

Rationale for setting the 2022/23 abalone total allowable commercial catches

The Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) uses a multiple-lines-of-evidence assessment approach to assess the state of the abalone resource and set the annual total allowable commercial catch (TACC) for each of the three commercial abalone zones.

The information considered in arriving at the TACCs includes:

- *Fishery dependent information*: catch history, catch per unit effort (CPUE) and diver observations; and
- *Fishery independent information*: independent dive survey data that includes pre-recruit and recruit abundance.

Following a comprehensive consultation process that included workshops and a call for submissions from key stakeholders, I have made the following decision on the TACC for the Central and Western Abalone Zones.

Central zone

- a blacklip abalone TACC of 240.8 tonnes; and
- a greenlip abalone TACC of 3.4 tonnes.

Western zone

- a blacklip abalone TACC of 33.8 tonnes; and
- a greenlip abalone TACC of 1.9 tonnes.

The final TACC for the Central and Western Abalone Zones was determined following a quota setting workshop. The draft harvest strategy in conjunction with the weight of evidence in the stock assessment informed the decision. Adapted size limit arrangements have been implemented, with stakeholder input carefully considered, as a conservative measure to provide added protection to spawning stock. It is envisaged that these measures, together with enhancements driven through the Fishery Resource Advisory Group (FRAG), will provide a basis for rebuilding the resource.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Padovani".

Chris Padovani

A/Director Fisheries Management, Science, Licencing, Policy and Communications
Victorian Fisheries Authority

30 / 05 / 2022