

Pipi Fishery Management Plan Steering Committee

Chair's summary – August 2016

The Pipi Fishery Management Plan Steering Committee held its third meeting in Portland, Victoria on Tuesday 16 August 2016. Key outcomes from that meeting were as follows:

1. The Steering Committee (SC) discussed and resolved several administrative matters.
2. The SC reflected on the site visit to Discovery Bay the day before and discussed the relevant practical implications for the fishery and the management plan.
3. The SC noted the current format of the logbook and recommended that the relevant logbooks be amended for the next licensing year to include a requirement to record the number of persons fishing each fishing event/day. In the interim, instructions should be amended to include this requirement in current logbooks as soon as practicable.
4. The SC noted that improved access is required across the State for both recreational and commercial fishers if the fishery is to develop. In terms of commercial fishing, based on the current available evidence, the SC did not identify any known pipi populations outside of the main harvest areas that could be practically accessed by non-motorised means, although 90 mile beach could be investigated further.
5. It was noted that the issue of vehicular access is a key issue in relation to development of the fishery. Although the plan can be progressed the vehicular access needs to be resolved as soon as practicable. At some point progress on the plan may need to be deferred until there is clarity on this issue.
6. Sector Views – SIV noted that there is a range of views within the commercial sector, but a general view is that the entire State's coastline should be opened to commercial harvest, as it is for recreational fishers. VRFish noted that practical access is required across the State to give both commercial and recreational fishers access to pipi populations, although there is no formal VRFish position on the pipi fishery at this stage.
7. The SC noted the draft Fishery Background Paper for public release. It was agreed that the paper be amended following discussion at the meeting, endorsed out-of-session, and published on the Fisheries Victoria website.
8. The SC continued discussion of the draft management objectives and endorsed them in principle subject to the agreed changes were made.
9. It was agreed that Fisheries Victoria would develop options for management of the pipi fishery for discussion at the next meeting. This will include the data/information required to implement the options to advise research and data collection needs for the plan.
10. It was agreed that a site visit to Venus Bay would be undertaken to coincide with the SC meeting #5.

The next meeting of the Steering Committee (#4) will be held in Melbourne in October, with the date to be confirmed.

Peter Appleford

Chair

August 2016