



ABN: 17 125 963 395  
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15<sup>th</sup> June 2020

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Mr Travis Dowling  
Chief Executive Officer  
Victorian Fisheries Authority  
Level 19, 1 Spring Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000

**RE: DRAFT FISHERIES (CORNER INLET FISHERY) NOTICE 2020**

Dear Travis.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission in relation to the draft Fisheries (Corner Inlet Fishery) Notice 2020.

The Futurefish Foundation has longed to work constructively with the commercial fishing sector to ensure fair and equitable access to Victoria's fish stocks and to eliminate heated interaction between the recreational and commercial fishers in any given area.

We have been conversing for several months now with a core group of Corner Inlet commercial fishers to assist and provide advice on how recreational and commercial fishers can work together peacefully to ensure sustainable fishing in Corner Inlet. Our joint desired outcome is that both sectors can enjoy great fishing, while respecting each other's entitlements and promote the quality fish available from the Corner Inlet fishery.

This is the first time in our 20+ year history where we have been able to work constructively with a group of commercial fishers and we truly hope the relationship continues to mature over time and provide a benchmark for other areas where the recreational and commercial fishing sectors coexist.

We commend the Victorian Fisheries Authority in recognising and cementing the voluntary Code of Practice which has existed in Corner Inlet for the past 28 years into enforceable rules. For the majority of licence holders who have fished for several generations; this is reward for their effort to ensure sustainable fishing for quality Victorian seafood. These fishers must be congratulated.

In regards to the draft Fisheries Notice, we provide the following comments:

***6. Prohibition on the shooting of more than two seine nets on any one day***

Futurefish Foundation is happy with this section of the notice but would like you to list the penalty of 100 units in this section to ensure the penalty is clear to all commercial fishers, similar to how you have prescribed the penalty for (7) in the draft notice.

***7. Reporting requirements for Corner Inlet Access Licence holders***

Futurefish Foundation does not support the reporting requirements listed in (7.) as we believe it replicates other reporting and (future) tracking requirements, and may be cumbersome for some fishers in cold, wet conditions or for those not competent with technology required to report.

With the installation of a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) together with the requirement for fishers to maintain an accurate log book of their operations; the VFA will have adequate information to monitor and investigate adherence to rules.

***8. Prohibition on the use of more than one type of fishing gear at any given time***

Futurefish Foundation is happy with this section of the notice but would like you to list the penalty of 100 units in this section to ensure the penalty is clear to all commercial fishers, similar to how you have prescribed the penalty for (7) in the draft notice.

Additional to the rules contained in the draft Fisheries Notice, Futurefish Foundation is supportive of the early introduction of a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS). This will assist in monitoring the regulatory obligation that commercial fishers must not depart a boat ramp or jetty before 5pm on a Sunday. In recent times, some commercial fishers have not adhered to this regulation and this has gone unchecked by the VFA.

Until the installation of a VMS, we would like to see an increased physical presence of Fisheries Officers observing adherence to this regulation. We encourage the VFA to have zero tolerance to non-adherence to this Fisheries regulation. This will ensure a level playing field for all commercial fishers and also eliminate unexpected interaction with recreational fishers.

Finally, we encourage the introduction of the Fisheries Notice on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2020 to provide timely prescribed rules for all Corner Inlet commercial fishers and recreational fishers to understand.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'DKramer', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**David Kramer**  
Director - Futurefish Foundation