



Operational Guide for the Beach-Cast Marine Plant Fishery

LICENCE HOLDER/SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

2024-25 EDITION

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About This Document

This document is a guide for those operating within the beach-cast Marine Plant Fishery with a fishing licence class 'marine plant'. The rules summarised here are contained in the [Fisheries \(Marine Plant\) Rules 2017](#) (the Rules) and made under the provisions of the [Living Marine Resources Management Act 1995 \(LMRMA\)](#). Subordinate rules and regulations to the LMRMA, including the [Fisheries Rules 2019](#), [Fisheries \(General and Fees\) Regulations 2016](#), and [Fisheries \(Penalties\) Regulations 2021](#) also apply to the Fishery.

Disclaimer

This Guide is intended as a plain English summary of most of the Rules and is produced for general guidance only. The Guide must not be used as a substitute for the legislation that regulates the fishery.

The Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania (NRE Tas) and its employees do not warrant or make any representation regarding the use, or results of the use, of the information contained herein as regards to its correctness, accuracy, reliability, and currency or otherwise. NRE Tas and its employees expressly disclaim all liability or responsibility to any person using the information contained in this Guide.

Licence Holder Responsibility

Information provided in this Guide is correct as at the time of publication. Fishery Management Plans, the LMRMA and its other subordinate legislation (the legislation) and Policy may change, and NRE Tas makes every endeavour to advise operators of these changes when they occur.

Licence holders are reminded of their responsibility to ensure that any person specified as an authorised supervisor on their licence is made aware of these changes as they occur.

It remains **your responsibility** as a licence holder or authorised supervisor to read and understand the relevant legislation in full, and to maintain knowledge of the management plan relevant to your activities.

Legislation and management plans are available for download from the NRE Tas website, via www.fishing.tas.gov.au/legislation or <https://www.legislation.tas.gov.au/>

Review of Fisheries Legislation

The Rules are in force from 10 years from the date of effect, which is 2017. The Rules expire on 31 August 2027.

A review may occur sooner than this period, subject to any management action that is required for all or part of the fishery.

Industry Representation

The main way that industry is represented in the planning and management process for fisheries is via recognised peak fishing bodies, who are directly involved in the co-management framework for managing Tasmania's marine resources.

Licence holders and supervisors may contact NRE Tas or the Minister directly about issues, but Seafood Industry Tasmania (SIT) should be considered the first point of contact for the fishery.

Seafood Industry Tasmania

The beach-cast Marine Plant Fishery is represented by the peak body for the whole Tasmanian seafood industry, [Seafood Industry Tasmania](#) (SIT). Contact: tsic@sit.org.au | (03) 6224 2332

Government Contacts

Wild Fisheries Management Branch

For questions relating to the information contained within this document and the management arrangements for the fishery, contact the Wild Fisheries Management Branch (Dive Section) using the contact details below, or email commercial.fisheries@nre.tas.gov.au with 'Marine Plants' in the subject line.

| | | |
|--|--|--|
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NRE TAS Fisheries Compliance and Licensing Branch

Licensing forms and fee information is available at www.fishing.tas.gov.au/forms

For questions relating to licensing matters or docket books, contact the Fisheries Compliance and Licensing Branch on (03)-6165-3000 or email one of -

Licensing matters: Fisheries.Licensing@nre.tas.gov.au

Docketing and records matters: Fisheries.Monitoring@nre.tas.gov.au

Parks and Wildlife Service for Access

The Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) is responsible for managing shoreline, land, and the many tracks required to access beach-cast marine plant resources. Licences are required to conduct commercial activities in reserves, including marine plant harvesting. PWS Authorised Officers may perform on-ground compliance checks.

For information relating to access arrangements contact the PWS [Property Services Division](#) on (03)-6169-9015 or PropertyServices@parks.tas.gov.au, or for local information contact the relevant regional [PWS Field Centre or Visitor Centre](#) or call 1300 TASPARKS (1300-827-727).

Marine Wildlife Hotline for Protected Species

The NRE Tas Natural Cultural Heritage Division's [Marine Conservation Program](#) is keen to hear about all cetacean (whales and dolphins) sightings in Tasmanian waters. Reports contribute valuable information to long term monitoring and conservation of these species.

If you locate an entangled or injured marine mammal (whale, dolphin, seal) or seabird do not attempt to rescue the animal yourself, but immediately ring the 24-hour Marine Wildlife Hotline on 0427 WHALES (+61)-427-942-537) and seek professional advice. Time is critical during a rescue attempt, or for testing deceased animals to determine the cause. If you are outside of phone range call TAS MARITIME RADIO on VHF Channel 16 for advice. They will initiate procedures to collect information and notify the disentanglement team who will provide advice.

