

# MARINE RECREATIONAL FISHING REGULATIONS

*in South Africa*



INCORPORATING

OCEANOGRAPHIC  
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Helping people to care for our ocean

**Effective fisheries regulations are based on sound scientific advice and ecological information to ensure long-term sustainable utilization of our fish resources.**

**As an angler you can help achieve long-term successful management of our marine resources by complying with the fishing regulations.**

This document simplifies and summarises the regulations that apply to recreational line-fishing in South Africa's marine and estuarine environments.

The information provided here is not complete and may change periodically.

For full details of the Marine Living Resources Act (Act No. 18 of 1998) and regulations promulgated thereunder, please contact your local fishery officer or the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment.

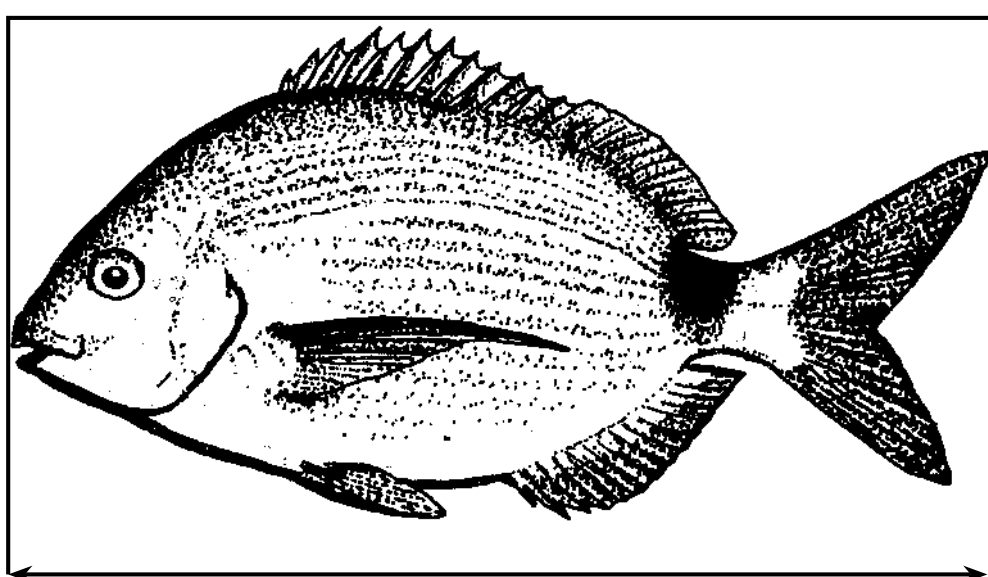
<https://www.daff.gov.za/daffweb3/Branches/Fisheries-Management/Marine-Resource-Management/Recreational-Fishing>

Special regulations may govern some estuaries, National Parks and Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). In such cases, please contact the relevant conservation authority.

<https://www.saambr.org.za/for-fishermen/>

## How to Measure Your Catch

Total length from the tip of the snout to the extreme end of the tail measured in a straight line.



Total length

## General Regulations

- Every recreational angler must pay for the right to fish in marine waters by buying an annual (or temporary) recreational fishing permit. Different types of fishing permits are available including angling, spearfishing, boat skipper, etc. These permits are available from the Post Office.
- A recreational fishing permit entitles the holder to catch fish for own use only and not to sell or trade.
- The holder of a recreational angling permit is entitled to catch fish of the Class Pisces (i.e. bony fish, sharks, rays, skates and chimaeras) only with a rod, reel and line, to which no more than 10 hooks are attached.
- The holder of a recreational spearfishing permit is entitled to catch fish of the Class Pisces (i.e. bony fish, sharks, rays, skates and chimaeras) only with a speargun.
- The skipper of a vessel used for recreational fishing shall be in possession of a permit endorsed for recreational fishing from a vessel.
- The holder of a spearfishing permit shall not use any artificial respiratory equipment, except for a snorkel.
- The holder of a recreational fishing permit authorised to fish within a Marine Protected Area (MPA) must adhere to the conditions specific to that MPA.
- The holder of a recreational angling and/or spearfishing permit shall not catch or be in possession of:
  - a) Any fish listed as a Prohibited Species.
  - b) More than the daily bag limit listed for that species during any one day. Furthermore, there is an overall cumulative bag limit of ten (10) fish per person per day irrespective of the species caught, except that this does not apply to baitfish species where there is no bag limit or to species where the bag limit is greater than 10.

c) Any fish smaller than, or of a mass less than, the size limit listed for that species.

d) Any fish during the closed season listed for that species.

