



Media Release

FROM THE OFFICE OF VRFISH - VICTORIA'S
RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY

5 April 2019

RECREATIONAL FISHING A BOOMING SUCCESS IN VICTORIA

VRFish, the peak body representing Victoria's 838,000 recreational fishers is hitting back at claims that Government investment into recreational fishing is failing fishers.

VRFish Chairman, Mr Rob Loats said "recreational fishing in Victoria is experiencing an unprecedented resurgence under the Andrews Labor Government's Target One Million policy aiming to get more Victorians fishing and more often."

"Fishing has never been better and there is unparalleled levels of excitement across our inland and coastal fisheries," he said.

Buy-back of commercial fishing licenses in Port Phillip Bay, record fish stocking, creating new fisheries, building new infrastructure like jetties and platforms to fish from, restoring fish habitat and promoting fishing have skyrocketed Victoria as the envy of other Australian states.

More work is planned through fixing our boating infrastructure, building a new purpose-built native fish hatchery, creating new metropolitan and regional fisheries, recovering our Gippsland Lakes, mandating access to thousands of kilometres of rivers and new on-water access.

"All these initiatives are deigned to grow fishing participation across Victoria, deliver economic benefits and to make fishing easy to access and fun to participate in," he said.

"Programs such as the Women in Fishing Network, VicFish Kids, Fishcare Victoria and community fishing clinics run by fishing clubs are all contributing to support new participants and young people into fishing," he said.

VRFish believes claims that the Target One Million policy is not delivering the expected outcomes is unfounded.

"Using the number of recreational fishing licenses sold annually to measure the performance of Target One Million and levels fishing participation is flawed," he said.



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A significant proportion of the Victorian community is exempt from a fishing license including people under 18 years of age, people over 70 years of age and anyone who holds a Senior, Pensioner or Veteran Affairs card.

VRFish have previously commissioned two landmark economic surveys of recreational fishing in Victoria by international experts Ernst and Young.

"These studies were conducted by world economic experts and the data used was statistically robust in its calculation our sector injects \$2.6 billion dollars in direct economic contribution to the Victorian economy in 2013/14," he said.

A similar economic study was recently completed this year in Western Australia which concluded the recreational sector spends \$2.4 billion dollars annually on recreational fishing.

"There is compelling evidence demonstrating the importance of recreational fishing in generating significant economic and social benefits and clearly our detractors are looking to discredit this evidence to suit their agendas," he said.



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