

Wild Catch Seafood Trial

New opportunities for fresh fish supply

Fresh fish for sale from the boat has been made possible thanks to an exciting new wild harvest trial. Following consultation with industry, the Victorian Fisheries Authority issued permits to commercial fishing licence holders and operators to allow them to take select fish species such as snapper, whiting, calamari and gummy shark for direct sale from the dock to tourists and locals keen to sample locally sourced fresh fish, as well as local businesses such as restaurants and supermarkets.

The trial commenced in Apollo Bay in July 2019 when six permits were issued to local commercial fishers.

Four months later, another six permits were issued to commercial fishers based around San Remo.

A dozen permits have also been issued to commercial fishers in Mallacoota over the new year period as the community there pulls together to recover and rebuild.

All permits have been issued for an initial two-year trial period.

Each permit allows fishers to take catch using up to six fishing lines with three hooks per line, in addition to three droplines with six hooks each.

To ensure the ongoing sustainability of this trial a two tonne annual catch-cap applies for all permits, within which 500kg species-specific limits apply. Strict reporting requirements apply to ensure that the trial can be closely monitored by fisheries managers and fine-tuned as necessary.

Permits are only available to commercial fishers and operators.

This trial program is ongoing and there is the potential for it to be expanded to other popular tourist destinations around Victoria.



Fresh fish from the boat!

Advantages for regional Victoria

- Allows regional restaurants to promote themselves as selling fresh fish straight from the sea to the plate;
- Promotes tourism in small towns by giving tourists the opportunity to sample locally sourced fish; and
- Grows the local economy by allowing commercial fishers to sell their catch close to home.

Advantages for commercial fishers and industry

- Provides additional wild-catch seafood opportunities to commercial divers and trap fishers;
- Increases productivity by allowing commercial fishers to target a greater number of species; and
- Promotes greater engagement between the public and commercial fishers.

For further information regarding the two-year small sales trial, call our Commercial Licensing Team on (03) 8392 7240 or email Commercial.Licensing@vfa.vic.gov.au