



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development

West Coast Demersal Scalefish Ministerial Advisory Committee – meeting #5

4 August 2026

The West Coast Demersal Ministerial Advisory Committee held its 5th meeting on 4 August 2026 to continue developing recommendations to the Minister for Fisheries on future management arrangements to support the ongoing recovery of the West Coast Demersal Scalefish Resource (WCDSR).

Mr Matt Gillett, Chair of the Committee, opened the meeting and updated members on the progress of action items from meeting 4. DPIRD presented regional boat ramp retrieval trends pre- and post- 2023 management changes ([Bradshaw et al. 2025](#)), as requested by the Committee in the previous meeting, highlighting that there had been little change in regional boat ramp retrievals in the West Coast region.

South Coast recreational priority areas

The Chair advised the Committee that, as per the Terms of Reference, the Minister for Fisheries has requested advice regarding recreational priority areas around key recreational boat ramps in the South Coast region.

DPIRD presented a summary of key themes from submissions from the 2025 'Have Your Say' survey and an overview of current management of South Coast fisheries.

The Committee noted a current lack of information to support a robust recommendation on this matter, and requested further information be tabled at the October meeting.

The Chair agreed to liaise with the Minister's Office to understand existing dialogue with the commercial sector and aggrieved persons.

To assist the Committee's ongoing consideration of the matter, DPIRD present South Coast temporal and spatial trends in demersal scalefish catch and effort at a future meeting.

Demersal recovery zones

Dr Tim Langlois presented the findings of research of spatial and temporal fisheries management measures on spangled emperor in the Ningaloo region. Dr Langlois proposed a similar modelling approach be used to inform demersal recovery zones in the West Coast region. The development of the model would be subject to appropriate habitat mapping, biological assumptions, DPIRD resources and funding.

The Committee endorsed the modelling approach proposed and the chair committed to seeking the Minister for Fisheries' support to fund the proposed modelling.

Proposed West Coast Demersal Scalefish Resource catch limits

DPIRD presented sensitivity analyses of WA dhufish model projections under the proposed catch limits at different levels of assumed recruitment ($\pm 30\%$ of average). Recruitment modelling showed minimal changes to predicted recovery trajectories over the next five years under the proposed catch limit.

DPIRD sought the Committees views on the development of an interactive tool over coming months to support the evaluation of different recreational management options to achieving the proposed catch limits when the fishery reopens in Spring 2027.

The Committee discussed other changes to proposed catch limits, including the potential to decouple the catch limits and management of inshore and offshore demersal scalefish species in the West Coast region.

The Chair agreed to inform the Minister for Fisheries of the Committee's views on proposed catch limits, including consideration to reopening the offshore demersal scalefish suite prior to Spring 2027.

Next Steps

The Committee agreed to regular monthly meetings on the first Tuesday of each month, with the exception of;

- The next meeting, which will be held on **Tuesday 25 August** and will be focused purely on the topic of demersal recovery zones; and
- The meeting following this will be held on **Monday 5 October**.

Matt Gillett

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