Report Sick or Diseased Animals (Birds) to Biosecurity Tasmania

Diseased, sick or dying animals should be reported to [Biosecurity Tasmania](#). Of current relevance to this fishery is [High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza \(HPAI\)](#), also known as bird flu. Symptoms in diseased wild birds include lethargy, falling or difficulty walking, difficulty breathing, nasal discharge, discoloration of wattle/comb/legs, and sudden death.

Report sick or dying birds right away to the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800-675-888.

Report Fish Kills to the Environment Protection Authority (EPA)

A fish kill is characterised by a sudden and unexpected large number of fish dying over a short time period, and generally within a limited area. Fish kills can be a result of human induced impacts or due to natural events. Please report any fish kill event immediately to [EPA Tasmania's Incident Response Hotline](#) on 1800-005-171, or email incidentresponse@epa.tas.gov.au

Report Signs of Marine Heatwave Impact

The east coast of Tasmania recently experiences marine heatwave conditions from mid-November 2023 to mid-2024. Future events are likely. Report signs of marine heatwave impact, like higher than usual amounts of beach-cast kelp, to your Fishery Manager or via the [online form](#) at [Report Signs of a Marine Heatwave | Fishing Tasmania](#).

Report Illegal Fishing to the Tasmanian Police – Marine & Rescue Division

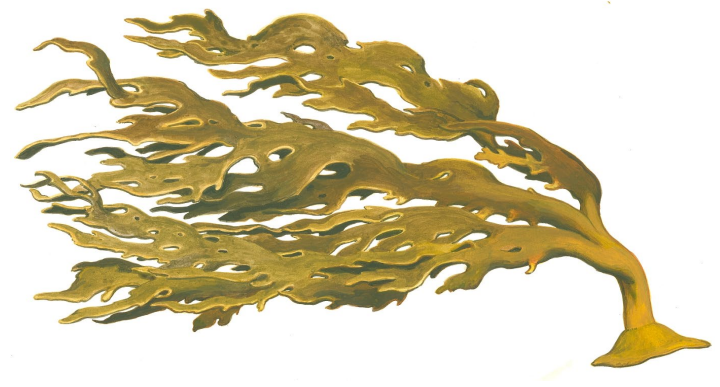
Report illegal fishing to Fishwatch 24-hour hotline (+61)-427-655-557 or marine@police.tas.gov.au

Your report should include as much information as possible, such as the time and location of the offence, fishing gear used (including licence or ID numbers), vehicle registration numbers, and vessel name, distinguishing marks and descriptions, and the name or description of persons involved. Information can be given anonymously.

The Fishery

Overview

The Tasmanian commercial beach-cast Marine Plant Fishery (hereafter referred to as 'the Fishery') authorises the commercial harvest of beach-cast marine plant species (hereafter referred to simply as 'kelp').



© Tasmanian Government. Illustration Peter Gouldthorpe

The primary species of focus is Bull Kelp of the species *Durvillaea potatorum* and *Durvillaea amatheiae*. The two *Durvillaea* species are physically indistinguishable from one another but are genetically distinct. *D. potatorum* is predominately located on the west coast, and *D. amatheiae* is more prevalent on the east coast.

The Fishery also authorises the take of other beach-cast kelp species, but these are negligible compared to the take of Bull Kelp. Operators collect kelp by hand, sometimes with the aid of mechanical winches, and load it into vehicles and trailers for transport to drying racks.

Most of the kelp taken within the Fishery comes from the west coast – from Granville Harbour, the Marrawah region, and King Island. However, a small quantity is also harvested from pockets located in the north, north-east and south-east coastlines.

The Fishery does not allow for live kelp to be harvested from within the water or from the seabed. Only kelp that has been cast by wind, wave and storm action upon Tasmanian beaches, bays, shores, and rocky headlands may be harvested.

There is an established fishery for the declared seaweed pest species, *Undaria pinnatifida*, which is harvested live in-water by divers. This is the only licensed harvest of a live kelp from within Tasmanian waters (several other species are taken under Permit for restoration or aquaculture purposes). The dive fishery is distinct from the beach-cast fishery, and is included within the [Operational Guide for the Commercial Dive, Shellfish & Undaria Fishery](#).

For more information, please visit [Marine Plant Fishery | Fishing Tasmania](#)

Role of the Parks and Wildlife Service

This fishery is unusual in that it requires co-management between two Business Units in NRE Tas – Marine Resources, and the Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS).

Marine Resources authorises and manages the taking, selling, and processing of kelp. It is the lead for managing this fishery, and usually the first point of contact for operators.

The PWS authorises and manages Crown land access arrangements, including use of tracks across public land to access beaches for commercial purposes. In most instances, it is responsible for the land from which the beach-cast kelp is collected.

A person who holds a commercial fishing licence to take kelp issued by Marine Resources will also, in most instances, require an authority from the PWS to conduct commercial activities across Crown-managed tracks and land.

