

Toby Jeavons

How much longer do we have to go before we get an increase in TAC. We are entitled to 270 tons but exploration rate will exceed 26.3% the very questionable target of harvest strategy. Well why not look at 255ton or 260ton and see how that works out instead of leaving everything the same again and again.

We have worked our gutses out the last few years for nothing, trying to sell crays locally as we keep getting told to support the locals but that is very time consuming for little return. Surely we can be rewarded with a bit more quota, we have earned it.

I know there are still a very small number of fishers in this zone that don't want increases in the TAC and I don't know why. With this Vic fisheries we can't even get our fees reduced.

South Australia have very poor recruitment but they got 70 ton extra given to them this season and they are having their best years ever. Something just doesn't add up. Maybe Vic fisheries should take a leaf out of their book. Also SA labour govt promised to cut their fees by 50% if they got elected and they did, so that's another win for SA cray fishermen. I don't think Vic Labour Govt even think we exist.

I also want to say something about some fishermen (taxi drivers) working for a company. They come in and out of the fishery when suits, own nothing and have other jobs to go back to. When the fishery was good they all jumped in taking the limited quota which is out there now and it is mostly been bought up by that company.

The genuine fishermen who own quota can't compete with these taxi drivers who make nothing but chew up the available leasable quota. When things are as tough as they are now you need quota to

compensate the low prices. I think if you are genuine about this industry you should have to commit to at least the minimum amount of quota "10 units or 1 ton" or get out and find work elsewhere. These people don't attend meetings as they don't give a shit about the industry. For them it is what they can get out of it not what they contribute. These taxi drivers pull the CPUE down as they are not very good at what they do but why should they care as they have other jobs to compensate.

If everything keeps going this way there will be no genuine fishermen left. All you will have is taxi driver fishermen working for a company not caring for anything or anyone. It will become a very poor looking fishery with little maintenance on boats at the end making it a very unattractive industry with only 1 winner – the company that owns the most quota. Not a good look for the current Vic Fisheries.

The mental health of the fishermen is another issue and is genuinely worrying, there is only so much a person can take but I don't think anyone in Vic Fisheries gives a shit. Would only be a concern for them if there pay packets were affected.

I have done fixed site surveys for years now but the money I receive to do these surveys doesn't cover the costs to do them. I do it to benefit the fishery. What is the point of doing these surveys as every year the goal posts get changed and we are no better off.

I decided to take my time and send you mine and many other fishermen in this industry thoughts even though its a waste of time because you say you consult with members but your minds are already made up well before consultation occurs.

Regards

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