- The holder of a recreational spearfishing permit shall not catch or attempt to catch fish in an estuary.
- All fish that are landed, except sharks, skates, rays and chimaeras, must have head and tail intact so that it can be established whether the fish conforms to the minimum size and/or mass, provided that it may be gutted.
- Any fish caught in contravention of the provisions of the Act or the permit conditions must immediately be returned to the sea with as little injury as possible.

## Prohibited Fish Species List

No person shall catch, land, or be in possession of any of the the species listed on the Prohibited Species List.

Common Name	Scientific Name
Basking shark (Koesterhaai)	<i>Cetorhinus maximus</i>
Brindle bass (Briekwabaars)	<i>Epinephelus lanceolatus</i>
Coelacanth (Selakant)	<i>Latimeria chalumnae</i>
Great white shark (Witdoodshaai)	<i>Carcharodon carcharius</i>
Natal wrasse (Natale lipvis)	<i>Anchichoerops natalensis</i>
Pipefish & seahorses (Pypvis & seeperdjies)	Family Syngnathidae
Potato bass (Aartappel-baars)	<i>Epinephelus tukula</i>
Sawfishes (Saagvisse)	Family Pristidae
Seventy-four (Vier-en-sewentig)	<i>Polysteganus undulosus</i>
Whale shark (Walvishaai)	<i>Rhincodon typus</i>
Wreckfish (Wrakvis)	<i>Polyprion spp.</i>

Should you inadvertently catch any of these species it must be immediately returned to the sea with as little harm as possible.

## Permitted Fish Species List

The holder of a recreational fishing permit may fish for and be in possession of species on the permitted species list subject to size, bag & closed season limitations.

The taxa, i.e. genus (denoted spp.), family or class mentioned in the table below refers to all species in the genus, family or class, as the case may be.

Note that a maximum accumulative bag limit of ten (10) shall apply (except that this does not apply to those species listed here with no bag limit, and to those with a bag limit exceeding 10)

Recreational species may not be sold by anyone. Commercial species may only be sold by permitted rights holders.

For species not listed here or on the Prohibited Species List, a daily bag limit of 10 shall apply, provided that all sharks and rays (Class Chondrichthyes) have a bag limit of one and rockcods (Family Serranidae) have a bag limit of five.

Special note should be taken of the size, bag and area limitations with regard to kob (*Argyrosomus spp.*)

Common Name	Scientific Name	Minimum size (cm TL)	Daily bag limit (pppd)	Closed season	Other
Anchovies	Family Engraulidae	None	None	None	Unlimited baitfish species
Baardman (Tasselfish, Belman)	<i>Umbrina robinsoni</i>	40	5	None	Recreational species
Billfish (Marlin, Sailfish)	Family Istiophoridae	None	5	None	Recreational species
Blacktail (Dassie, Kolstert)	<i>Diplodus capensis</i>	20	5	None	Recreational species
Bream Bronze (Copper Bream, Bluefish)	<i>Pachymetopon grande</i>	30	2	None	Recreational species
Bream River (Perch, Slimjannie)	<i>Acanthopagrus vagus</i>	25	5	None	Recreational species
Bream Stone (Stinker, Stinkvis)	<i>Neoscorpis lithophilus</i>	None	5	None	Recreational species
Carpenter (Silverfish, Karpenaar)	<i>Argyrosomus argyrosomus</i>	35	4	None	Commercial species
Catshark Leopard	<i>Poroderma pantherinum</i>	None	1	None	Recreational species
Catshark Striped	<i>Poroderma africanum</i>	None	1	None	Recreational species
Cutlassfish (Walla Walla)	<i>Trichiurus lepturus</i>	None	None	None	Unlimited baitfish species
Dageraad	<i>Chrysoblephus cristiceps</i>	40	1	None	Commercial species
Dane	<i>Porcostoma dentata</i>	None	5	None	Commercial species
Elf (Shad)	<i>Pomatomus saltatrix</i>	30	4	1 Oct to 30 Nov	No commercial sale in KZN
Englishman	<i>Chrysoblephus anglicus</i>	40	1	None	Commercial species

