

Toby Jeavons
Victorian Fisheries Authority
By email: toby.jeavons@vfa.vic.gov.au

2017/18 ROCK LOBSTER STOCK ASSESSMENT REPORT AND CONSULTATION ON 2019/20 QUOTA

Dear Toby,

I am writing on behalf of VRFish, the peak body representing Victoria's 838,000 recreational fishers. VRFish welcomes the opportunity to provide comment.

The stock assessment does indicate a positive outlook for the Western Zone and a decline in the Eastern Zone. We thank the VFA for extending an invitation to recreational fishers to attend a special workshop for the Eastern Zone Rock Lobster. It is important that more recreational fishers are involved in the management of rock lobster and have a better understanding of the data trends used in annual stock assessments. It also demonstrated that a very thorough and considered process has been undertaken.

A recommendation of no change in the TACC in the Western Zone and a 16 tonne reduction in the Eastern Zone is appropriate given the Harvest Strategy decision rules.

That said, recent summer CPUE data in the Eastern Zone indicates a much more positive outlook. A recommendation for the RLRAG should be to examine if there is a 'lag' before seeing improvement in the fishery data following reductions in TACC to achieve a rebuild.

While the scope of this consultation is about commercial fishing limits, VRFish agrees it is not appropriate to undertake any review of recreational rock lobster management arrangements while a tagging data trial is underway.

Yours sincerely,



Rob Loats
Chair
Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body

18 April 2019

**Let's make fishing
better, for everyone.**