



2026 ELECTION PRIORITIES

A \$10 million investment to bring more Victorian fish to local tables, support regional communities and create more jobs.

Slash reliance on imported fish and enjoy more fresh, local seafood from our own wild fisheries and sustainable farms.

Strengthen regional communities by supporting coastal industries that make country Victoria a destination of choice and ensure Melbourne's reputation as one of the world's culinary capitals.

Boost regional jobs and make coastal Victoria a place for business through innovation, diversification and emerging opportunities in our local seafood sector.

Why Victoria needs more investment in its seafood industry

Surveys reveal that 90% of Victorians believe it is critically important to produce seafood locally¹. This is not merely an industry request; it is a clear priority for 6.3 million Victorians.

Victoria's seafood potential is massively under-utilised. Victorian seafood makes up a mere 4% of Australia's gross seafood product². Approximately 65% of total seafood consumed in Australia is imported from overseas³.

Despite being one of the world's most sustainable industries, market supply of local finfish from Victorian managed fisheries has declined by almost 50% over the past 10 years⁴. We can benefit from our sustainable low carbon footprint fisheries by supporting wild-catch businesses supplying more fresh fish to local restaurants and consumers.

Aquaculture is the fastest growing primary industry globally. Victoria's clean coastal waters provide the potential for our state to be Australia's biggest shellfish producer, creating more jobs for regional Victoria.

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An investment plan to strengthen Victoria's seafood industry

Embracing technology to improve fisheries management (\$2 million)

Roll out digital reporting tools for any remaining commercial fisheries still using handwritten logs for their mandatory catch reporting.

Roll out digital reporting tools for charter boat fishing operators to contribute important data to help monitor trends in fishing success and the health of fisheries resources.

A commitment from the fisheries regulator to enforce lawful digital reporting of recreational lobster catch to ensure accurate data is being collected for resource management.

A thriving oyster industry to create regional jobs (\$1.5 million)

Expand commercial trials of native Sydney Rock Oyster farming in the Gippsland Lakes in collaboration with the Gunaikurnai people and partner organisations.

Establish commercial trials of triploid Pacific Oyster farming in Western Port Bay in collaboration with the Bunurong people and existing Victorian aquaculture businesses.

Innovation to make use of more long-spined sea urchin (\$2 million)

The creation of viable markets for low grade long-spined urchin through the commercialisation of shelf-stable food products and biomaterials.

More local fish for Victorian consumers (\$2.5 million)

Develop secure and tradable commercial fishing licences and appropriate regulations that will encourage investment into Victoria's ocean-based fisheries.

Address local demand for King George Whiting and Calamari by trialling sustainable harvests in areas where the species are not currently commercially fished.

Prioritise food production in marine spatial planning processes to ensure local seafood availability is not threatened by reduced access to fishing grounds.

Increased capacity for SIV to support industry (\$2 million)

Peak body funding over 4 years to:

work with stakeholders on minimising impacts of offshore energy developments on local seafood availability

work with industry and Global Victoria on promotion and market differentiation for Victoria's seafood products

bring to market SIV's pilot digital app designed to help Victorian consumers make informed choices around seafood provenance and sustainability.

References:

1. Valuing Victoria's Wild-Catch Fishing and Aquaculture Industries (2021). University of Sydney.
2. Futures of Seafood National Roadmap (2026). Blue Economy CRC.
3. Seafood consumption in Australia (2022). Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences.
4. Victorian Commercial Fish Production Information Bulletin (2024). Victorian Fisheries Authority.