Common Name	Scientific Name	Minimum size (cm TL)	Daily bag limit (pppd)	Closed season	Other
Fransdam (Karel Grootoog)	<i>Boopsoidea inornata</i>	None	10	None	Commercial species
Galjoen (Damba)	<i>Dichistius capensis</i>	35	2	15 Oct to end Feb	Recreational species
Galjoen Banded	<i>Dichistius multifasciatus</i>	None	5	None	Recreational species
Garfishes (Needlefishes)	Family <i>Belonidae</i>	None	None	None	Unlimited baitfish species
Geelbek (Cape Salmon)	<i>Atractoscion aequidens</i>	60	2	None	Commercial species
Glassies	Family <i>Ambassidae</i>	None	None	None	Unlimited baitfish species
Grunter Olive (Piggy, Pinky)	<i>Pomadasus olivaceum</i>	7.5	10	None	Commercial species
Grunter Spotted	<i>Pomadasys commersonnii</i>	40	5	None	Recreational species
Hake (Stockfish)	<i>Merluccius</i> spp.	None	5	None	Commercial species
Halfbeaks	Family <i>Hemiramphidae</i>	None	None	None	Unlimited baitfish species
Hottentot	<i>Pachymetopon blochii</i>	22	10	None	Commercial species
Hottentot Blue	<i>Pachymetopon aeneum</i>	None	5	None	Commercial species
John Brown	<i>Gymnocrotaphas curvidens</i>	None	5	None	Recreational species
Kingfishes (Trevallies)	<i>Caranx</i> spp. & <i>Carangoides</i> spp.	None	5	None	Recreational species
Kingklip (Cuskeel)	<i>Genypterus capensis</i>	None	1	None	Commercial species
Knifejaw Cape	<i>Oplegnathus conwayi</i>	None	5	None	Recreational species
Knifejaw Natal (Cuckoo Bass)	<i>Oplegnathus robinsoni</i>	None	5	None	Recreational species
Kob Dusky (Daga Salmon)	<i>Argyrosomus japonicus</i>	60	1	None	Commercial species*
Kob Silver	<i>Argyrosomus inodorus</i>	50	5	None	Commercial species*
Kob Squaretail (Half Kob)	<i>Argyrosomus thorpei</i>	40	5	None	Commercial species*
Leervis (Garrick)	<i>Lichia amia</i>	70	2	None	Recreational species
Maasbanker (Cape Horse Mackerel)	<i>Trachurus</i> spp.	None	None	None	Unlimited baitfish species
Mackerel Chub	<i>Scomber japonicus</i>	None	None	None	Unlimited baitfish species
Mackerel King (Cuda)	<i>Scomberomorus commerson</i>	None	10	None	Commercial species
Mackerel Queen (Natal Snoek)	<i>Scomberomorus plurilineatus</i>	None	10	None	Commercial species
Mulletts (Harders)	Family <i>Mugilidae</i>	None	50	None	Commercial species
Musselcracker Black (Poenskop)	<i>Cymatoceps nasutus</i>	50	1	None	Commercial species
Musselcracker White (Brusher)	<i>Sparodon durbanensis</i>	60	2	None	Recreational species
Pompano Largespotted (Wave Garrick)	<i>Trachinotus botla</i>	None	5	None	Recreational species
Pompano Southern	<i>Trachinotus africanus</i>	None	5	None	Recreational species
Rockcod Catface	<i>Epinephelus andersoni</i>	50	5	None	Commercial species
Rockcod White-Edged (Captain Fine)	<i>Epinephelus albomarginatus</i>	40	5	None	Commercial species
Rockcod Yellowbelly	<i>Epinephelus marginatus</i>	60	1	None	Commercial species
Roman	<i>Chrysoblephus laticeps</i>	30	2	None	Commercial species
Santer (Soldier)	<i>Cheimerius nufar</i>	30	5	None	Commercial species
Sardines (Pilchard & Red-Eye)	Family <i>Clupeidae</i>	None	None	None	Unlimited baitfish species
Sauries	Family <i>Scomberesocidae</i>	None	None	None	Unlimited baitfish species
Scads	<i>Decapterus</i> spp.	None	None	None	Unlimited baitfish species
Scotsman	<i>Polysteganus praeorbitalis</i>	40	1	None	Commercial species
Shark Raggedtooth	<i>Carcharius taurus</i>	None	1	None	Recreational species
Shark Hammerhead**	<i>Sphyrna</i> spp.	None	1	None	No commercial sale
Shark Spotted Gully	<i>Triakis megalopterus</i>	None	1	None	Recreational species
Slinger	<i>Chrysoblephus puniceus</i>	25	5	None	Commercial species
Snapper River (Rock Salmon)	<i>Lutjanus argentimaculatus</i>	40	5	None	Recreational species
Snoek Cape	<i>Thyrsites atun</i>	60	10	None	Commercial species
Springer (Tenpounder)	<i>Elops machnata</i>	None	5	None	Recreational species
Steenbras Bank	<i>Chirodactylus grandis</i>	None	5	None	Recreational species
Steenbras Red (Copper Steenbras)	<i>Petrus rupestris</i>	60	1	1 Oct to 30 Nov	Recreational species
Steenbras Westcoast	<i>Lithognathus aureti</i>	60	1	None	Recreational species

