



forestry, fisheries & the environment

Department:
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

PUBLIC NOTICE

20 October 2022

THE DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT (DEPARTMENT) ANNOUNCES THE WEST COAST ROCK LOBSTER TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH (TAC) AND TOTAL APPLIED EFFORT (TAE) FOR THE 2022/2023 FISHING SEASON

The Deputy Director-General: Fisheries Management (DDG: FM), acting under authority delegated by the Minister, has, in terms of section 14 of the Marine Living Resources Act, 1998 (Act No. 18 of 1998) (MLRA) determined the West Coast Rock Lobster (WCRL) Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and Total Applied Effort (TAE) for the 2022/2023 fishing season. The exercise of the powers and duties stipulated in section 14 of the MLRA by the DDG: FM are guided by fundamental principles of environmental and fisheries management. Some of the most important principles are the following:

- (1) The need to achieve optimum utilisation and ecologically sustainable development of marine living resources.
- (2) Determining TAC and TAE based on the best available science and information.
- (3) A precautionary approach must be applied in respect of the management and development of marine living resources.
- (4) The development, use and exploitation of renewable resources and the ecosystems which they are part of do not exceed the level beyond which their integrity is jeopardised.
- (5) Intergenerational equity: marine living resources must be conserved for the benefit of present and future generations.
- (6) The need to recognise approaches to fisheries management that contribute to food security, socio-economic development and the alleviation of poverty.

In determining the TAC and TAE for the 2022/2023 WCRL fishing season, further consideration was given to the judgment of *WWF South Africa versus the then Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and others* (Case No: 11478/18, in the High Court of South Africa, Western Cape Division Cape Town). By all indications, the DDG: FM has used the best available science and information in resource assessment and the precautionary principle has been observed. The harvesting of WCRL at levels which do not facilitate the growth of the resource is contrary to the judgment and constitutes a threat of serious and irreversible environmental damage. In projecting how resource abundance would be influenced by reductions in TAC and the limitation of the TAE, a TAC of 550 tons for the 2022/2023 fishing season has

been determined. The TAC for the 2022/2023 fishing season has been reduced by 21.4% from the previous fishing season (2021/2022). The 2022 updated assessment has established that the resource is depleted to about 58% compared to the minimum recovery target level adopted in 2006, which is appreciably lower than the 70% estimated in the 2021 assessment. The resource is now at a mere 1.4% of its pristine (1910) abundance.

The apportionments per sector are as follows:

	2021/2022 TAC (t)	2022/2023 TAC (t)
Commercial Fishing (Offshore)	351.61	276.3
Commercial Fishing (Nearshore)	119.46	93.9
Recreational Fishing	21.57	16.9
Subsistence (Interim Relief Measure) Fishing	119.46	93.9
Small-Scale Fishing sector (Nearshore)		
Small-Scale Fishing Sector (Offshore)	87.90	69.1
Foreign Fishing	0.00	0.00
Total:	700.0	550.0

Similarly, to previous fishing seasons, the department will apply effort limits to restrict the daily bag/ catch limits and the number of fishing days. The commercial and small-scale fishing sectors are authorised to undertake fishing for four months in each super-area/ zone. The start and end dates for the fishing season per sector and super-area/ zone are as follows:

Area	Catch period	
	Commercial Nearshore, Interim Relief, Small-Scale: nearshore	Commercial Offshore, Small-Scale: offshore
Super-area 1+2	15 Oct, Nov, Dec, Jan, 15 Feb	
Super-area 3+4	15 Nov, Dec, Jan, Feb, 15 Mar	15 Nov, Dec, Jan, Feb, 15 Mar
Super-area 5+6	15 Nov, Dec, Jan, Feb, 15 Mar	
Super-area 7		Dec, Jan, Feb, Mar
Areas 8 and 11	15 Nov, Dec, Jan, Feb, 15 Mar	Jan, Mar, Apr, May
Area 8 (Deep water)		Jun, Jul
Areas 12, 13 and 14	15 Nov, Dec, Jan, Feb, 15 Mar	

The 2022/2023 WCRL recreational fishing effort is limited to 12 days between 16 December 2022 and 9 April 2023. Fishing will be allowed as follows:

Number	Month	Date	Day	Approx. Low Tide time
1	Dec 2022	16 th	Friday (public holiday)	15h30
2	Dec 2022	17 th	Saturday	16h40
3	Dec 2022	24 th	Saturday	09h52
4	Dec 2022	26 th	Monday (public holiday)	11h33
5	Dec 2022	27 th	Tuesday	12h29
6	Dec 2022	28 th	Wednesday	13h32
7	Dec 2022	29 th	Thursday	14h42
8	Dec 2022	30 th	Friday	16h00
9	Dec 2022	31 st	Saturday	04h03
10	Jan 2023	1 st	Sunday (public holiday)	05h11
11	Apr 2023	8 th	Saturday (public holiday)	10h34
12	Apr 2023	9 th	Sunday (public holiday)	11h07

It should be noted that only persons over the age of twelve (12) may obtain a recreational fishing permit allowing the fishing, collecting, keeping, controlling, landing, transporting of, or possession of not more than four (4) WCRL per day. A seasonal WCRL recreational fishing permit costs R94 and can be purchased at the Post Office. A recreational fishing permit is valid for the entire season.

WCRL may be caught between 08h00 and 16h00 daily. The bag limit is four (4) per person per day and the size restriction is eighty (80) millimetres of carapace length. No person catching WCRL with a recreational fishing permit shall sell their catch. Any WCRL caught, collected, or transported must be kept in a whole state.



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DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: FISHERIES MANAGEMENT (ACTING)

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Issued by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment

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