

Dear Travis

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the consultation paper for the consultation to be completed and before any quota order is made Michael and Jason with SIV request a meeting to discuss in depth the implications of external factors regarding CPUE at your earliest opportunity. We would also like to bring to your attention we have not had a single meeting in the last 3 years a potential major change to quotas warrants one.

We do agree that CPUE can be used as an indicator with some fisheries but it requires all data and external input available in it along with stable management and fishing methods.

CPUE Changing factors.

1. Water temperature is probably the biggest one we've worked out the hard way then cross referenced with Tasmania and previous operators attached is Tasmanian catch history to show biggest catches are Jan Feb and May. The water warmed in January Michael's catches picked up in and his best day being 90 fish on the last day of the season at Gabo island the fish there they just haven't been moving.

Colder seasons will always have lower CPUE it's been a cold few years overall

2. Swell reduces catches and since 2020 Jason has only been fishing banded Morwong on days it's too swelly for diving abalone

3. Loss of ground marine parks changes the whole fishery pre 2004 is not relevant to now

4. Loss of February a top fishing month reduces catching and forces pressures to fish cold less productive months. Lost approximately 2012

5. Years with daily catch limits affect CPUE

6. New operators learning we are learning and still have a lot to learn reduce CPUE

7. operators availability and ability. Michael contracted Covid on 6th Jan 2022 and still suffers from long covid he missed January the last month of the season and May the first month of the next season both the best fishing month where CPUE is higher in general. Tony and Pauls fishing years varried with their commitments health and availability

8. Sea tulips come and Go they reduce areas of operation as they cover grounds and destroy nets the last year they have been thick have been an issue they die off in the warm water if and when it comes. The Morwong usually hang in the same areas.

9. Covid has restricted catching and travelling changing traditional patterns.

10. Markets change fishing patterns

Without having all these variants in or some removed CPUE is not only uncertain data but it's wrong and a dangerous tool in its current format and we would be saying the same thing if it was recommended we increased our quotas which may be the case down the track.

We also recommend additional meetings for future management and research possibilities we have in mind to better understand the fish patterns movements and biomass.

Ideas

Under and over data analysis working out pre recruitment as a percentage to size fish caught may predict the future biomass.

Onboard tagging and recording research project done by fishers.

Water temperature recording over time to be used in CPUE

Season changes to possibly avoid colder months if possible.

Research project in to February fishing with VFA

Jason has 10,000+ hours of diving time over the last 15 years and is observing plenty stock currently on the reefs

We have left approximately 2000 fish in the water the last two seasons and approximately 40% unfished/rested grounds at the western end of our zone where the fish will still be there and breeding waiting to be caught.

We recommend status quo on banded Morwong quota of 2920 fish for the 2023/2024 season.

Thank you for reading

Regards Jason York and Michael York.