



Fisheries Working Group

Report to
the Northern Development Taskforce
July 2008

Membership

- NDT secretariat
- Pearl Producers Australia
- WA Fishing Industry Council
- Recfishwest
- Aquaculture Council of WA
- Kimberley Aquatic Charter Industry
- Dept Environment & Conservation
- Department of Fisheries



Outline

- Characteristics of Kimberley aquatic environment
- Scope of working group's interest
- Principles underpinning our advice
- Types of risk and opportunities identified
- Site specific issues



Characteristics of Kimberley

Complex coastline
combined with bays and
estuaries

Low wave energy

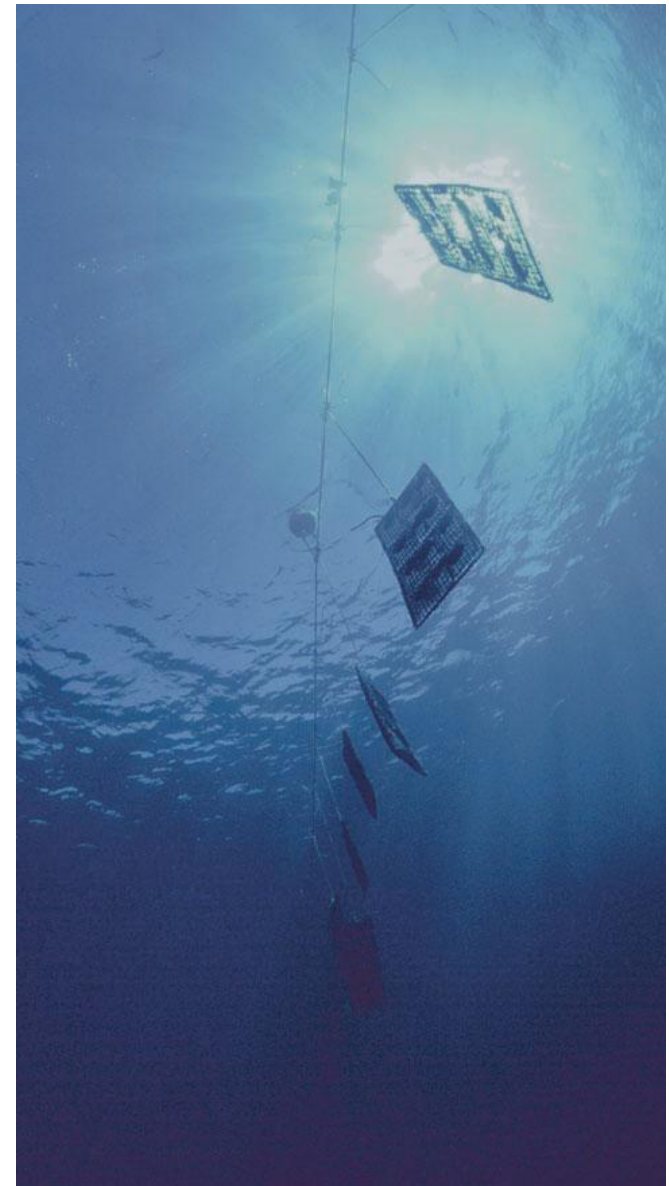
Productivity and
environment has strong
seasonal influences -
storms and tides

Fish are highly diverse
and utilise a variety of
habitat types.



Scope of WG interests

- What do I mean by fish?
- Commercial fishing
- Recreational fishing
- Charter operation
- Pearling & aquaculture
- Cultural fishing



Principles underpinning our advice

- Triple bottomline – environmental, social and economic
- Established human uses depend upon the maintenance of healthy viable ecosystems
- Recognition of legitimate existing activities and development potential.
- Comparative resilience of systems to impacts of development.
- Risk averse with respect to proximity to known important features that support fish and fish habitats and important human uses.



