



Torres Strait Kaiar (Tropical Rock Lobster)

Life Cycle

Size at mature age

- Tropical rock lobsters (Kaiar) mature at around 2½ to 3 years of age with a carapace length (shell width) of 90-120mm.

When is the spawning season?

- Spawning occurs between November and April.
- Larval life lasts approximately six months.

What do they feed on?

Kaiar feed on almost anything they come across. Their diet includes snails, clams and sea urchins.

What are their migration patterns?

- Tagging studies have shown that most 2+ year old lobsters emigrate from Torres Strait to the northeast into the Gulf of Papua to breed. They then seem to disappear.

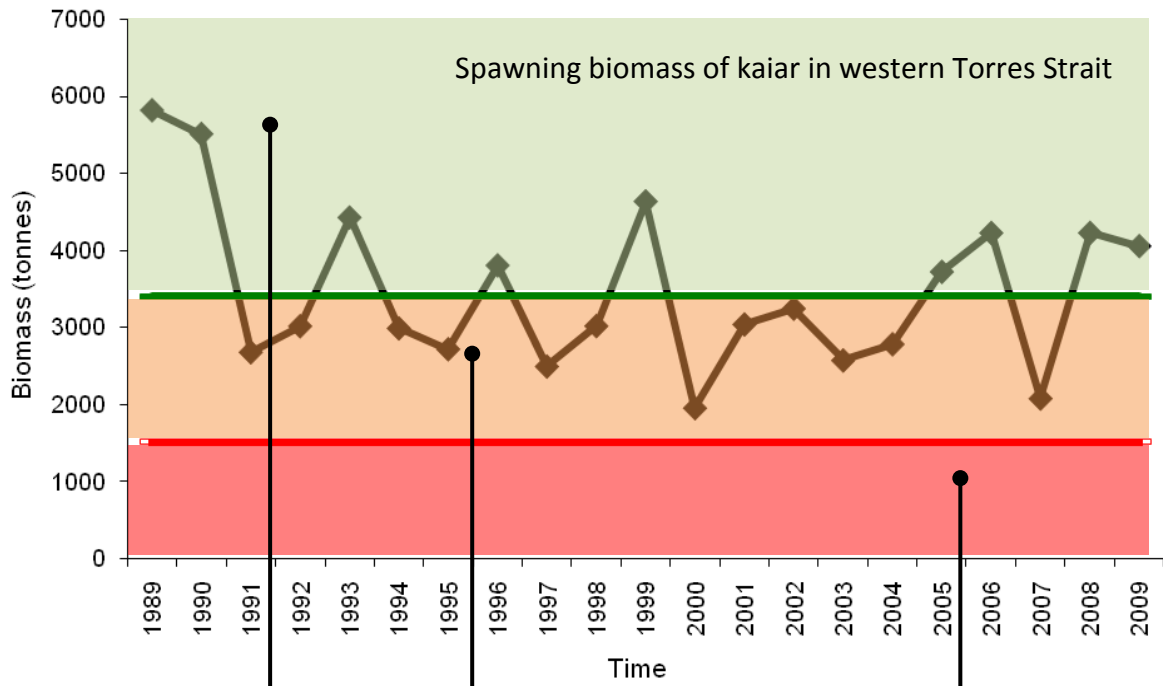


Where do they live?

- Kaiar live in holes, caves and crevasses of coral or rocky reef.
- At around one year of age, they live only in deep areas.
- At 2+ years of age, they live in both deep areas and shallow reefs.
- At 3+ years, male kaiar live mainly in shallow reefs.



Kaiar stocks in the Torres Strait are currently at a **healthy** level



Kaiar stocks are **HEALTHY** (green) when the number of kaiar harvested each year is less than the number of kaiar reaching a mature age to spawn each year.

Kaiar stocks are **STABLE** (amber) when the number of kaiar harvested each year is equal to the number of kaiar reaching a mature age to spawn each year.

Kaiar stocks are **UNHEALTHY** (red) when the number of kaiar harvested each year is much greater than the number of kaiar reaching a mature age to spawn each year.

Healthy stocks of Kaiar can be maintained by:



Harvesting only by hand or with hand-held equipment, such as a spear or scoop net.



An October to November closure on all commercial fishing of kaiar.



A December to January ban on the use of hookah gear.



Only taking kaiar of tail length greater than 115 mm and carapace length (width) greater than 90 mm to be sold.



Taking no more than three (3) bags of kaiar per person, or six (6) kaiar per dingy.



A prohibition on the processing or carrying of kaiar meat.

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