

## **Version 2: Comments for 2021-22 TACC Eastern zone of the Victorian octopus fishery to VFA by Tony Pollard 10/5/21**

Hi Joanne, This is my submission/comment for the 2021/22 octopus fishing season. first up would like to thank the VFA and all personnel involved for all the work and effort put into establishing the new octopus fishery ,and also acknowledge that this has created a valuable asset,

Addressing information sheet, the eastern zone fishery has been active longer than 9 months, we started 2016 not 2020, the licence was created in 2020 not the fishery, we started operating in the octopus fishery from 2016 under my access licence and then a permit and collating data and information for fisheries in this period, the first couple of years our catch rates were lower(2016 2017) as we were running a charter fishing operation in conjunction with octopus fishing while we were finding our feet and researching/exploring potential productive areas, I don't believe we have even scratched the surface of known productive ground also there are massive areas we have not yet explored , Our 2020/2021 figures saw us catch our allocated TACC 34,507kg allocation in less than 9 months which saw the first 5 months of quota year where we had to deal with an unusual adverse run of easterly weather where we were lucky to do a trip a week, sometimes not even that ,as you will see from our last lots of data submitted our catch rates have improved considerably with less gear turnover The footprint of our pot lines are less than a metre wide and approx 6000 meters (3.7 mile) long per line (x10) with roughly a 3 week turnover cycle(weather dependant), so doing a rough calculation I don't believe we have worked at any time any more than 1% of any gridded area in the eastern zone as each

gridded area on the eastern zone map is approx 10 mile x 10mile

Due to their life cycle (approx 12 months and prolific breeding strategy) and the method we use I don't believe we have any effect on the population although there will be natural population fluctuations , as we catch one mature fish it makes room for another to move in. We have observed larger mature specimens of pale octopus(probably close to end of life cycle) consuming (cannibalising) smaller juvenile pale octopus so to me makes sense, take 1 mature octopus out you give other smaller less mature octopus in the neighbourhood a chance to survive and mature before they possibly become prey, Have discussed this observation and other observations with (Jayson Semmens UTAS)

At present I don't believe the 2020/2021 TACC will be caught for the simple fact that some of the licences with quota attached that were issued have not been utilised, so most of that share of the quota will not be caught, this needs to be taken into consideration when collating the 2020/2021 catch data.

### **SUBMISSION TEMPLATE**

I do not support the proposed 68.7ton  
Also no consultation whatsoever has taken place to date 10/5/21 with us in accordance with section 3A of the **fisheries act 1995** (the act) as stated in the draft of further quota order.

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES I believe 100 ton is extremely conservative and sustainable with what I have observed and have learned through active experience in the eastern zone

EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT PROPOSAL is provided in our catch data records with our catch rates remaining consistent and even

increasing (CPUE) even though we have not changed areas of operation significantly past 3 years,(at least 2 maybe 3 generational life Cycles) with our pot lines footprint ground coverage less than 1% in area of any grid in the eastern zone area.

Kind Regards Tony Pollard