Environmental risks

- Ports
- Loss / modification of habitats & system function.
 - Ability to support fish and biodiversity - including threatened spp.
 - Alter balance with existing human use activities
 - Introduced pests
- Water quality
 - Local
 - Down stream
- Increased human impacts
 - Recreational fishing
 - Competition for available resources



Social & economic risks

- Loss of access
 - Commercial
 - Recreational
 - Tourism
 - wilderness
 - Cultural
- Travel times
- Collisions with vessels and gear
- Competition for infrastructure, services and labour



Environmental Opportunities

- Net environmental benefits – investment in management of Kimberley aquatic environment
 - Research and monitoring
 - Education and enforcement
 - Comprehensive aquatic management system (EBFM / marine planning)



Social & Economic Opportunities

- Economic stimulus with regional flow on effects
 - Demand for fresh local fish and pearls
 - Charter services
- Access to new and improved infrastructure
- Partnership with aboriginal people in management of aquatic resources
 - Bardi Marine Ranger Program



Gourdon Bay

Profile

- Water depth at 1 km from coast: ~5–10 m
- Substrate: Sand, some seagrass areas (nursery); some inshore reefs (bombies)

Issues

- Very high profile rec. fishing area
- Proximity to pearl oyster beds
- Variety of commercial fishing



Quondong & James Price

Profile

- Water depth at 1 km from coast: ~5–10 m
- Substrate: Mainly sand; some rocky and potentially coral areas immediately on each point. Embayment and mangroves in area likely to be nursery area for fish and invertebrates.

Issues

- Very high rec. fishing profile – sailfish aggregation
- Pearl leases
- Significant commercial fishing grounds



North & Perpendicular heads

Profile

- Water depth at 1 km from coast: ~5–10 m
- Substrate: Extensive rocky area; potentially coral areas; Seagrass inshore. Many small creeks and bays in immediate vicinity (within 1 km); Embayment and mangroves likely to be nursery area of fish and invertebrates.

Issues

- Proximity to pearl oyster grounds
- Pearl leases
- Significant commercial fishing grounds



Packer Island

Profile

- Water depth at 1 km from coast: >10 m
- Complex marine habitats - islands, bays, spits, creeks, estuaries. High diversity of habitats promotes high biodiversity of marine organisms and fishes. Likely to be important nursery areas for commercial and recreational species and protected and iconic species.

Issues

- No pearl sites
- Significant commercial fishing grounds
- Wilderness rec. fishing experience supported by TOs



Koolan Island

Profile

- Water depth at 1 km from coast: >20 m;
- Complex marine system, including island, bays, creeks, tidal flats, seagrass and corals. Likely to be high diversity of important fish habitats in immediate area supporting high biodiversity

Issues

- Pearl lease sites
- Commercial mudcrab fishing grounds
- Boat based ecotourism



Wilson Point

Profile

- Water depth at 1 km from coast: >10 m;
- Substrate: Complex marine system, including island, bays, creeks, tidal flats, seagrass and corals. Likely to be high diversity of important fish habitats in immediate area supporting high biodiversity

Issues

- Pearl lease sites
- Commercial mudcrab fishing grounds
- Boat based ecotourism



Maret Island

Profile

- Water depth at 1 km from coast: >10 m;
- Substrate: Complex marine system, including island, bays, creeks, tidal flats, seagrass and corals. Likely to be high diversity of important fish habitats in immediate area supporting high biodiversity

Issues

- Commercial fishing grounds
- Boat based ecotourism and wilderness fishing
- Turtle breeding grounds



Cape Voltaire

Profile

- Water depth at 1 km from coast: >10 m;
- Substrate: Complex marine system, including island, bays, creeks, tidal flats, seagrass and corals. Likely to be high diversity of important fish habitats in immediate area supporting high biodiversity

Issues

- Commercial fishing grounds and travel route
- Boat based ecotourism and wilderness fishing
- Pearl lease sites
- Dugong



Anjo Peninsular

Profile

- Water depth at 1 km from coast: 5–10 m;
- Substrate: Complex marine system, including island, bays, creeks, tidal flats, seagrass and corals. Likely to be high diversity of important fish habitats in immediate area supporting high biodiversity

Issues

- Commercial fishing grounds and travel route
- Boat based ecotourism and wilderness fishing
- Pearl lease sites



NDT Potential Hub Sites

