



SUMMARY OF RESULTS – VRFISH ADVOCACY PRIORITIES SURVEY (2022)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over a seven week period from April to May 2022, VRFish conducted a comprehensive survey of recreational fishers on their priorities to make fishing better in Victoria.

The survey was conducted to gather the views of Victorian recreational fishers and understand the issues that are deeply important to the recreational fishing community.

The survey results will be used to inform VRFish's advocacy plan for the next 12 months and beyond as well as informing the VRFish election policy ahead of the next state election.

METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted using an online questionnaire. The questionnaire contained 16 questions, including both closed and open-ended questions. The questions collected information on fisher demographics and profile, together with data on fishing satisfaction and advocacy priorities.

The survey was open for seven and a half weeks between 8 April 2022 and 31 May 2022.

Survey respondents were invited to complete the survey via three key methods: (1) email invitation sent to VRFish subscribers and recreational fishing licence holders; (2) survey link distributed via social media; (3) survey link on the VRFish website.

Different links were used to identify the source of responses via each of the three methods. We received 4,645 via method (1) email subscribers, 187 responses via method (2) social media and 25 responses via method (3) VRFish website.

Sample size

A total of 4,858 people completed the survey. This sample size is considered to be of statistical significance given both the sample population and the total population of Victorian recreational fishers¹ (1,113,506).

¹ Ernst & Young (2020).

SURVEY RESULTS

Demographics and fisher profile

A number of fisher demographic questions collected demographic data on the respondents. These questions were combined with a range of fishing preferences to build a profile of the survey respondents.

Summary of results:

- 89% of respondents were male, 10% were female, less than 1% selected other and less than 1% selected preferred not to say. **(Fig 1)**
- The most dominant age group of fishers were between 55 and 64 years old. **(Fig. 2)**
- Majority of fishers considered themselves as 'active' fishers. **(Fig 3.)**
- Marine and coastal waters were fished most frequently. **(Fig 4)**
- Majority of fishers fish land-based, followed by from a boat. **(Fig 5)**
- King George whiting followed by snapper were the most targeted marine species, trout and Murray cod were the most targeted inland species. **(Fig 6)**

Fig 1. Gender of survey respondents (%)

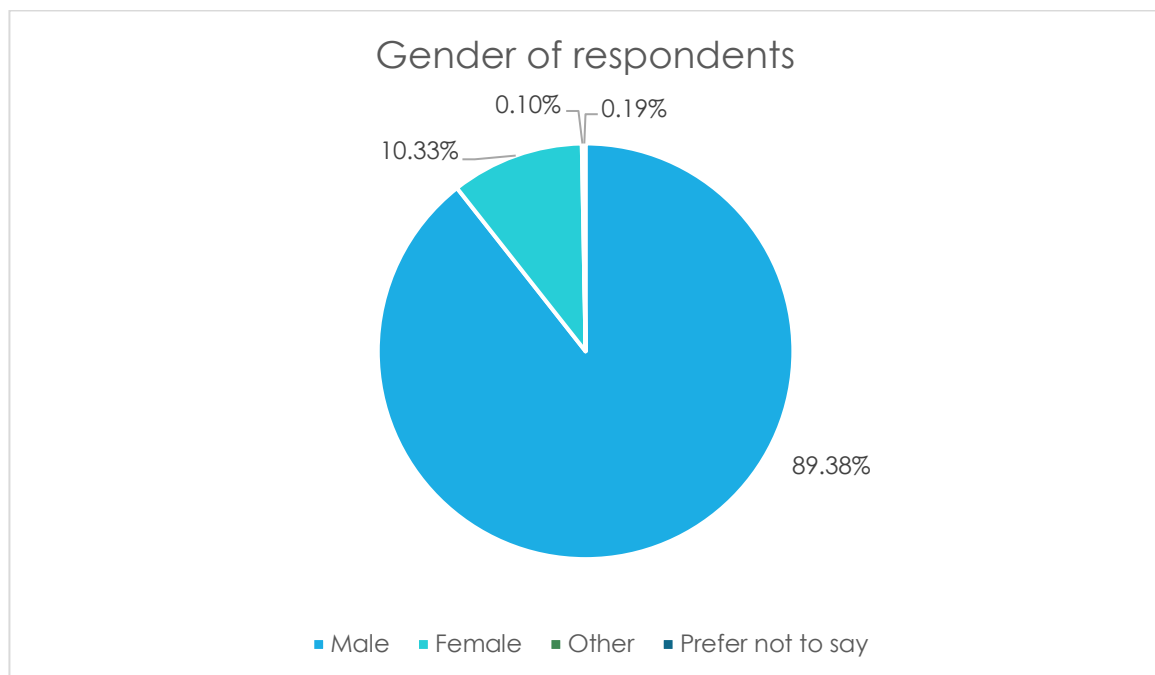


Fig 2. Age of respondents (%)

