



23/02/2022

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Re: Draft Corner Inlet Fishery Management Plan– West Gippsland Catchment
Management Authority submission

General comments:

- The WGCMA (West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority) supports the integrated approach outlined in the draft Corner Inlet Fishery Management Plan.
- More specifically, *Objective 2: Maintain Ecological integrity of the fishery ecosystem*- The WGCMA welcomes the opportunity to work with the Victorian Fisheries Authority and partners on actions associated with this objective as presented on page 37.
- The WGCMA is supportive of the community consultation actions outlined in the Plan (page 39) and the integration of the Corner Inlet Connections group as a key component of these actions.
- While it is good to see recognition of seagrass as habitat for fish, please also consider adding saltmarsh and mangrove habitats. These ecosystem components are proven to be important habitat for juvenile species of fish that are commercially important.

Specific comments:

Page	Section or sentence description	Comment and suggested amendment where applicable
1	Acknowledgement of country	The traditional owner section/s of this document looks good, however there is not an acknowledgment at the beginning of the document.
9	Figure 1	It would be good if the map indicated the spatial extent of the fishery
22	Protected species interactions	A list (or at the least some examples) of the protected species that occur in Corner Inlet would help the reader understand the importance of management actions.
23	2.4.1	“The Corner Inlet-Nooramunga area (Figure 10) was listed as a “Wetland of International Importance” under the Ramsar Convention in 1982. It is also listed as a matter of national environmental significance under the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (EPBC Act).” Suggest change to: The Corner Inlet-Nooramunga area (Figure 10) was listed as a “Wetland of International Importance” under the Ramsar Convention in 1982. This affords it protection as a matter of national environmental significance under the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (EPBC Act).”
23	2.4.1 waterbirds	Suggest replacing the third paragraph with the following. While the shorebirds are important, it is fish eating birds that are more relevant to a fisheries management plan. “A total of 95 species of waterbird have been recorded within the Corner Inlet Ramsar site, including 26 international migratory species listed under

		international agreements (JAMBA, CAMBA and ROKAMBA). The barrier islands and south-east sector of the Ramsar site support the greatest diversity and abundance of shorebirds and the shallow waters provide foraging for a diversity and abundance of fish-eating species such as cormorants and terns.”
23 - 24	2.4.2 seagrass	There is more recent information on seagrass in the site, that makes paragraphs two and three in this section inaccurate. There was a decline in the extent in Posidonia between 1965 and 1998; an increase by 2011; declines in 2016 that persisted through 2018 and then increases by 2020. Zostera, on the other hand was relatively stable in Corner Inlet from 1998 through 2011; but declined by 2016, again persisting through to 2018, and then increasing by 2020.
33	4 objectives strategies and actions	It would be good to see recognition of the Ramsar Convention concept of “wise and sustainable use” in these actions. Recognising that the fishery operates within a Ramsar site, but that the Convention allows for that if the fishery is sustainable and does not impact ecological character.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this Plan.

Please do not hesitate to contact Tanya Cowell; tanyac@wgcma.vic.gov.au or 0439397529 if you have any questions in relation to our submission.

Regards,



Martin Fuller
Chief Executive Officer
West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority