



## **Chairperson's Summary**

### **Victorian Rock Lobster Committee (VRLC) Meeting #12 – 12 October 2024**

**Location: Zoom Meeting**

#### **2024 VRLC Terms of Reference**

- Updates to the 2020 ToR requested by the committee at the June Strategy Day were presented for final approval.
- A review extension provided VRLC members until 8th November 2024 to offer any final feedback. If there is no further feedback received the version provided in the meeting papers will be accepted as the 2024 ToR.

#### **RL Management Plan**

- At the RLRAG meeting in June objections were raised regarding late changes made by the VFA to the draft Management Plan prior to it being submitted to the Minister for approval.
- A fundamental late change was made by the VFA to remove the harvest rule for the recreational sector, which had imposed a cap on recreational take in both zones.
- It is unknown how the objections raised at the RLRAG will be considered by the VFA in regard to the draft Management Plan currently before the Minister's office.
- SIV CEO to brief the Minister's Chief of Staff regarding the VRLC's perception of events.

#### **Cost Recovery Working Group – Update**

- The VFA has established a Working Group of 5 industry members and 3 VFA staff to consider a VFA proposal for a GVP model to calculate levies for wild catch fishers.
- VRLC member Gary Ryan and the SIV CEO are both members of the Working Group to ensure that SIV and the VRLC are properly briefed on the principles being discussed.
- It was acknowledged that the process of considering the model had only just begun. At the last meeting the Working Group asked the VFA to undertake further modelling and consider issues raised by industry.

#### **Trade update**

- The Prime Minister has announced the removal of trade restrictions to China. A firm date has not yet been confirmed.
- Discussions are still in progress behind the scenes between DFAT and their Chinese counterparts regarding the technicalities to reopen trade.
- Fishers and quota holders are expressing some relief, however uncertainties remain regarding the required conditions for sanctions to be finally lifted.
- If the industry is to meet Chinese New Year demand in China, then trade needs to resume by Christmas to allow businesses to establish the proper connections.

**Draft Southeast Marine Parks Management Plan**

- There is no overlap between recent catch data (last 7 years) and the marine parks with proposed zone changes.
- SIV were relieved that zoning of Apollo Bay Marine Park remained unchanged in the draft document following consultation between SIV and Parks Australia in 2023 on potential impacts to lobster fishing.

**Trans-Tasman Rock Lobster Conference**

- Keynote speaker has been confirmed.
- The draft program is being developed.
- Soft launch of the conference was undertaken at Seafood Directions, including the distribution of flyers to provide information on the event and sponsorship.

**Lobster National Peak Body Update**

- Two potential models for a National Peak Body are currently being presented to existing peak bodies and business interests in the RL industry for their consideration.

Wayne Dredge  
VRLC Chairperson