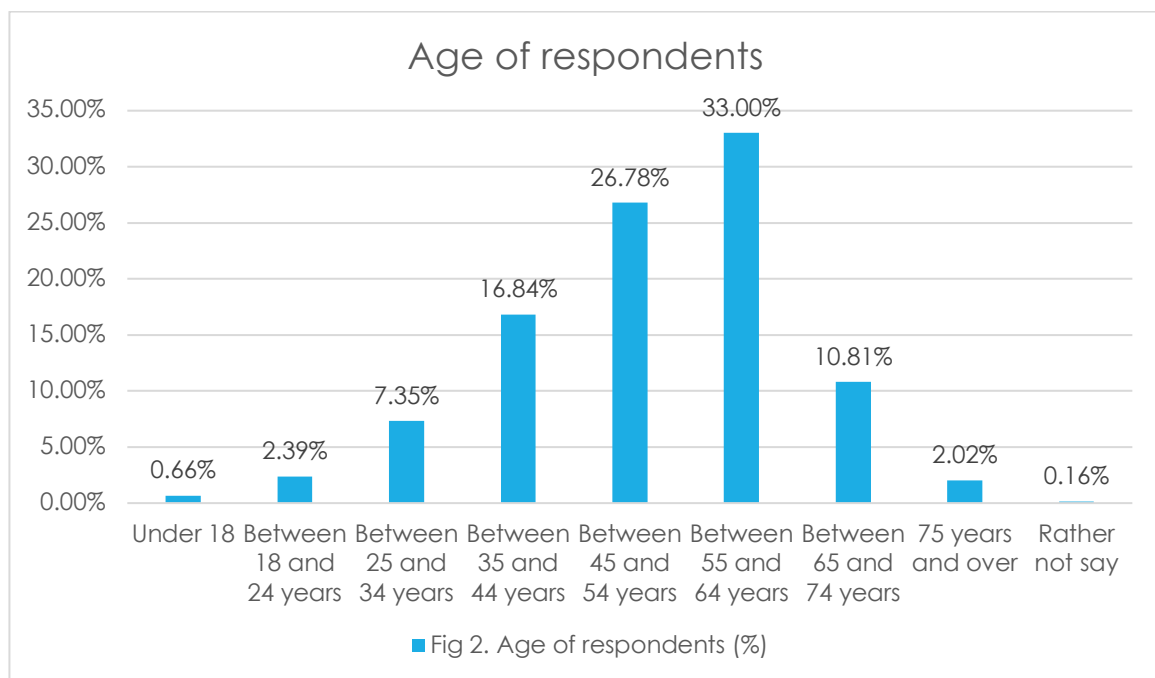
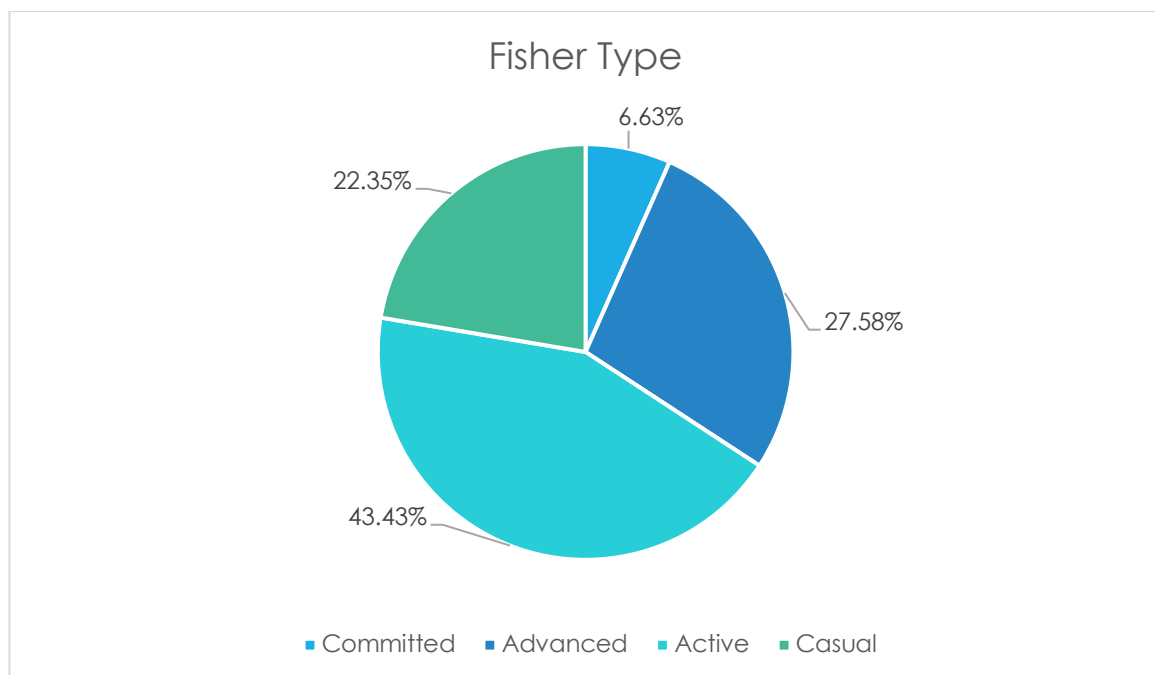


