



Chairperson's Summary

SIV Board Meeting #214 of 30 November 2023

Location: Zoom

Fishery Management

a) OFAL - Show Cause

- The VFA issued a show cause notice to the 106 Ocean Access Fishery Licence (OFAL) holders who had caught less than 1000kg over the last 5-year period.
- SIV advocated for all extenuating circumstances provided by licence holders to be considered as part of individual assessments.
- The VFA granted the majority of those who wanted to retain their licence another two years to engage in activities allowed by their licence actively, regularly and substantially, as per wording of the *Fisheries Act (1995)*.
- Some licence holders did not show cause. SIV requested the VFA call each of those licence holders to verify that they had understood the show cause process.
- The SIV Board agreed it would be prudent for SIV to request detail from the VFA regarding what criteria is going to be used for the reassessment after two years.

b) Inshore Trawl - Catch Limits

- The VFA issued a Draft Fisheries Notice to Inshore Trawl licence holders regarding:
 - a daily limit of octopus/licence and an annual octopus cap.
 - fixing an administrative error in the Fisheries Regulations (2019) to specify the OSC agreed daily combined limit of Commonwealth managed finfish.
- The VFA contend that the Inshore Trawl licence is designed for targeting crustacea only.
- Several licence holders are of the belief it has always been a broad multispecies fishery given they are allowed gear types to target other species.
- Members of the octopus pot fishery are concerned about increased catch from inshore trawl impacting stocks and quota.
- The Board agreed that SIV should not take a position on resource allocation between licence classes but continue to advocate for industry consultation to determine an acceptable outcome for all parties.
- SIV summarised points raised by inshore trawl licence holders in a submission to the VFA.

c) Pipi Fishery - Beach Access

- Fishers can't gain access to the beach using motorised vehicles due to access tracks running through National Park.
- Currently fishers must cart pipis off the beach by hand - unfeasible and causing O,H&S risk.
- SIV sent a letter to the Minister asking for support on the issue.

Marine Development

Policy and Engagement Agreement

- Following Board consultation out of session, the updated Marine Development Policy was uploaded to the SIV website and circulated to stakeholders.
- SIV reserves the right to oppose or challenge developments in response to risk to the commercial seafood industry.
- An Engagement Agreement has been sent to proponents who have requested consultation.

Literature review on seismic studies

- The Victorian Rock Lobster Committee (VRLC) wishes to better understand risk associated with seismic activity to commercial seafood species.
- A meeting was held between SIV, Abalone Council Victoria and VRFish where mutual interests on this issue were identified.
- The Board agreed it would be a positive to summarise available information in one place.

Research projects

- Two research priorities recently proposed by SIV have been released by the FRDC for applications:
 - Impacts of electromagnetic fields associated with offshore wind on commercially and recreationally important species.
 - Impacts of seismic arrays on Southern Rock lobster in near shore shallow water environments.

Victorian Rock Lobster Committee (VRLC) Update

5-year Draft Rock Lobster Management Plan

- The VFA released a draft 5-year Rock Lobster Management Plan for public consultation.
- The VRLC provided rock lobster licence holders with a summary of the management plan and harvest strategy to assist with understanding implications and providing feedback.
- The proposed Eastern Zone TAC will make it very difficult for operators to absorb current fees for management of the fishery.

Seismic survey compensation

- Three offshore energy companies proposed a compensation framework based on the NERA Protocol developed for WA/NT/Commonwealth fisheries, which requires displaced fishers to maintain fishing activity and apply for compensation for reductions in catch and increased costs.
- The VRLC's view is that the suggested protocol is not appropriate for Victoria based on limited fishing grounds and that fishers shifting effort could lead to localised depletion and increased competition between licence holders.
- An alternative approach was presented by the VRLC for temporary 'retirement of quota' that does not require fishers to continue fishing and relocate their effort.

2025 Trans-Tasman Rock Lobster Conference

- This conference is held every two years, hosted by one of the nine Rock Lobster fishing jurisdictions in New Zealand and Australia.
- Good opportunity for Victoria to gain political and media exposure for the seafood industry.
- There needs to be a focus on issues that the sector is currently facing, including spatial squeeze, climate change and market access.
- Board support for SIV to express interest in hosting the 2-day event and Gala Dinner.

Internal Resources

NFP Governance Course

- SIV CEO completed two-day course on Governance Foundations for Not-For-Profit Directors.
- CEO recommended the course to SIV Board members.

Project Coordinator

- SIV Board requested a position description for the recruitment of a Project Coordinator.
- SIV Board supported outsourcing marketing requirements until an appointment is made.

Aquaculture Extension Officer

- Promoting the interests of the aquaculture sector is reflected in the SIV Rules (2022).
- Potential opportunity to employ a staff member to lead aquaculture representation.
- SIV Board reaffirmed the importance of increasing membership from the aquaculture sector.

Independent Directors

- Recommendation to be put forward at the 2023 AGM that SIV recruit at least one independent director with experience and networks in the areas of tourism or hospitality.

Marketing

Social Media Plan 2024

- SIV is pulling together a 24-month social media calendar to ensure regular promotion of industry across the Victorian Seafood channels.

Membership Drive

- SIV to develop a member value proposition for prospective members.
- Membership will be sought from companies that have an interest in seafood.

Events

Victorian Seafood Awards

- Draft invite for the awards provided to the Board for comment.
- Both venue and ticketing arrangements confirmed.
- Agreed to change the date of the event to May 9th, 2024.
- A judging panel will review award nominations.

Other Business

Draft Animal Care and Protection Bill

- Draft bill to be released for consultation.
- SIV to assess implications for members given the Bill considers species such as rock lobster, octopus, squid and cuttlefish.

Next meeting

February 2024 – In person

Roland Roccioletti
Independent Chair