

Pipi Fishery Management Plan Steering Committee

Chair's summary – May 2016

The Pipi Fishery Management Plan Steering Committee held its second meeting in Melbourne, Victoria on Thursday 5 May 2016. Key outcomes from that meeting were as follows:

1. The Steering Committee (SC) discussed and resolved, as appropriate, several administrative matters.
2. Membership of the SC was finalised, being Fisheries Victoria, SIV and VRFish. It was agreed that consultation with indigenous parties and conservation groups would be undertaken by Fisheries Victoria during the management plan development process.
3. The SC met with 8 Victorian fishery licence holders who have recent catch history in the fishery. The licence holders raised a number of issues for consideration during the development of the management plan, including:
 - The status of the pipi fishery in Discovery Bay and Venus Bay, including catch rates and the viability of the fishery generally;
 - The opportunity to access other populations within Victoria besides those in the current open areas;
 - The risk of activating latent effort, and the factors influencing entry into the fishery;
 - The use of motorised and non-motorised vehicles to access the fishery and the issues associated with each method, including the practical difficulties of using hand pulled trolleys;
 - Current management arrangements and potential future arrangements, including quota management (and allocation), licencing and input controls;
 - Current markets for pipi and prices obtained for bait and human consumption;
 - Information about fishing operations and improving catch and effort information; and
 - Concerns about illegal take-for-sale, and fishing undersized pipi under recreational fishing arrangements.
4. Sector Views – SIV noted that there are a range of views within the commercial sector, which were heard at this meeting, but there is no formal position from SIV at this stage except that there is a real need to consider opening up other areas that are currently closed via Fisheries Notice. VRFish noted that a viable commercial fishery is needed to supply bait to the recreational sector. There is no formal VRFish position on the pipi fishery at this stage but the issue will be raised at the next State Council meeting in May.
5. It was agreed that Fisheries Victoria would develop a Fishery Background Paper that can be made public.
6. The SC continued discussion of the draft management objectives and the possible management arrangements.

The next meeting of the Steering Committee will be held in Melbourne on Tuesday 19 July 2016.

Peter Appleford

Chair

May 2016