Fig 3. Fisher type (%)



The following descriptions apply to fisher types:

- **Committed:** fishing is the centre of your life; your social life revolves around fishing; you use high-quality species-specific tackle and always target a particular species.
- **Advanced:** fishing is your most important leisure activity; your circle of friends includes many anglers; you prefer high quality tackle and usually target a particular species.

- **Active:** fishing is one of many activities you enjoy; you occasionally go fishing with a few friends; you prefer common tackle and often target a particular species.
- **Casual:** fishing is not your most important leisure activity; social life rarely involves fishing; you prefer common tackle and target whatever is biting.

Fig 4. Ecosystem type fished (%)

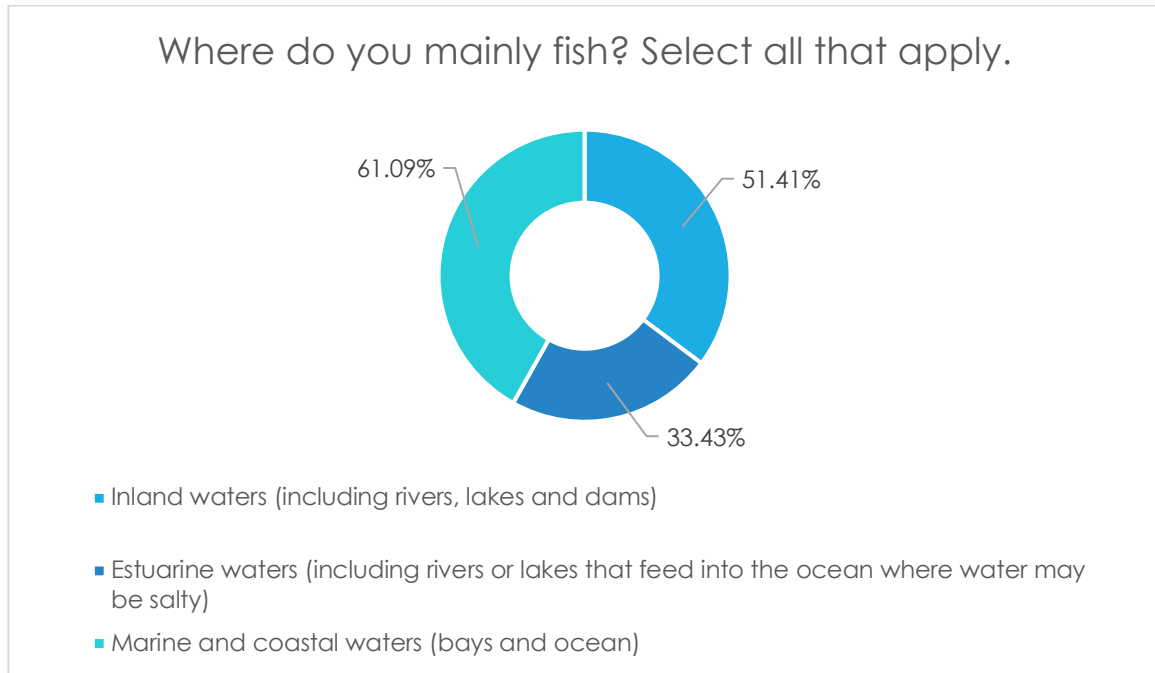


Fig 5. Fishing access method (%)

