.afma.gov.au/fisheries-services/logbooks-and-catch-disposal/) are available on the AFMA website. The catch weight data in logbooks are estimates only which have been recorded by fishers while at sea. When fish are landed at port, the accurate weight of fish is recorded in AFMA catch disposal records (CDRs) by both the fisher and fish receiver permit holder. AFMA uses catch weights from CDRs to make deductions from fishers’ quota holdings (catch allowances).

**CAAB**: **C**odes for **A**ustralian **A**quatic **B**iota. CAAB is a coding system for aquatic organisms in the Australian region. It is maintained by CSIRO Division of Marine and Atmospheric Research, Australia (CMAR). Users can search the [CAAB database](http://www.marine.csiro.au/caab/) for information such as currently accepted scientific name, common name, and approved marketing name for a fish species.

**Australian Fishing Zone**: Waters adjacent to Australia and its external territories (excluding Torres Strait and the Antarctic Territories), which extend from defined baselines to 200 nm seawards, but not including coastal and excepted waters. Agreed boundaries apply where these zones intersect the 200 nm zones of other nations. Within the AFZ, Australia exercises jurisdiction over all fishing by Australian and foreign boats.

**Keywords:** Catch, Commonwealth, Fish, Fishery, Logbook.

**Table 2: Fisheries**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Fishery Code** | **Fishery Name** | **Description** |
| BSCZSF | Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery | Fishing for scallops in the central zone of the Bass Strait. |
| CSF | Coral Sea Fishery | Trawl, trap, line, and hand collection in the Coral Sea. NOTE: This dataset does not include catch for the hand collection sector. |
| CTS | Commonwealth Trawl Sector  | Trawling for mixed species off southeast Australia. CTS is a sector of the Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery. |
| ECDW | East Coast Deepwater Trawl Sector | Trawl fishing in the area adjacent to (but not within 25 nautical miles of) Lord Howe Island. The ECDW is a sector of the Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery. |
| ESTF | Eastern Skipjack Tuna Fishery | Purse seining for Skipjack tuna. The fishery covers the waters of the Western Pacific Ocean out to 200 nm from the eastern Australian coastline. This fishery is not currently active. |
| ETBF | Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery | Fishing for tuna and billfish off the east coast of Australia. |
| GAB | Great Australian Bight Trawl Sector | Trawl fishing the Great Australian Bight. GAB is a sector of the Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery. |
| GHAT | Gillnet, Hook and Trap Sector | Fishing for shark and scalefish off southern and eastern Australia, using gillnets, hooks, and traps. GHAT is a sector of the Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery. |
| HMI | Heard and McDonald Islands Fishery | Fishing in the Heard and McDonald Islands sub-Antarctic zone. Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR). |
| MID | Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery | Fishing around Macquarie Island sub-Antarctic (not CCAMLR). |
| NPF | Northern Prawn Fishery | Trawling for prawns off Australia’s northern coast from Cape York in Queensland to Cape Londonderry in Western Australia. |
| NWSTF | North West Slope Trawl Fishery | Trawling in deep water from the coast of the Prince Regent National Park to Exmouth between the 200m depth contour to the outer limit of the Australian Fishing Zone. The two major target species are deepwater prawn and scampi. |
| SBTF | Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery | Fishing for Southern Bluefin Tuna using purse seine and longline. The Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery covers the coast around Australia, out to 200 nm.  |
| SPF | Small Pelagic Fishery | Fishing for Jack Mackerel and other small pelagic fish off southern and eastern Australia. The fishery extends from the Qld NSW border around southern Australia to just north of Perth. |
| SSJF | Southern Squid Jig Fishery | Jigging for squid off southern and eastern Australia. |
| STR | South Tasman Rise Trawl Fishery | Trawling on the South Tasman Rise within the Australian Fishing Zone. |
| WDTF | Western Deepwater Trawl Fishery | Trawling for mixed species in water deeper than 200m off the coast of Western Australia from Exmouth to Augusta. |
| WSTF | Western Skipjack Tuna Fishery | Purse seining for Skipjack tuna. The fishery covers the waters of the Eastern Indian Ocean out to 200 nm from the western Australian coastline. This fishery is not currently active. |
| WTBF | Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery | Fishing for tuna and billfish off the southern and western coasts of Australia. |