

Queensland fish stocking action plan

2022–2024

© State of Queensland, 2023

The Queensland Government supports and encourages the dissemination and exchange of its information. The copyright in this publication is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) licence.

Under this licence you are free, without having to seek our permission, to use this publication in accordance with the licence terms.



You must keep intact the copyright notice and attribute the State of Queensland as the source of the publication.

Note: Some content in this publication may have different licence terms as indicated.

For more information on this licence, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

The information contained herein is subject to change without notice. The Queensland Government shall not be liable for technical or other errors or omissions contained herein. The reader/user accepts all risks and responsibility for losses, damages, costs and other consequences resulting directly or indirectly from using this information.

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.
- Conservation of threatened fish species

Fish stocking also supports the government's core priorities of protecting the environment and growing our regions, 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 fishing for sport, relaxation and food, while supporting the conservation of freshwater fish.

About the action plan

The *Queensland fish stocking action plan: 2022–2024* grew from a statewide stocking workshop held at Mackay in 2022 and continues on from the 2019–2020 plan.

Objectives of the action plan include:

- promoting freshwater fishing in Queensland
- increasing participation in the SIPS program
- increasing engagement with stocking groups
- providing greater opportunities for stocking groups
- enhancing monitoring and habitat improvement.

This plan sets out clear actions to deliver on the vision and these objectives by the next statewide stocking workshop in 2024. A report detailing progress of the actions will be presented at the workshop.

Actions

A total of 15 actions have been identified across the following 4 themes:

- Policy, rules and regulations
- Communications and engagement
- Monitoring
- Promotion

Theme 1: Policy, rules and regulations

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

The 2019–2020 action plan resulted in the *Policy for fish stocking in Queensland*, which formalised the policy and processes for stocking. Fisheries Queensland also reviewed and consolidated the management of the SIPS scheme under the *Guideline on the administration of Queensland’s Stocked Impoundment Permit Scheme*. With these major reforms completed, Fisheries Queensland will turn their attention to the following actions to modernise the regulatory framework for freshwater fishing and stocking.

Actions	Completion
1. Complete a review of the Broodstock and Culture stock Policy.	December 2023
2. Work with Agri-Science Queensland to support the extension of the Habitat Guideline.	December 2023
3. Release a Prescribed Barramundi Waterways Policy.	June 2023
4. Continue discussions on a hatchery assurance/quality framework.	December 2023
5. Review golden and silver perch size and possession limits.	December 2023
6. Complete add and remove impoundments process for SIPS.	December 2023

Theme 2: Communications and 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 continue to engage with the SIPS and freshwater fisheries working groups to progress the actions outlined in this plan.

Actions	Completion
7. Implement regional virtual/phone forums for stocking groups to share information and experiences, and ask questions of fisheries Queensland.	June 2022
8. Fisheries Queensland to continue regional tours as time and resources allow.	Ongoing
9. Develop a contact database for stocking groups to easily contact each other and assist with information-sharing.	Completed

Theme 3: Monitoring

Over the past 2 years, Fisheries Queensland has had an increasing focus on delivering a fit-for-purpose monitoring framework for freshwater fisheries. The Monitoring Guideline was released for comment at the stocking workshop.

Actions	Completion
10. Finalise the Monitoring Guideline.	October 2022
11. Investigate the inclusion of freshwater and SIPS catch reporting in the updates to the Queensland Fishing 2.0 app.	When developed

Theme 4: 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.

Fisheries Queensland is committed to raising the profile of the stocking sector and assisting stocking groups to grow their social licence and community recognition.

Actions	Completion
12. Fisheries Queensland to work with FFSAQ, stocking groups and others to continue to implement new promotional activities for SIPS and stocking in general.	Ongoing
13. Fisheries Queensland and FFSAQ to consider a fish stocking awards to acknowledge an individual or stocking group's contribution to stocking in Queensland.	October 2024
14. Fisheries Queensland to work with interested stakeholders to develop a vision for showcasing stocked waters for the 2032 Olympics.	October 2024
15. Fisheries Queensland to develop whole-of-program messaging for stocking and freshwater fishing for use by stocking groups.	October 2023

More information

📞 13 25 23

🌐 fisheries.qld.gov.au