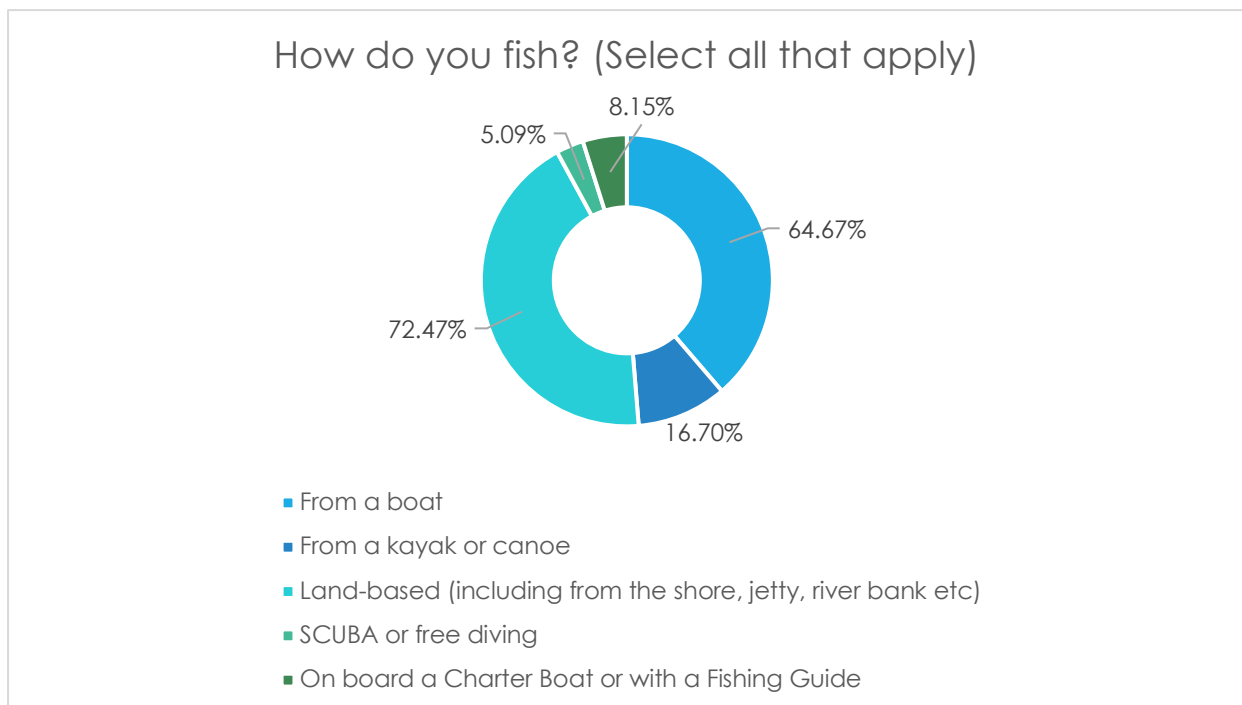
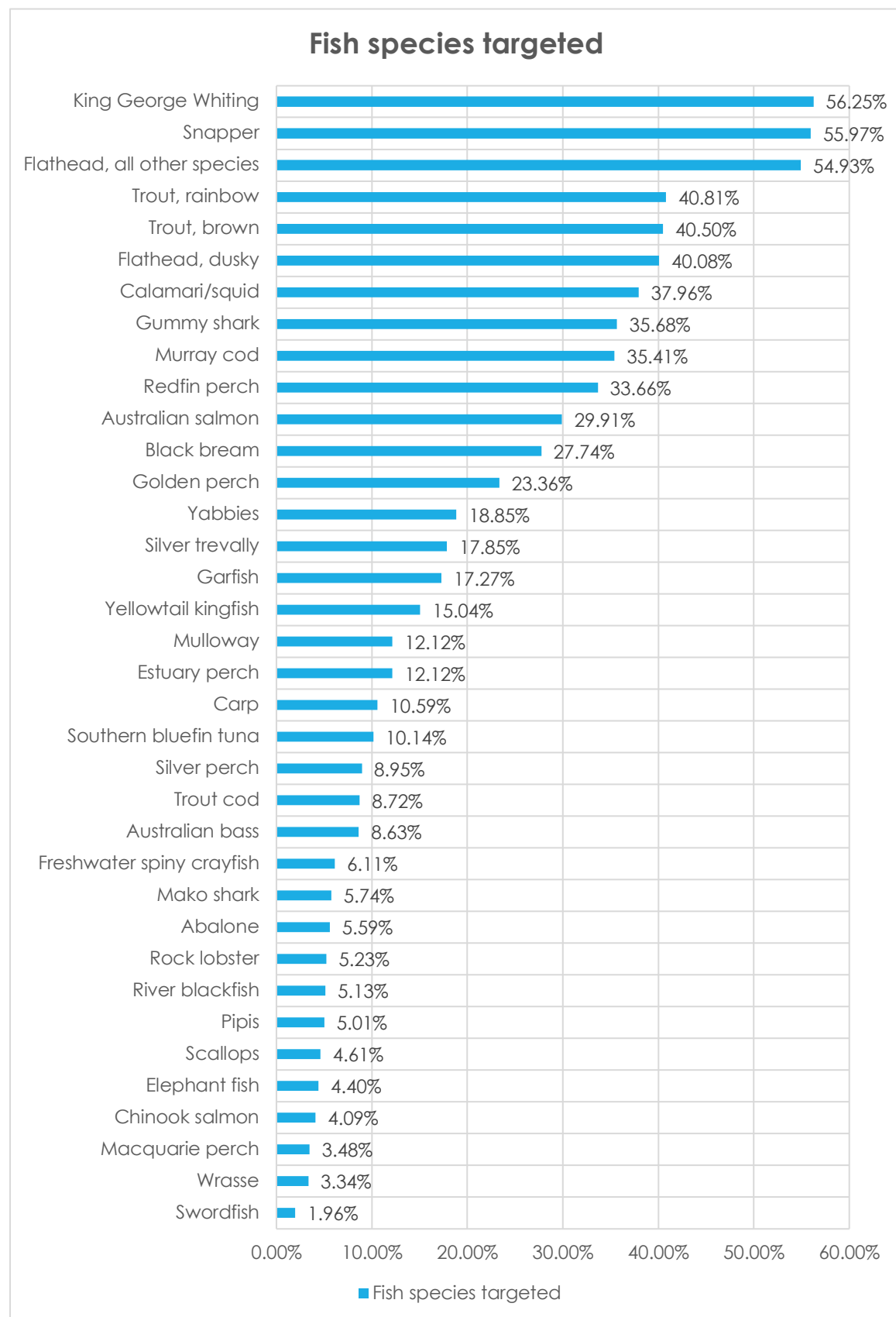