A Marine Plant Fishing Licence is required to commercially take and process kelp, and an authority is required to conduct commercial activities on Crown Land.

Licences

The Fishery contains two different licence types for harvesting kelp:

| Licence | Features | Endorsements & Conditions |
|--|---|--|
| Fishing Licence (Marine Plant) 'FLMP' | Unlimited number Non-transferrable | 1 supervisor (harvester) Up to 2 supervised assistants Defined harvest locations Defined species Kelp delivery/processing conditions Harvesting/land access conditions Annual licence renewal fees |
| Fishing Licence (King Island Kelp) 'FLKIK' | Limited number (1) Non-transferrable | Unlimited supervisors Up to 2 supervised assistants per supervisor Defined harvest locations on King Island Defined species on King Island All kelp to be delivered to Kelp Industries Annual licence renewal fees and biannual royalties |

Some operations also require a Fish Processing Licence (FPL), which is an unlimited and non-transferrable licence type permitting the licence holder and their staff to process kelp.

This is the only commercial Tasmanian fishery which does not require operators to hold a Fishing Licence (Personal) (FLP). This is because the fishery operates on land and not on the water.

Acquire, Transfer, or Surrender a Licence

Marine plant fishing licences are all non-transferrable.

The FLKIK type is limited to only one licence, and further FLKIK's will not be granted.

The FLMP licence type may be applied for at any time, however granting of further licences will be limited by location-based sustainability, environmental, and operational considerations (i.e., is the area legally and practically accessible, or does it contain sensitive habitats or threatened species, or any other relevant matter).

Any licence may be voluntarily surrendered, at no cost, upon submission of a licence surrender form. Licences expire automatically if the licence holder does not renew within 12 months of expiry.

Licensing information, including application and variation forms, can be accessed at www.fishing.tas.gov.au/forms or by calling the Fisheries Licensing Team. New applicants or existing licence holders who wish to vary their harvest locations are encouraged to contact the Marine Plant Fishery Manager prior to application.

Requirement for Land Access

Any person who applies to Marine Resources for a commercial licence or new harvest locations will be asked to confirm whether they have been granted authority to conduct their commercial activities in that area by the land manager or holder. Marine Resources will not progress the application without confirmation that legal access has been granted to the applicant to physically access the beach-cast kelp.

To determine whether access to a beach is across Crown-managed land, you may utilise the 'Land Tenure' layer of [LISTmap](#). Your Fishery Manager and Property Services can assist.

- If access to intended harvest location/s is across Crown-managed land, the applicant will be asked to contact the Property Services Division of the PWS to determine whether a [PWS-issued licence](#) is required. The [licence](#) will authorise specific tracks and land that may be utilised for commercial kelp harvesting activities. These will then be used in the licence application assessment process by Marine Resources to determine the harvest locations to be endorsed on the Fishing Licence (Marine Plant).
- If access to intended harvest location/s is across private land, then a letter of authority will be required from the landholder to confirm that access to the beach/es has been granted. This will be used in the licence application assessment process by Marine Resources to determine the harvest locations to be endorsed on the Fishing Licence (Marine Plant), and whether any specific conditions are required to facilitate an orderly harvest on private land.
- If access to intended harvest location/s is across public land (i.e., beaches routinely accessed by beach-goers from main roads) then a licence/authority may not be required. However, in assessing the licence application, Marine Resources will consider whether any mitigating licence conditions may be required to ensure the activity does not negatively impact use of the area by other beach-goers.

All applications for new licences, or variations to harvest locations on existing licences, should be accompanied by:

1. Landholder name/s and document/s showing that authority is granted to access the kelp, including any conditions to that access which may be relevant to the application; and
2. Map of any harvest location/s showing the full extent of the area being requested, including border points, and highlighted tracks and access points for intended harvest location/s.

Licence Endorsements

Under the Rules, there are provisions made for the different licence types to be endorsed for certain activities, including:

1. the species or types of marine plants that may be taken;
2. the harvest locations where a licence can operate;
3. requirements relating to the transfer and/or processing of harvested marine plants, including marine plants taken from certain areas;

Licensing information, including forms to vary licence endorsements, can be accessed at www.fishing.tas.gov.au/forms

Licence Conditions

All fishing licences carry a set of standard conditions, and licences may be further conditioned with additional requirements for fisheries management or compliance purposes.

Within this fishery, most licences carry unique conditions (and endorsements) to support sustainable harvesting practices at each unique harvest location. For example, harvesting periods are limited at certain harvest locations to protect nesting shorebirds.

Conditions are reviewed annually and if a change is required, they are updated at renewal time. It is your responsibility to ensure you are familiar with, and comply with, all current conditions.

