



Australian Government

Department of the Environment and Energy

Ref: 002068376

Mr Travis Dowling
Chief Executive Officer
Victorian Fisheries Authority
Level 20, 1 Spring Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Mr Dowling

I am writing to you as the Delegate of the Minister for the Environment in relation to the reassessment of the Victorian Eel Fishery (the fishery) under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

In January 2019, the Victorian Fisheries Authority applied for export approval for the fishery under the EPBC Act. The application has been assessed and I have amended the List of Exempt Native Specimens to allow export of product from the fishery until 13 April 2024.

The amendment to the List of Exempt Native Specimens includes six recommendations that were agreed by officials from both agencies as issues to be addressed before the next assessment of the fishery. These recommendations can be found at [Attachment 1](#).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Gibbs'.

John Gibbs
Delegate of the Minister for the Environment

9 April 2019

Recommendations to the Victorian Fisheries Authority on the ecologically sustainable management of the Victorian Eel Fishery, April 2019

1. Operation of the Victoria Eel Fishery will be carried out in accordance with management regime in force under the *Fisheries Management Act 1995* (Vic) and *Fisheries Management Regulations 2009* (Vic).
2. The Victorian Fisheries Authority to inform the Department of the Environment and Energy of any intended material changes to the fishery's management arrangements that may affect the assessment against which *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* decisions are made.
3. The Victorian Fisheries Authority to produce and present reports to the Department of the Environment and Energy annually as per Appendix B of the *Guidelines for the Ecologically Sustainable Management of Fisheries – 2nd Edition*.
4. The Victorian Fisheries Authority to collaborate with other jurisdictions and pursue consistent and complementary research needs and management arrangements for the target species.
5. To control the level of harvest and the potential impacts on the target species, the Victorian Fisheries Authority to develop and implement a harvest strategy within the life of the existing management plan. The harvest strategy is to be reviewable and include performance measures linked to defined management triggers and responses. It should also include mechanisms to enable ongoing monitoring of the fishery and take into account the impact of environmental conditions on the fishery.
6. Should there be resumption of harvesting in the glass eel sub-fishery, the Victorian Fisheries Authority to develop and implement a precautionary management strategy for this sub-fishery designed to:
 - a) monitor the level of harvest and the potential impacts on bycatch species in the sub-fishery;
 - b) be reviewable and, where practical and reliable stock assessment methods are available, include performance measures linked to defined management triggers and responses; and
 - c) enable the ongoing monitoring of the sub-fishery, taking into account the impact of environmental conditions.