

**Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation
Fisheries Queensland
MEDIA RELEASE**

15 September 2011

Temporary fishing closure in Gladstone area

Fisheries Queensland will put in place a temporary closure on all fishing in an area centred on Gladstone while Biosecurity Queensland conducts testing on a condition affecting some locally-caught fish.

Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI) Director-General Ian Fletcher said fishers had reported barramundi being caught in the area, some with cloudy eyes and lesions.

"Public health is the number one priority and we are putting in place a temporary closure while we assess the situation," Mr Fletcher said.

"Fisheries Queensland has determined the boundaries for the temporary closure will be between Deception Creek at the top of end of The Narrows down to Rodds Peninsula and to the outer edge of Facing Island.

"Biosecurity Queensland is testing fish samples to try to identify the condition.

"In the meantime, we are taking a precautionary approach to ensure handling of affected fish is minimised.

"An additional Fisheries officer has been sent to Gladstone and the Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol is conducting extra patrols.

"While the fish condition has not been identified, we strongly urge people not to fish in the local area.

"DEEDI is consulting with the Queensland Seafood Industry Association and Sunfish Queensland.

"The fishing closure can be lifted at any time upon scientific advice confirming it is no longer necessary."

Safe Food Production Queensland Principal Policy Officer David Wilkinson said the closure ensured that fish that were potentially unsuitable for consumption would not enter the food chain.

"There is no evidence to suggest that seafood harvested from other areas is affected," Mr Wilkinson said.

Queensland Health Acting Chief Health Officer, Dr Michael Cleary said seafood that showed signs of damage, deterioration or disease should not be handled or consumed.

"Anyone who has concerns about their health which might be attributed to the handling or consumption of seafood from the local area should seek medical advice," Dr Cleary said. State agencies will continue to monitor the situation.

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