

## ***Total allowable Commercial Catch for Victorian Giant Crab Fishery 2025/26***

### **EXPLANATORY STATEMENT**

The Victorian Giant Crab Fishery is managed in accordance with the Victorian Giant Crab Fishery Management Plan. The main aim is to manage the commercial catch at levels that prevent overfishing, reducing the risk of lowering abundance and allowing stock to rebuild.

In 2024, development of a new harvest strategy commenced, led by a sub-committee of the Rock Lobster and Giant Crab Resource Assessment Group. The draft strategy was finalised in early 2025 and recently completed a formal public consultation process.

The draft harvest strategy introduces a tiered management structure allowing for greater flexibility in the total allowable commercial catch (TACC) with improved levels of data collection and verification. The levels can be summarised as follows:

1. Level 1, the most conservative level, maintains the fundamental and precautionary principles of the existing harvest strategy and does not allow for TACC increases.
2. Level 2 requires that the fishery meets mandatory length-frequency sampling and data verification requirements.
3. Level 3 requires at least three years of data collection under the Level 2 requirements, and a model-based stock assessment.

The draft harvest strategy further includes a starting TACC of 8.5 tonnes, 1 tonne greater than the 2024/25 TACC. This amount aims to recognise recent improvements in the average catch per unit effort whilst maintaining an appropriate level of precaution.

As the draft harvest strategy will be finalised shortly, I have decided to implement the recommended starting TACC of 8.5 tonnes for the 2025/26 season. I am confident that this will maintain an appropriate level of precaution whilst encouraging ecologically sustainable development within this fishery.



Travis Dowling  
Chief Executive Officer  
Victorian Fisheries Authority

08 / 05 / 2025