Current conditions that apply to most marine plant fishing licences include:

1. A copy of the current licence certificate must be displayed at or near the windscreen of the collection vehicle during the collection period.
2. No more than 50% of the total marine plants cast at a harvest location on any given day may be collected, and collection by multiple licence holders at a single location is not to exceed 50% of the total cast marine plants that was available at the start of the day.
3. Vehicle operations are restricted to existing access tracks only, and to below the high tide mark when driving on sandy beaches.
4. Public or private property must not be entered without the prior written approval of the manager or owner of that property, and the holder of this licence must abide with any conditions of that approval.

Licence Renewals

All Marine Plant Fishing Licences and Fish Processing Licences expire 31 August each year.

If not renewed within 12 months of expiry, the licence(s) will automatically expire.

Renewal forms are automatically generated by the Licensing team in July, and these are sent to licence holders for completion and submission with the applicable fees.

There is a set schedule of fees which applies for each licence type. The fees are expressed as 'fee units'. The number of fee units charged per licence does not change from year to year, but the value of a fee unit may increase.

In the 2024-25 financial year, the fee unit value is \$1.87, and the fee schedule is as shown below:

| Licence Type | Fee Type | Number of Fee Units | Fee Charged |
|------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Fish Processing | Renewal Fee | 150 | \$280.50 |
| | SIT Levy | 400 | \$748.00 |
| | TOTAL | 550 | \$1,028.50 |
| Marine Plant | Renewal Fee | 200 | \$374.00 |
| King Island Kelp | Renewal Fee | 4,650 | \$8,695.50 |

Permit Activities

Permits allow for actions that would otherwise contravene a provision of the legislation and can be granted for up to 12 months at a time. The issuing of a permit does not imply any type of ongoing access right. Potential applicants are encouraged to contact the Department prior to submitting an application. The LMRMA sets out very specific purposes for which permits can be issued; these are:

- scientific research;
- the promotion of fishing or fish products*;
- the development of fisheries*;
- the development of fishing technology*;
- educational and community awareness programs;
- fish stock depletion or enhancement*;
- the collection, keeping, breeding, hatching or cultivating of rare or endangered fish;
- sport or recreation purposes by a person who, in the opinion of the Minister, would otherwise be unable by reason of that person's disability to engage in fishing by methods permitted under this Act;
- Aboriginal cultural and ceremonial activities;
- the development of marine farming*;
- law enforcement;
- environmental monitoring; and
- bioprospecting.

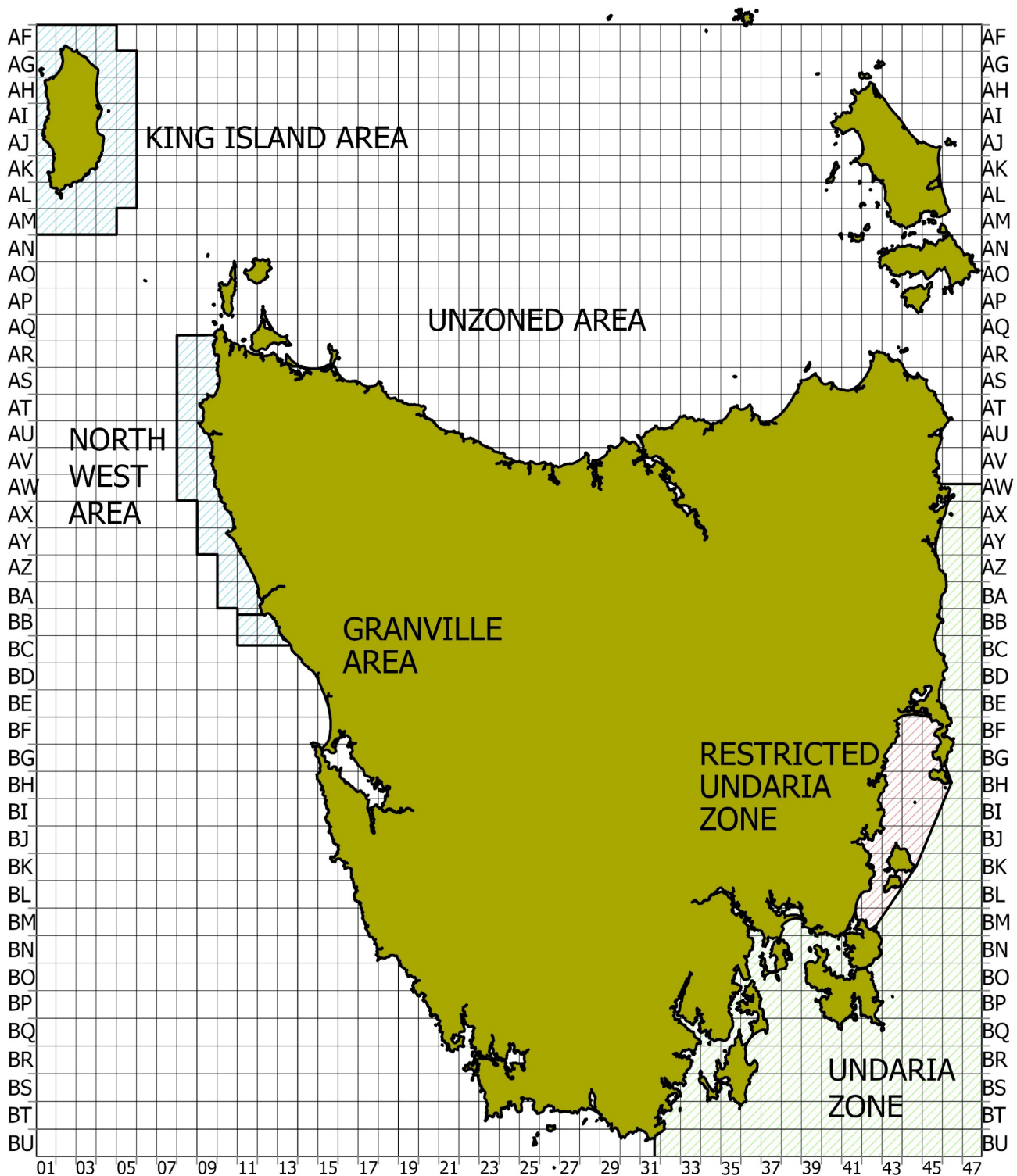
* The purposes marked with an asterisk require the Minister to consult with the relevant peak fishing bodies. Consultation also occurs in other relevant instances.

