

GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM GBRMPA-TM-4

AMATEUR FISHING ON THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

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SUMMARY

Analysis of catch records from deep sea amateur fishing clubs and charter boat operators using the Great Barrier Reef has confirmed frequently voiced comments on catches of demersal reef fishes. The results are preliminary and only apply to amateur fishing from charter boats, however the major findings showed that

- where reefs are a range of distances from shore, catches increase with increasing distance from port (e.g. Cairns, Innisfail);
- off Townsville, the same number of fish are being caught as 15 years ago, but the average fish size is smaller;
- off Innisfail, catches are smaller but the fish have got larger in the last five years;
- in the Capricorn-Bunker area, catches and average fish size have remained fairly steady over the last 20 years;
- many smaller fish are caught in the Capricorn-Bunker area but these figures change with latitude and by Cairns fewer but larger fish are caught;
- large red emperor and coral trout are caught less frequently;
- small boats catch more fish than larger boats.

Keywords: Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, amateur fishing, demersal fish, Great Barrier Reef, catch and effort, charter boats.

Technical Memoranda are of a preliminary nature, representing the views of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.

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