Project 100269 Progress Report Fishery Data: Processor Sampling

13.3 Progress report due: PS activity in Dive Fisheries; agreed communications outputs completed (IMAS website, Facebook, e-news, SIT News, and other channels).

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Table of contents

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table 1: Summary of commercial abalone catches measured in 2024 by processors across Zones.   | Processor | Zone | Catches | n | % | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | TASMANIAN SEAFOODS PTY LTD | W | 41 | 4,104 | 33 | | TASMANIAN SEAFOODS PTY LTD | N | 4 | 399 | 3 | | TASMANIAN SEAFOODS PTY LTD | E | 81 | 7,827 | 64 | | Total |  | 126 | 12,330 | 100 | |

# Abalone

Commercial abalone catch sampling has continued through the third quarter of 2024. Catch samples have continued to come from a single large processor. YTD there have been 12,330 individual abalone measured from 126 catches ([Table 1](#tbl-summary-flex)). Initial data continues to show larger abalone >160 mm continue to dominate catches in the Western Zone ([Figure 2](#fig-WZ-summary)). In the Eastern Zone catches continue to shift towards larger individuals >150 mm with fewer animals nearer to the LML (142 mm) suggesting there are limited recruits entering the fishery ([Figure 1](#fig-EZ-summary)). There have been a small number of catches measured from the Northern Zone with most dominated by larger animals around 145 mm ([Figure 3](#fig-NZ-summary)).

Summary statistics for each catch measured continue to be provided to factories participating in the program. These data summaries are enabling more accurate size grading and efficiency in live-export shipments.

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| Figure 1: Eastern Zone weight (top) and length (bottom) frequency distributions recorded at processing factories in 2024. Horizontal boxplots represent summary weight and length distributions. Pie plot represents percentage composition of weight grading (vertical dashed red lines) for abalone weighed. Size limit presented as vertical dashed red line in length frequecny plot. |

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| Figure 2: Western Zone weight (top) and length (bottom) frequency distributions recorded at processing factories in 2024. Horizontal boxplots represent summary weight and length distributions. Pie plot represents percentage composition of weight grading (vertical dashed red lines) for abalone weighed. Size limit presented as vertical dashed red lines in length frequecny plot. Note: Size limit increase from 145 mm to 150 mm in Western Zone on 1st July 2024. |

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| Figure 3: Northern Zone weight (top) and length (bottom) frequency distributions recorded at processing factories in 2024. Horizontal boxplots represent summary weight and length distributions. Pie plot represents percentage composition of weight grading (vertical dashed red lines) for abalone weighed. Size limit presented as vertical dashed red line in length frequecny plot. |

# Urchins

A total of 11,763 individual long-spined urchins (Centrostephanus rodgersii) from 38 catches have been measured by IMAS staff since the beginning of 2024 season ([Table 2](#tbl-urchin-summary-flex)). The Centrostephanus fishery stopped harvesting towards the end of June with the onset of spawning. The closure of the major processor of urchins, True South Seafoods, in May 2024 has disrupted much of the industry harvest and the measuring program has now shifted to sampling catches from smaller processing facilities that are currently being established (e.g. Hai Loong Seafoods, Margate and Tasmanian Blue Seafoods, Huonville).

A total of 614 short-spined urchin (Heliocidaris erythrogramma) have also been measured from three catches with the beginning of the main harvest season for this species (October 2024) ([Table 2](#tbl-urchin-summary-flex)).

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| Table 2: Summary of commercial urchin catches measured in 2024 by IMAS staff at processing factories.   | Year | Species | Catches | n | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | 2024 | Centrostephanus | 38 | 11,763 | | 2024 | Heliocidaris | 3 | 614 | | Total | - | 41 | 12,377 | |

# Communications

Provision of catch measuring updates and analysis to processors continues for all species (e.g. length-weight grading plots for each abalone catch docket measured). Cumulative overall results have also been communicated at recent industry Port Meetings, as well as various industry and government forums/meetings. Abalone measuring data were also prepared and released as part of the 2023 Tasmanian Abalone Fishery Stock Assessment.