Occasionally, the Department issues permits to councils or community groups for the clean up of beach-cast kelp that are creating a public nuisance with their odour.

You are encouraged to consult with your Fishery Manager prior to applying for a permit at www.fishing.tas.gov.au/permits

Operational Areas

Marine Plant Fishing Map



Harvest Restrictions

There are several geographical areas for which certain rules or restrictions apply¹.

King Island

Defined as being inclusive of all coastal areas on King Island. The following apply:

1. Only three licences allow for the commercial take of beach-cast kelp on King Island – one Fishing Licence (King Island Kelp) and two Fishing Licence (Marine Plant) that persist under a grandfathered arrangement. Additional harvest licences cannot be granted.
2. The Fishing Licence (King Island Kelp) allows for multiple supervisors of the licence, who are authorised to harvest King Island kelp.
3. All kelp harvested from King Island must be processed by a licenced Fish Processor endorsed to process King Island kelp.
4. There is only one fish processing license that is endorsed to process King Island kelp, and that is held by Kelp Industries Pty Ltd. Additional processing licences cannot be granted.

Granville Harbour

Defined as the area from Ahrberg Bay (41°43'19.61"S, 144°56'26.52"E) southwards to the mouth of the Tasman River. The following apply:

1. Granville Harbour kelp can only be transferred to a licenced Fish Processor who is endorsed to process Granville Harbour kelp.
2. There is only one fish processing license that is endorsed to process Granville Harbour kelp, and that is held by Kelpomix Tasmania. Additional licences cannot be granted.

North West Area

Defined as the area from Cape Grim southwards to Ahrberg Bay. The following is a provision of the *Minister's Guideline (limit on number of Fishing Licence [Marine Plant] in north-west Tasmania) 2015*:

1. No more than eight marine plant fishing licences should be granted to authorise the harvest of kelp from within the area from Cape Grim south to Ahrberg Bay.

The Guideline preceded the Rules as an interim measure, and as such it will be reviewed soon.

Reserves

You must not harvest from National Parks, State Reserves, Nature Reserves, Historic Sites, or Game Reserves. The use of natural resources cannot be authorised in these Reserves under the management objectives in the [National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002](#).

¹ All coordinates of latitude and longitude specified are to be determined by reference to the Geocentric Datum of Australia (also known as "the GDA" or "GDA94") as defined in the Commonwealth Gazette No. GN 35, 6 September 1995.

Commercial use of natural resources can be authorised in Regional Reserves, Conservation Areas, and Nature Recreation Areas. Kelp harvesting may also be authorised in Public Reserves and Crown Land managed under the [Crown Land Act 1976](#).

Many Tasmanian Reserves extend to the low-water mark. The [National Parks and Reserves Management Regulations 2019](#) do not permit the removal of flora, fauna or material (including shells and seaweed) from Reserves land without prior authority. You must ensure that you avoid Reserves that cannot permit harvesting, and if you are accessing beaches via Reserves and Crown Land for the purpose of commercial kelp harvesting, you must ensure that you hold an appropriate PWS-issued authority.

Endorsed Harvest Locations

Harvest Locations are an endorsement on your licence which specifies where you may harvest beach-cast kelp from – you cannot harvest outside of these areas.

