

## ***Total Allowable Commercial Catch for eastern octopus zone of the Victorian Octopus Fishery 2023/24***

### **EXPLANATORY STATEMENT**

Consultation on the 2023/24 Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC) of the Victorian Octopus Fishery (Eastern Zone) was undertaken in April/May 2023 in accordance with section 3A of the **Fisheries Act 1995**.

The Octopus Fishery Access Licence class was established in 2020 to enable targeted commercial octopus harvest in Victoria under dedicated, sustainable management controls. Octopus Fishery Access Licences have been issued authorising octopus harvest from the eastern octopus zone using unbaited shelter pots, under a TACC and quota management system. The TACC has been at 68.7 tonnes for the first three fishing seasons.

I have decided to maintain the TACC at 68.7 tonnes for the 2023/24 fishing season. This has been informed by a weight of evidence evaluation, taking into account stock status, species biology, management settings and available catch and effort data.

Managing sustainable biomass levels of pale octopus across the zone, and minimising risk of localised depletion, is a high priority for maximising ongoing sustainable harvest in this fishery. Alongside the TACC, the VFA will work with the multiple licence classes that access octopus from the eastern octopus zone area to ensure that total catch is managed sustainably.

Other current management measures will also be reviewed, including over catch allowance for the season, permitted listed operators on the licence, and the establishment of an electronic reporting system, so we can continue to work towards an efficient and sustainable fishery.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Travis Dowling".

**Travis Dowling**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Victorian Fisheries Authority

11 / 05 / 2023