Fig 6. Fish species targeted (%)



Fishing values and priorities

Respondents were asked to rate a range of recreational fishing issues from very important to not important. The rating scale is shown in Table 1 below.

Recreational fishing issues were divided into three sections: (1) inland and estuarine issues; (2) marine and coastal issues; (3) state-wide issues.

Summary of results:

- The top priority for inland fisheries was identified as habitat restoration for wild trout fisheries. **(Fig 7)**
- The top priority for marine and coastal fisheries was an expansion of the restoration of living shellfish reefs. **(Fig 8)**
- On a state-wide basis, litter and rubbish around waterways was identified as the most important issue. **(Fig 9)** Further to this, additional comments left by respondents reiterated their views that litter and rubbish is an ongoing issue.

Table 1. Rating scale

Rating	Value
Very Important	5
Important	4
Moderately Important	3
Slightly Important	2
Not Important	1

Fig 7. Inland and estuarine issues ranked by importance (mean)

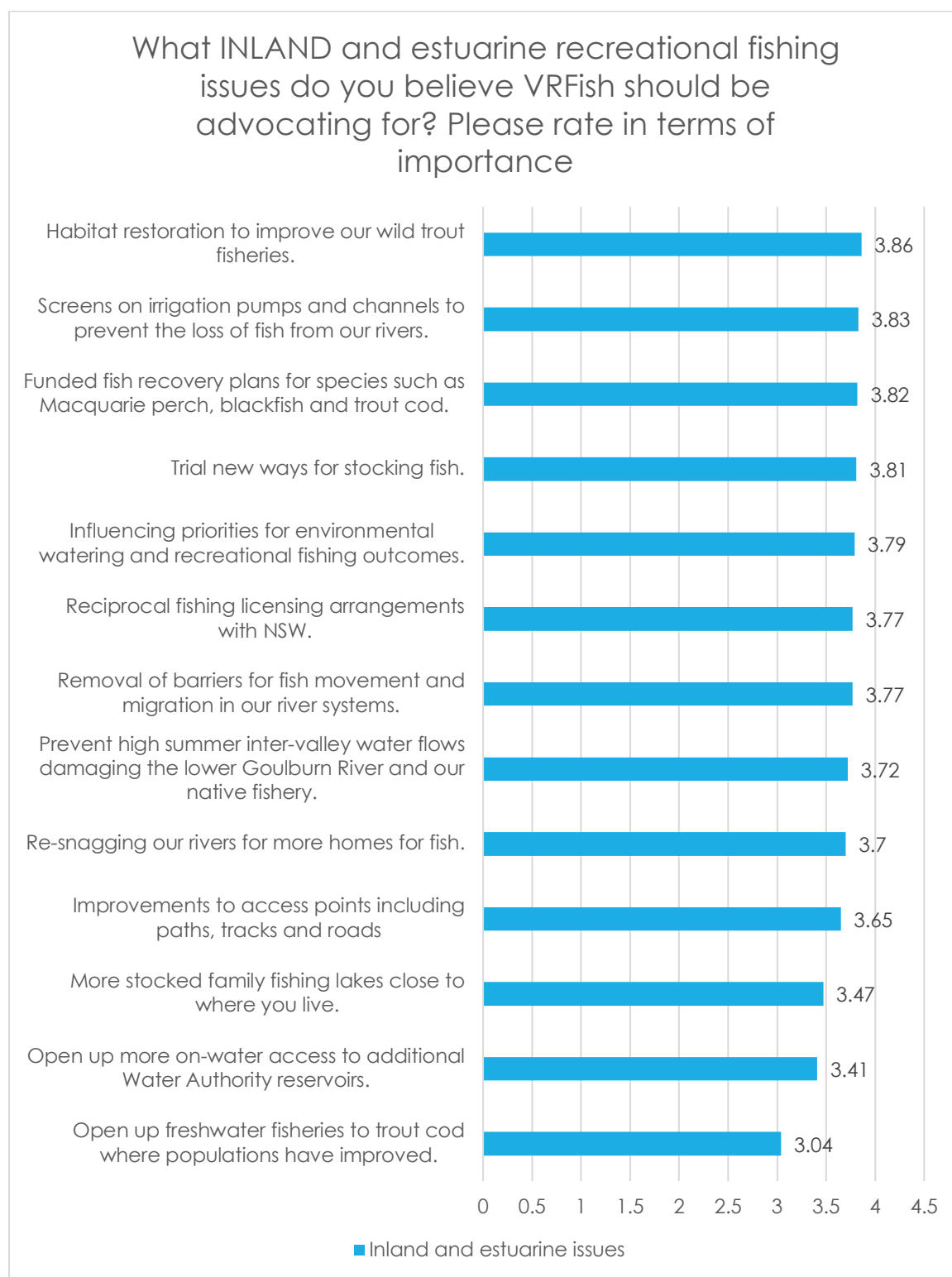


Fig 8. Coastal and marine issues ranked by importance (mean)

