



Queensland fish stocking action plan

2019–2020

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Summary

More than 50 million fish have been stocked in freshwater dams, weirs, rivers and creeks throughout Queensland since 1986. Fish stocking is a use of fisheries resources that, if managed appropriately, aligns with the purposes of the *Fisheries Act 1994* by providing benefits to the wider community while minimising environmental risks.

Established in 2000, Queensland's Stocked Impoundment Permit Scheme (SIPS) has been supporting the stocking of registered freshwater impoundments across Queensland and providing a sustainable freshwater fishing option for recreational fishers. Stocking activities have evolved and expanded into sophisticated operations that focus on the best management and use of the state's freshwater fisheries resources.

Fish stocking can provide great environmental, social and economic benefits, including:

- industry development (such as tourism and recreational fishing)
- employment for charter operations, bait and tackle shops, caravan parks, the boating industry and commercial fishing
- investment for hatcheries and infrastructure
- contribution to social values from fishing, food and voluntary activities
- Indigenous community wellbeing from cultural values.

Fish stocking also supports the priorities of the government's 'Our Future State' plan to advance Queensland, and contributes significant economic benefits to the state – a 2013 study indicated that the return to regional economies was \$100 million annually.

Our vision

World-class freshwater fisheries in Queensland that facilitate sport fishing, fishing for relaxation, and fish consumption, as well as being sustainable and minimising risks to the environment.

About the action plan

The *Queensland fish stocking action plan: 2019–2020* grew from a statewide stocking workshop held at Warwick in 2018.

Objectives of the action plan include:

- promoting freshwater fishing in Queensland
- increasing participation in the SIPS program
- increasing engagement with stocking groups
- reviewing policy and regulations for fish stocking
- improving data on fish stocking
- improving compliance in freshwater fisheries.

This plan sets out clear actions to deliver on the vision and these objectives by the next statewide stocking workshop in 2020. A report detailing progress of the actions will be presented at the workshop.

Actions

A total of seven actions have been identified across the following three themes:

- regulation and standards
- engagement
- promotion.

Theme 1: Regulation and standards

Effective management of stocked fisheries resources depends on appropriate legislation, policies, compliance, monitoring and periodic review of management arrangements.

Developing a single stocking policy and monitoring guideline for the whole of the state will help manage fish stocking in Queensland, improve the success of fish stocking and minimise the impacts of fish stocking on the environment.

A review of freshwater fish stocking rules and regulations will also be undertaken as part of reforms to Queensland's fisheries legislation.

Actions	Completion
1. Develop a fish stocking policy for Queensland	June 2020
2. Develop a cost-effective statewide monitoring guideline	June 2020
3. Review rules and regulations for fish stocking	End 2019

Theme 2: Engagement

Effective engagement with the freshwater fishing sector is fundamental to implementing the initiatives in this action plan.

Fisheries Queensland will continue to work closely with the Freshwater Fishing and Stocking Association of Queensland Inc. (FFSAQ) to communicate information to stocking groups. FFSAQ are the peak body representing fish stocking groups, freshwater fishing clubs and the interests of freshwater fishers in Queensland.

Fisheries Queensland will also establish a freshwater working group, similar to working groups established for other fisheries, to ensure advice from this sector is considered in freshwater fisheries management.

Actions	Completion
4. Provide advice and support to FFSAQ and stocking groups	Ongoing
5. Establish a freshwater working group	End 2020

Theme 3: Promotion

Building awareness of freshwater fishing opportunities and promotion of SIPS impoundments and weirs as an attractive and sustainable fishing destination will help increase participation rates and provide a range of economic, environmental and recreational benefits. Initiatives will include development of fishing trails, Facebook competitions and promotion of fish stocking release events.

In addition to promoting freshwater fishing opportunities, educating fishers about freshwater fishing rules is required (including SIPS permits, closures, allowable gear and no-take species). Building awareness and understanding of freshwater fishing rules and regulations will provide greater compliance.

Actions	Completion
6. Build awareness of freshwater fishing opportunities and promote SIPS	Ongoing
7. Build awareness and understanding of freshwater fishing rules	Ongoing

Time frames

Theme	Action	Time frame		
		2019	2020	Ongoing
Regulation and standards	1. Develop a fish stocking policy for Queensland			
	2. Develop a cost-effective statewide monitoring guideline			
	3. Review rules and regulations for fish stocking			
Engagement	4. Provide advice and support to FFSAQ and stocking groups			
	5. Establish a freshwater working group			
Promotion	6. Build awareness of freshwater fishing opportunities and promote SIPS			
	7. Build awareness and understanding of freshwater fishing rules			

More information

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