



Fact sheet



Fisheries Management Act 1991

If your project interacts with fish or fisheries within Australian Commonwealth waters or is likely to impact a Commonwealth fishery, you may require approvals or authorisation under this Act.

1. What approvals do I need?

Authorisation is required to use fishery resources in the Australian Fishing Zone (AFZ) – generally beyond three nautical miles from the Australian coastline, specified areas outside the AFZ, and Commonwealth managed fisheries under the [Fisheries Management Act 1991](#) (the Act).

The Act defines the AFZ and provides the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) with enforcement powers to protect Australia's valuable fishery resources. The [Fisheries Management Regulations 2019](#) specify areas outside the AFZ and Commonwealth managed fisheries to which the Act also applies. More information about Fisheries and their location can be found on the AFMA [Fisheries Maps](#).

The following types of authorisation may be needed:

- statutory fishing rights
- fishing permits
- fish receiver permits
- scientific permits.

Fishing rights and permits depend on the fishery's management plan, species of fish, fishing equipment used and the nominated fishing boat. More information on the types of authorisations available under the Act can be found on the AFMA [website](#).

The Australian petroleum industry's offshore activities and the Australian offshore renewables industry's activities may occur in the same place where fishing occurs. These activities are subject to environmental approvals. Project developers are expected to consult

directly with fishing operators about all activities and projects which may affect day to day fishing activities. A list of fishing industry association contacts is available on the AFMA [website](#).

2. Who provides the approvals?

AFMA issues access rights to undertake commercial harvesting of species managed by the Australian Government – generally this covers fishery resources beyond three nautical miles from the Australian coastline. Some activities or resources within three nautical miles are subject to an offshore constitutional settlement that provides for management to be under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth.

AFMA ensures that consideration is given to any broad-scale impacts of offshore petroleum industry development or offshore electricity infrastructure development on commercial fishing in Commonwealth waters.

Guidance to assist the Australian petroleum industry to consult with the commercial fishing industry around offshore activities including seismic surveys, exploration, drilling, pipeline construction and oil and gas production is available on the AFMA [website](#).

Guidance to assist the Australian offshore renewables industry with interactions with fisheries is available on the Offshore Infrastructure Regulator [website](#)^[PDF].

The states and Northern Territory generally manage fisheries resources within three nautical miles of the coastline. Some activities and/or resources outside three nautical miles are subject to an offshore

constitutional settlement that provides for management to be under the jurisdiction of the respective state or territory.

Additional approvals may be required from the relevant state or territory authorities for activities within three nautical miles of the Australian coastline or within offshore constitutional settlements managed by a state or territory.

3. How do I apply for the approvals?

Guidelines and application forms for licencing and quota management functions are available on the AFMA [website](#).

4. More information

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Further information on fisheries management is available on the AFMA [website](#).

The AFMA can be contacted by email at info@afma.gov.au.

Major Projects Facilitation Agency

If you would like assistance to identify potential Australian Government regulatory approvals required for your project, please refer to the [Major projects help tool](#) self-assessment.

The MPFA team can be contacted by email at MPFA@industry.gov.au.