A Harvest Location may be a broad area, allowing access to a long coastline with multiple beaches and headlands. Alternatively, a Harvest Location may be narrowly defined as a specific beach or a particular part of a beach.

A broadly defined Harvest Location endorsement does not permit you to harvest contrary to other laws (i.e., you may not harvest from within a National Park or State Reserve without authority from the PWS) or to utilise tracks and access points on land for which you are not authorised to traverse.

During the 2024-25 licence renewal period, broadly defined Harvest Locations are being reviewed and narrowed to remove any perceived access to National Parks and State Reserves, and to ensure areas are meaningful and searchable on LISTmap. Narrow definitions will be favoured in future to ensure endorsed Harvest Locations match those areas permitted for access by the landholder, and to reduce ambiguity and improve reporting processes.

Catch Dockets

All instructions are contained within the relevant docket book, and it is your responsibility to complete and submit docket returns in accordance with the instructions. If you are unsure, please contact the Fisheries Monitoring team or your Fishery Manager.

The Marine Plant Commercial Fishing Docket is dual-purpose, servicing both the beach-cast marine plant fishery and the *Undaria* dive fishery. It is a monthly record for which you complete daily harvest information on each day that you harvest kelp, and then submit the complete record at the end of the month.

Deadlines

Ensure you adhere to submission deadlines – this is within 7 days of the end of each month, including any month in which you did not harvest kelp.

You may anticipate that you will not harvest through certain months of the year – to assist you to not fall behind with your docket returns, you may submit a 'nil' docket/s ahead of time, which can be overridden by future docket returns that contain harvest data.

Why are Catch Dockets Required?

Recording your catch, effort, and disposal data as accurately as possible is important:

- Your catch, effort, and interactions information are used by fisheries managers and our partner research organisation, the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS), to monitor productivity through time and across different locations, and to determine if any management action is required to maintain an orderly harvest and sustainable fishery.
- The information is also used to inform the annual reports to the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) to maintain export approvals for the fishery.
- The receiver/disposal information is used to track sales pathways, and to inform fishery value calculations used by the State and Commonwealth to categorise fisheries.

What Happens with Catch Dockets After Submission?

All catch dockets are received by the Fisheries Monitoring Team who scan copies into the Tasmanian Fisheries Integrated Licensing and Management System (FILMS) database. The data is verified and checked by the team and FILMS software, including cross-checks with other sources of fisheries information and permit data.

Once scanned and entered, the data becomes immediately available for fisheries management and compliance purposes. Within the Marine Plant Fishery, the data is routinely monitored by the Dive Fishery Managers.

You can request access to your own data at any time through your Fishery Manager or the Fisheries Licensing team.

What if an Error or Omission is Detected on a Catch Docket?

The Fisheries Monitoring team will notify you via email or phone if they have detected an error requiring your attention. Likewise, if you realise that you have made a mistake after submitting a docket, you may contact the Fisheries Monitoring team to report the mistake and have it corrected.

Completing the 'Harvest Location' Field

You should be as specific and accurate as possible with the harvest location, writing the common name of the specific beach, bay, harbour, or headland that you harvested from.

Consider these examples from actual dockets received:

- 'Stinky' likely means 'Stinky Beach', but the ambiguity is removed if you write it in full.
- Locations like 'Rocks', 'Causeway', 'Beach', and 'Bluff' do not provide enough information to accurately determine the harvest location, particularly if a person is endorsed to harvest at broad locations, or multiple locations. You must include an area name so that the location can be identified.

Area names should be linked to the endorsed Harvest Location/s on your licence.

You can use [LISTmap](#) to accurately identify the names of beaches, bays, and headlands. You can also contact your Fishery Manager for assistance in identifying the names of your usual harvest locations. This is critical to ensuring good data and to streamline the process of producing accurate reports as required (e.g., annual reports to DCCEEW).

Completing the ‘% Harvested’ Field

Beach-cast kelp, also known as wrack, plays a vital role in maintaining healthy coastal ecosystems. Decomposing wrack cycles nutrients into the shoreline and marine habitats, and it provides feed and habitat for small invertebrates that in turn become food and nutrients for other species. When dried out, wrack can assist in stabilising beaches and providing nesting materials.

While kelp harvests restricted to the endorsed harvest locations which are spread across the State, there are favoured locations. For the above reasons, you are not permitted to take more than 50% of the available wrack from a location, either by yourself or cumulatively with other operators. You must estimate the percentage harvested per location, and record that in this field.

Completing the ‘Protected Species Interactions’ Field

Operations within this fishery carry an elevated risk of interacting with threatened, endangered, or protected species (TEPS), with particular regards to nesting coastal birds. The ‘Protected Species Interactions’ reporting space is an important component of the docket and **must** be completed in the event of an interaction.