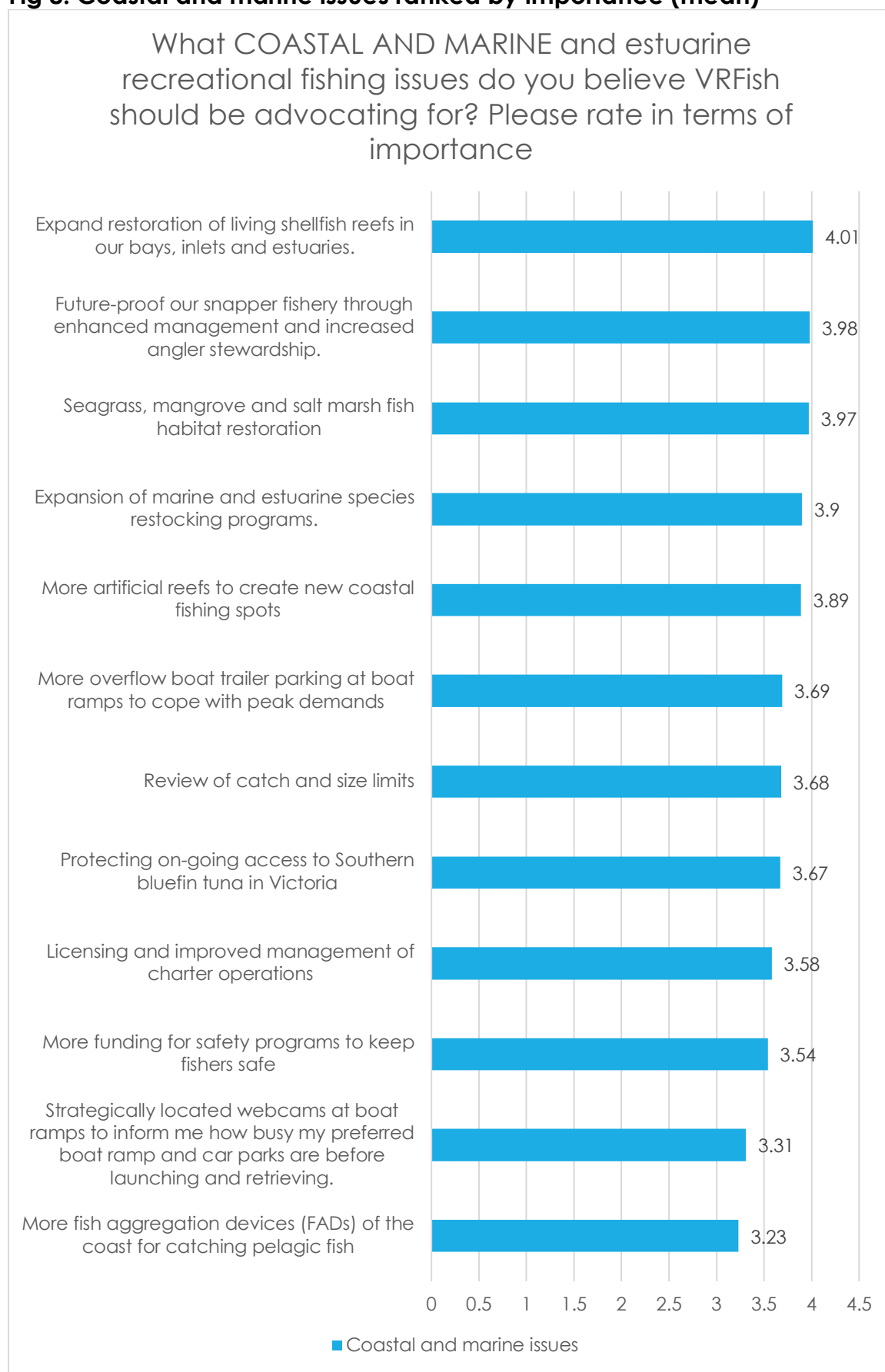
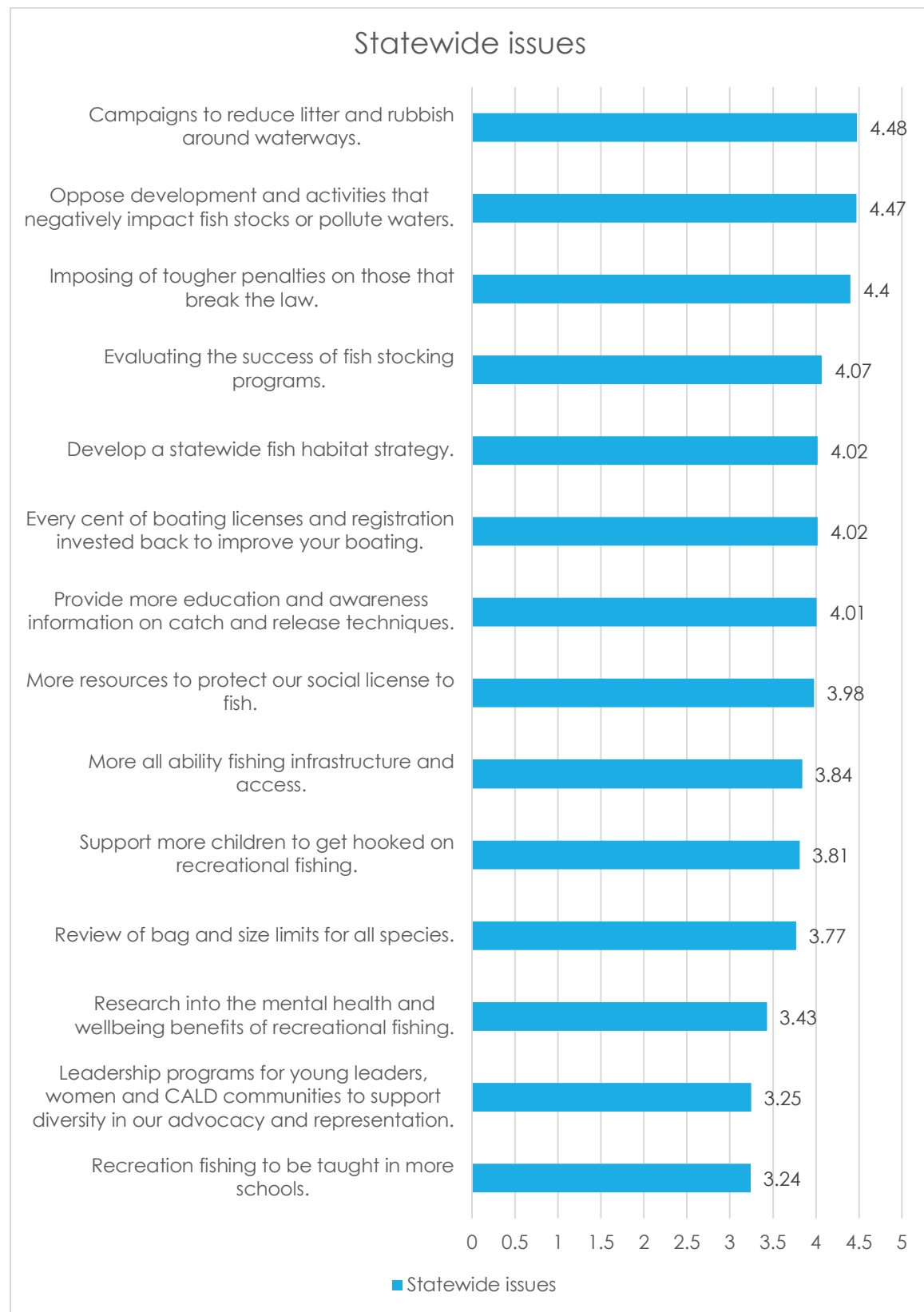


Fig 9. State-wide issues ranked by importance (mean)



