

The Great Barrier Reef supports a substantial and growing recreational fishery, for both pelagic and demersal species. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is concerned that with continued growth, the resource being targeted (including bait) is not adversely affected, that conflicts between recreational fishing activities and other activities are minimised, that reasonable fishing opportunities are provided and that above all the conservation of the Great Barrier Reef system is not compromised.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park is spatially divided into zones for which purposes for use and entry are specified. The zones are graded from General Use A Zone (covering most of the Park and in which most activities are allowed as of right), through increasing restriction to Preservation Zone (small areas in which only scientific research which cannot be undertaken anywhere else is permitted). The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act, under which zoning plans are drawn up, provides for regulation of all activities occurring within the Park.

Within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, there has, in general, been an attempt to give equivalent treatment to both recreational and commercial fishing. Line fishing is permitted in most areas of the Park as shown in Table 1, amounting to over 95% of the total Park area.

In addition to zones which regulate usage and which are specified for the life of the zoning plan, there are two kinds of temporary closures which can be introduced. These are the "Seasonal Closure" of a reef (for a matter of months) which can be for the purpose of protecting spawning stocks of fish, and "Replenishment" closure of a reef (for a matter of years) to all methods except trolling for pelagics, to enable resource stocks to regenerate.