What is an interaction? An interaction is when any aspect of your harvesting activities injures, kills, or changes the behaviour of TEPS. This includes all interactions where you, your vehicle, or your gear collides into or entangles a TEPS. **Interactions must be avoided or mitigated at all times.**

It is not an interaction when a species is simply present, resting or feeding, in a harvest area. You can find a good explanation of interactions, and a list of short codes to represent key species and types of interactions, in the instructions of the Marine Plant Commercial Fishing Docket book.

Coastal Birds

Kelp harvesting activities predominantly occur on sandy beaches and rocky headlands, which are the feeding and nesting habitats for coastal birds, including oystercatchers, plovers, and terns.

Reportable interactions include those where adult birds, juveniles, chicks, eggs and/or nests are injured, killed or destroyed. You must also report distressed behaviour which can include swooping, agitated and repetitive calling, ‘wing-dragging’ distraction behaviour, aggression, or birds leaving the area.

[The Kelp Harvesters Guide to Tasmanian Coastal Birds](#) has been produced by Marine Resources and is available online to assist you in identifying key coastal birds, signs of distress, and options to mitigate risk of interactions. You should keep a copy in your harvest vehicle for quick reference.

Other Birds

Kelp harvesters often transit to/from harvest areas using bush tracks, which may result in interactions with bush and forest birds. Birds that are of particular concern include orange-bellied parrots and blue-winged parrots, which may be disturbed from feeding alongside tracks.

The risk of interacting with birds when transiting to/from harvest areas has been classified as low, and it may be difficult for you to accurately determine the species if you are driving a vehicle. However, if you injure, kill, destroy, or disturb bird/s from feeding whilst on a harvest trip, you must report it using the 'O' species classification code. You should provide further details, including species name (if known), and circumstances or interaction type, in the comments section.

Other Species

You may encounter seals on beaches, including fur, leopard or elephant seal species. If your harvesting activities will disturb the animal/s or risk injury to any party, you should leave the area.

Very occasionally, leatherback turtles have been reported on northern beaches. These may have been blown off course by significant storms or swells and will likely be in poor condition. You should avoid the animal and report it as soon as possible to the Marine Wildlife (WHALES) Hotline via 0427 942 537 or call TAS MARITIME RADIO on VHF Channel 16 for advice. This would not be a reportable interaction on your catch docket, although comments to notify us of the incident and your stewardship are welcomed.

You are reminded that any beached or deceased marine mammals should be reported as soon as possible to the Marine Wildlife (WHALES) Hotline for investigation, as time is critical during a rescue attempt, or for testing deceased animals to determine the cause of death. This would not be a reportable interaction on your catch docket, although you may document it via the comments section.

Seaweed Working Group Meetings

The Seaweed Working Group is a regular series of meetings convened by NRE Tas at least twice per year. Attendance is by open invitation to all people associated with Tasmanian seaweed, including researchers (geneticists, ecologists, applied technologists, economists, etc), commercial harvesters and processors, and seaweed aquaculture or biotechnology companies.

The Group meetings are an excellent networking opportunity which also facilitate the sharing of information through informal discussions and formal presentations. The meetings are held with the option of attending in person or via video link, noting that very recently there have been some technical issues with online connectivity which have been resolved.

Contact your fishery manager if you would like to attend future Seaweed Working Group meetings.

Export Approval

The Tasmanian Marine Plant Fishery is an [approved Wildlife Trade Operation \(WTO\)](#) under Part 13A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) until 5 December 2026, having just completed the re-application process to maintain WTO status.

This means that Tasmanian commercially harvested kelp and products can continue to be legally exported out of Australia, subject to the fishery meeting the five conditions set by DCCEEW.

Marine Resources is responsible for providing annual reports to DCCEEW regarding the fishery, including any information required to determine if the specific conditions are being met. The reports are due by 31 December of each year.

Infringements and Penalties

There are penalties for breaching the legislation. The penalty structure is set out in the [Fisheries \(Penalties\) Regulations 2021](#). The rules also have Infringement Notices that may be served by Fisheries Officers, including Police Officers and authorised Parks Rangers, subject to the level of the offence.

Frequently Asked Questions

When is a Licence Required to Harvest and/or Sell Kelp?

If you intend to harvest more than 100kg of beach-cast kelp in a year for commercial purposes, you will require a Fishing Licence (Marine Plant).

If you intend to harvest less than 100kg of beach-cast kelp in a year for commercial purposes, then your boutique operation will not require a commercial licence.

A person may harvest 100kg of beach-cast kelp per day for recreational purposes only – this includes for personal art and crafting, mulching, or fertilising, and other personal uses. This kelp can be gifted, but it cannot be sold, traded, or otherwise exchanged for profit or money.

A permit is required to remove nuisance/odorous beach-cast marine plants from an area.

Do I Require a Fish Processing Licence?

