

Media Release

The Hon Melissa Horne MP

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation
Minister for Ports and Freight
Minister for Fishing and Boating



Friday, 28 August 2020

COMMERCIAL OCTOPUS FISHERY LICENCES SECURED IN GIPPSLAND

Commercial operators in East Gippsland will be able to fish for octopus thanks to a new category of licence which will secure valuable jobs in the region and provide more fresh food for seafood lovers.

Minister for Boating and Fishing Melissa Horne said 11 ongoing licences will be issued, which will allow operators to catch up to 68 tonnes of octopus per year through sustainable fishing in the Gippsland zone.

The new category of licence will be specific to the octopus fishery and will permit operators to fish in waters east of Loch Sport to the New South Wales border.

The new dedicated licence and quota is tradeable, which will improve business security for operators and enable more confident investment into boats, equipment and staff.

Octopus have been harvested by commercial fishers in Victoria in the past under other licence categories. They will be caught in purpose-built, unbaited traps that minimise bycatch and are environmentally friendly.

The catch from the region could be worth up to \$1 million annually to the Gippsland operators as Australian chefs and consumers move to embrace Victorian octopus.

Most of the fishery is based on pale octopus, which inhabits sandy substrates in bays and coastal waters of Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania. They can be found in waters to depths of almost 600 metres and are of little interest to recreational fishers.

Catches from the Western and Central zones, where octopus fishing is more developmental, will continue to be managed using permits issued by the Victorian Fisheries Authority.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Fishing and Boating Melissa Horne

“Securing the octopus fishery long-term through new licensing arrangements is terrific news for East Gippsland, and for Victorians who love fresh seafood on their dinner plates.”

“We’re providing much-needed security for commercial operators, while ensuring this fishery is managed sustainably.”

Quotes attributable to Member for Eastern Victoria Jane Garrett

“This area is well known for providing some of the best seafood in Australia, and we’re making it easier to showcase that produce to a broader market.”

“This new licence category will provide a much-needed economic boost to the region with important ongoing work for the local community.”

Quotes attributable to Seafood Industry Victoria Chair Joanne Butterworth-Gray

“The security and ongoing flexibility of these licences are a welcome opportunity for businesses in East Gippsland.”

“We welcome the opportunity to work with the Government and the industry to grow a sustainable fishery which will benefit Victoria.”

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