Common Name	Scientific Name	Minimum size (cm TL)	Daily bag limit (pppd)	Closed season	Other
Steenbras White (Pignose Grunter)	<i>Lithognathus lithognathus</i>	60	1	None	Recreational species
Steentjie	<i>Spondylisoma emarginatum</i>	None	10	None	Commercial species
Strepie (Karanteen)	<i>Sarpa salpa</i>	15	10	None	Commercial species
Stumpnose Cape	<i>Rhabdosargus holubi</i>	20	5	None	Recreational species
Stumpnose Natal (Yellowfin Bream)	<i>Rhabdosargus sarba</i>	25	5	None	Recreational species
Stumpnose Red (Miss Lucy)	<i>Chrysolephus gibbiceps</i>	30	1	None	Commercial species
Stumpnose White	<i>Rhabdosargus globiceps</i>	25	10	None	Commercial species
Swordfish (Broadbill)	<i>Xiphias gladius</i>	25 kg	5	None	Recreational species***
Tuna Bigeye	<i>Thunnus obesus</i>	3.2 kg	10	None	Commercial species
Tuna Bluefin	<i>Thunnus maccoyii</i>	6.4 kg	10	None	Commercial species
Tuna Longfin (Albacore)	<i>Thunnus alalunga</i>	None	10	None	Commercial species
Tuna Yellowfin	<i>Thunnus albacares</i>	3.2 kg	10	None	Commercial species
Wolfherring (Silky)	<i>Chirocentrus dorab</i>	None	None	None	Unlimited baitfish species
Yellowtail Cape	<i>Seriola lalandi</i>	None	10	None	Commercial species
Zebra (Wildeperd)	<i>Diplodus hottentotus</i>	30	5	None	Recreational species

*Kob caught from a boat at sea (Cape Agulhas to Umtamvuna River)	50	5 but only 1 > 110 cm	None	None
*Kob caught from a boat at sea (in the province of KZN)	40	5 but only 1 > 110 cm	None	None
*Kob caught from the shore and in estuaries (east of Cape Agulhas)	60	1	None	None
*Kob caught west of Cape Agulhas	50	5	None	None
**Although Hammerhead sharks <i>Sphyrna</i> spp. are listed as Prohibited Species in the 2017/18 Marine Recreational Activity Information Brochure, this has not been legally gazetted.				
***Only pelagic longline rights holders may sell swordfish.				

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