All licenced operators are able to process kelp that was harvested under the authority of their own Fishing Licence (Marine Plant). That authority also allows for the help of up to two assistants who must be supervised at all times by the licence holder.

A Fish Processing Licence will be required to process kelp in the following cases:

1. If the licence holder is unable to directly supervise the two assistants;
2. If more than two assistants are required (i.e., a processing facility with multiple employees);
3. If processing more than 100kg of kelp that was harvested under the authority of someone else's Fishing Licence (Marine Plant); and/or
4. If there is a requirement that kelp harvested from a location must be transferred to a licenced fish processor endorsed to process plants from that location (i.e., King Island and Granville Harbour).

A person cannot process more than 100kg of kelp in a licensing year (Sep to Aug) without being the holder of an appropriate commercial licence as described above.

Can I Harvest Live Plants?

No, this Fishery does not provide for the take of living marine plants from within the water, and you may not detach marine plants from the seafloor.

Live kelp is critical to marine ecosystems and the Department does not authorise the take of living marine plants except for:

1. Take of the introduced and noxious species *Undaria pinnatifida*, which may be only taken by those specifically licenced to do so; and
2. Take, under Permit, of small quantities of native species to be used as seed/broodstock in aquaculture facilities or for native marine habitat restoration projects.

Can I Harvest and/or Process Kelp from Granville Harbour?

The number of licences that are permitted to process kelp collected from Granville Harbour is limited to one, and this is currently held by Kelpomix Tasmania. Harvest Locations endorsed on licences (both existing and in future) reflect this.

Can I Harvest and/or Process Kelp from King Island?

The number of harvesting licences permitted on King Island is limited. Likewise, the number of licences that are permitted to process kelp collected from King Island is limited to one, currently held by Kelp Industries Pty Ltd. Harvest Locations endorsed on licences (both existing and in future) reflect this.

Anyone wishing to harvest King Island kelp needs to contact Kelp Industries Pty Ltd and arrange to be added as a supervisor to the licence, and they will need to deliver the kelp to the licence holder for processing. Alternatively, the person may work as an assistant of an authorised supervisor of the existing licence.

What is the King Island Kelp Royalty?

The King Island kelp royalty is a payment made twice per year, in March and September, by the holder of the Fishing Licence (King Island Kelp) in exchange for access to the significant kelp resources available on King Island.

The royalty is payable per kilo harvested in the relevant half of the year, and it is calculated and invoiced by the Department according to the following equation: $A = B \cdot (C/D)$, where:

A is the amount of royalty, rounded down to the nearest dollar;

B is \$30;

C is the value of the CPI figure for Hobart for the June quarter immediately preceding the licensing year in which the value of the royalty is to apply;

D is the value of the CPI figure for Hobart for the June quarter 2017.

What is the “50% Rule”?

The “50% Rule” is shorthand for *you must not take more than 50% of the available beach-cast kelp from a location, either by yourself or cumulatively with other operators.*

Beach-cast kelp plays a vital role in maintaining healthy coastal ecosystems. Decomposing kelp cycles nutrients into the shoreline and marine habitats and provides feed and habitat for small invertebrates that in turn become food and nutrients for other species. When dried out, kelp can assist in stabilising beaches and providing nesting materials for coastal birds.

While the rule is critical for maintaining ecosystem health, being able to demonstrate that the rule is adhered to is critical for maintaining the fisheries accreditations and public acceptance.

Can I Harvest Kelp Using Machinery?

Beach-cast kelp is typically harvested by hand, sometimes with the aid of mechanised winches to haul loads of kelp for loading onto trailers. Any use of machinery must be sensitive to the environment in which it is operating, and if conducting a commercial activity on Crown land, the machinery used must be authorised within the license issued by PWS.

Why are Licences Non-Transferrable?

Licences are non-transferrable for several purposes:

1. The licences are 'unlimited' meaning that they can be applied for at any time, eliminating the need for individuals to transfer their licences.
2. The licences contain Harvest Location/s endorsements that are specific to the person who originally applied for the licence. That person has validated their personal access arrangements, and it cannot be assumed that those would continue to apply to a new licence holder should the licence be sold and transferred.
3. The Department is obliged to ensure an orderly and sustainable fishery, and the application assessment process enables a full range of checks between Marine Resources and the PWS, as well as assessment of the suitability and sustainability of kelp harvesting at any harvest location/s submitted by the applicant.

When can I use Assistants?

Each licence provides for the use of two unlisted assistants. In the case of the fishing licence (King Island kelp), each listed supervisor may have two unlisted assistants. You do not need to report the use of assistants, or their names, to the Department.

In recognition of the heavy work involved in the fishery, assistants may help in all aspects of harvest, transport, and processing, providing that they are **actively supervised by the person who is named on the licence as being authorised to harvest kelp**.

This means that assistants can only harvest, transport, and/or process kelp when the licenced person is present and actively supervising their activities.



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