



16 October 2020

To The Victorian Fisheries Authority
The Hon. Melissa Horne – Minister for Fishing & Boating
The Hon. Lily D'Ambrosio – Minister for Environment
The Hon. Martin Pakula – Minister for Tourism

Re: FISHERIES (SPIDER CRAB) NOTICE 2020

Dear Sir/Madam,

We write to you in response to your consultation announcement asking for public comment on the reduction of the Australian Giant Spider Crab bag limit.

We acknowledge that the Victorian Fisheries Authority are responding to the overwhelming community concerns in the form of initial research and a reduction to the daily bag limit, however both efforts do not provide any safeguards to the documented destructive events of 2019 and 2020 and will not provide any bulk, viable scientific data to justify population mass speculation unless greatly expanded, properly funded and continued for several years. Instead, we strongly urge you to introduce a 'no-take season' in enclosed waterways (as per Marine Safety Victoria and Marine Regulations 2009) before the 1st April 2021 to safeguard these annual moulting aggregations from April-July each year.

We agree with and support the overwhelming and significant community concerns from fishers and non-fishers alike over the continued crabbing of this species from enclosed waterways, at a time that is, without argument, the most vulnerable stage in their life and breeding cycles.

The issue is gaining a significant international audience. We ask that you consider the vast majority of opinions from the local to international community who wish to see our unique spider crab aggregation protected for its value as a local and national tourism drawcard and asset, in addition to its value as the fascinating, ecologically valuable, environmental phenomenon that it is. Please introduce a 'no-take season' in enclosed waterways (as per Marine Safety Victoria and Marine Regulations 2009) before the 1st April 2021 to safeguard these annual moulting aggregations from April-July each year.

Yours Sincerely,

AJ Morton
Co-Founder, Spider Crab Alliance (SCA)
Partner, Save Our Spider crabs Campaign (SOS)

