

# Corner Inlet Fishery Management Plan Steering Committee

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## Chair's Summary – Meeting #1

The Corner Inlet Fishery Management Plan Steering Committee held its first meeting online on Friday 13 November 2020. Key discussions and outcomes from that meeting were as follows:

1. Terms of Reference – the Committee endorsed the draft Terms of Reference subject to one amendment to support greater transparency. As a result, all documents that are not marked as confidential can be shared with other interested stakeholders.
2. Visions for success – the group is committed to working together to assist the Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) in developing an effective management plan (subject to the Minister's final approval). While there were a range of views among members, common themes raised when discussing success related to future management to be data driven, science and evidence-based, and to set the fishery up for the long-term in a way that will ensure its social license is protected through responsible fishing practices. The management plan presents a good opportunity to improve management of the fishery, boosting its reputation for sustainability. It is also an opportunity to build connections between the various sectors and promote harmony.
3. While some commercial licence holders do not want further regulatory changes to their sector, there is a clear desire from all sectors to future-proof the fishery and maintain its social licence. It was acknowledged that to have an effective management plan there will have to be change of some kind.
4. The next meeting - will focus on the current stock assessments and monitoring, as well as the health and importance of seagrass in the Inlet for fish communities. This will support discussions on opportunities to improve scientific monitoring in order to enhance management of the fishery. Presentations from the VFA science team and a seagrass expert were requested by Committee members to support this.
5. Field trip - The group agreed it would be beneficial for members to observe commercial netting practices, the environment and the local community first-hand. A proposed field trip to the Inlet some time in December 2020 was fully supported and is currently being investigated.
6. Winching of seine nets – While not on the agenda, some members of the Committee raised as a matter of urgency their concerns relating to a recent change to seine netting practices by a small minority of operators. The VFA advised it is reviewing the impacts of this form of fishing on the sustainability of the fishery.

The next meeting of the Steering Committee will be held on Friday 27 November 2020.

Dallas D'Silva  
Chair  
November 2020