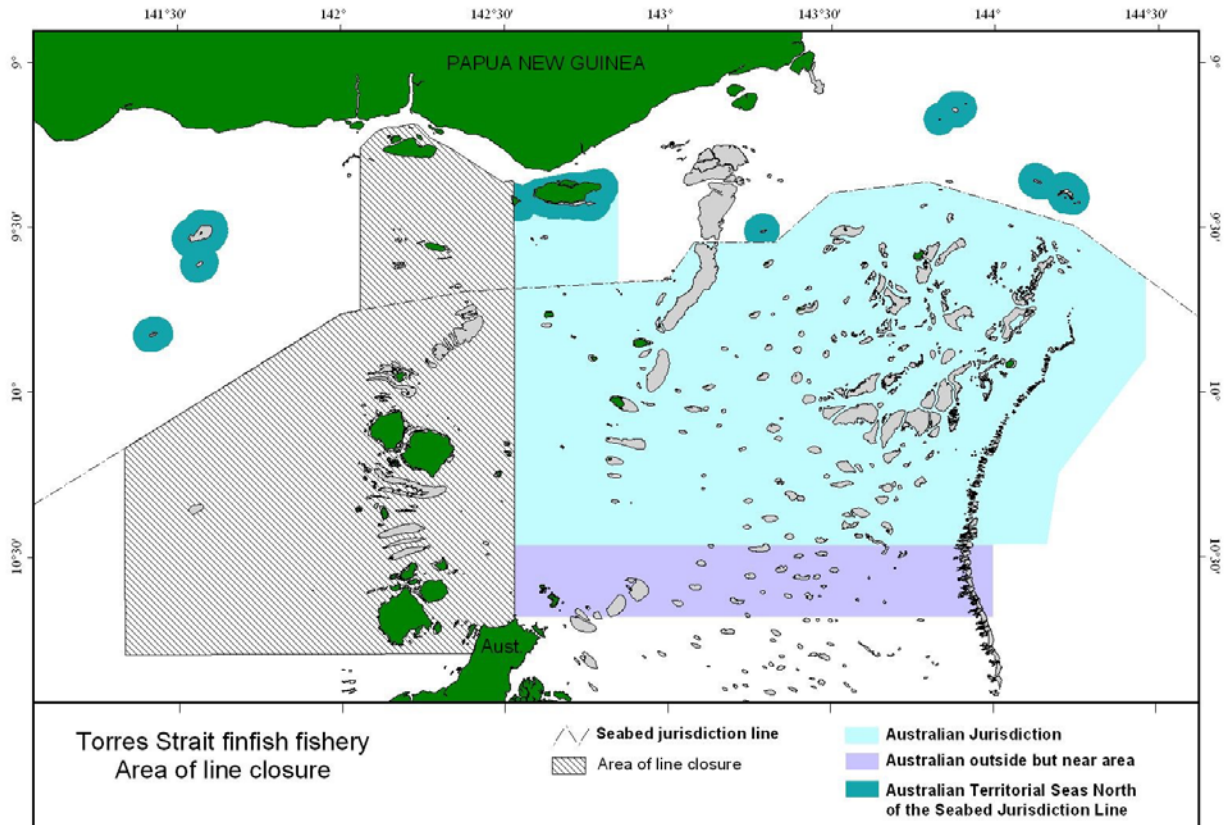




WESTERN LINE CLOSURE FOR FINFISH An Overview



Commercial fishing for reef-line finfish species (e.g. coral trout, trevallies and emperors) is banned in the area of the Torres Strait Finfish Fishery west of 142° 32'E. This is referred to as the western line closure (see map above). The closure does not apply to mackerel commercial fishing or traditional fishing.

The closure affects all Traditional Inhabitant Boat licenced fishers who fish commercially for finfish species under a reef-line (LN) endorsement. Western communities including Boigu, the western half of Dauan, Mabuaiag, Badu, Moa, Keriri, Ngurupai, Muralag and Waiben lie within the closure.

The closure does not serve a purpose in managing the fishery and reflects an historic boundary that was carried over when the Fishery was transferred to a single jurisdiction under the PZJA.

What will happen if the closure is removed?

If the closure is removed the area of the Fishery available for commercial reef-line fishers will increase.



AFMA will continue to monitor catches and participation in the fishery through the Fish Receiver System and will work with the PZJA Finfish Resource Assessment Group and Working Group to monitor how the fishery is performing.



Finfish Resource Assessment Group and Working Group advice

AFMA has gathered advice on potentially removing the western line closure from PZJA Finfish Resource Assessment Group and the PZJA Finfish Working Group. Both advisory groups support the removal of the closure.

Draft regulation to remove the closure

If communities support removing the closure the PZJA would need to make a new Fisheries Management Instrument.

In making a new instrument for the fishery, the current mesh net restriction on Australian Traditional Inhabitants engaged in traditional fishing for finfish will be removed to reflect that the PZJA's jurisdiction does not extend to traditional fishing.

If you have any questions contact AFMA on (07) 4069 1990 or via email FisheriesTI@afma.gov.au