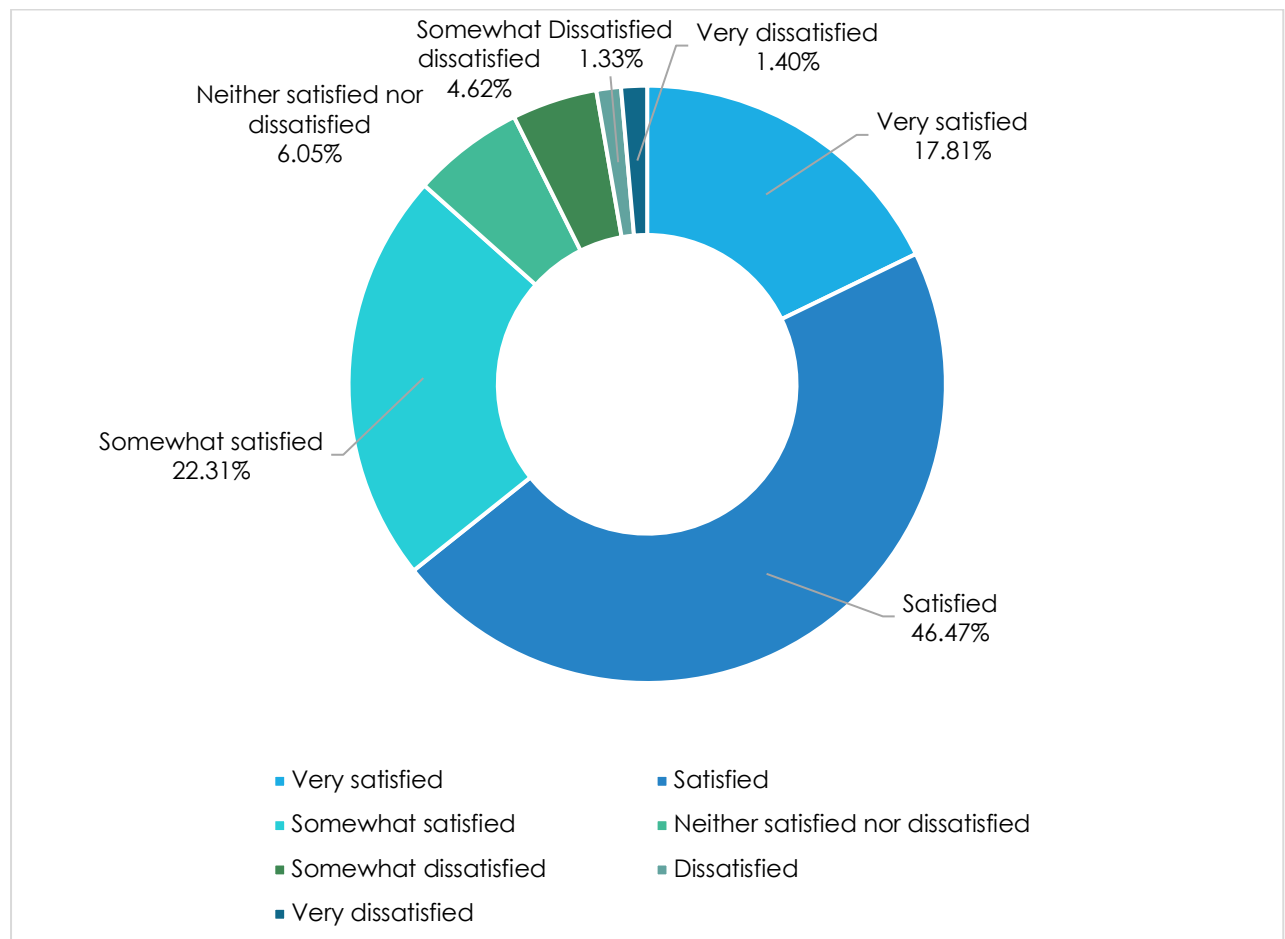
Fishing satisfaction and impacts on the quality of fishing

Fishers were asked to rate how satisfied they were with the quality of the Victorian recreational fishing experience. Respondents were also asked if some common recreational fishing issues have impacted their fishing satisfaction and the quality of their fishing experience over the past 12 months.

Summary of results:

- A large majority of respondents (approx. 87%) were on the spectrum of being satisfied with the quality of recreational fishing in Victoria (being either very satisfied, satisfied, somewhat satisfied).
- Lack of bins or fishing disposal facilities had the biggest impact on fisher satisfaction and quality of fishing experiences.

Fig 10. Fisher satisfaction (%)



The rating scale used to score the survey responses in figure 11 (below) is outlined in Table 2.

Table 2. Rating scale

Rating	Value
All the time	5
Most of the time	4
About half of the time	3
Sometimes	2
Not at all	1

Fig 11. Impacts on fishing satisfaction and quality of fishing experience (mean)

