

## ***Total allowable Commercial Catch for Victorian Rock Lobster Fishery 2021/22***

Consultation on the 2021/22 Total Allowable Commercial Catches (TACC) was undertaken in March/April 2021 in accordance with section 3A of the Fisheries Act 1995.

Setting the 2021/22 TACC has occurred in accordance with the *Victorian Rock Lobster Fishery Management Plan* and Harvest Strategy. The strategy is based on standardised catch per unit effort (CPUE), pre-recruit indices (PRIs), predetermined TACC levels that correspond with CPUE bands, and decision rules that are used to set the annual TACCs for the Rock Lobster Fishery.

The key trends in the Western Zone suggest improved stock conditions. The standardised catch rate has been on an upward trend for the past six years and levels of egg production remained steady. The numbers of undersize lobsters have increased from the recent historical low, however are still at low levels.

Overall, the conditions in the Eastern Zone do not show improved stock conditions. Catch rates have declined from the previous fishing period and long term declining trends have continued across biomass and egg production. However, whilst remaining below the PRI reference point, there has been some positive signs regarding an increase to the number of undersize lobster across multiple indicators

I have therefore set the Rock Lobster Fishery TACCs for the 2021/22 season at the following levels:

- 246 tonne per year in the Western Zone Rock Lobster Fishery (no change); and
- 32 tonne per year in the Eastern Zone Rock Lobster Fishery (8t reduction)

The TACCs at these levels are determined to be appropriately conservative under the harvest strategy to continue to rebuild the rock lobster population.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Travis Dowling".

**Travis Dowling**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Victorian Fisheries Authority

11 / 05 / 2021