



Media Release

DATE: December 21st, 2007

FROM THE OFFICE OF VRFISH – VICTORIA’S RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY

\$100 MILLION IS NOT ENOUGH

The Australian Government has given the go ahead for the Port of Melbourne Channel Deepening Project.

December 14, saw the Victorian Minister for the Environment and Climate Change, Gavin Jennings, approve the Project under the *Coastal Management Act 1995*, subject to the Port of Melbourne Corporation adhering to the comprehensive Environmental Management Plan, backed up by a \$100 million environmental bond and overseen by an Independent Environmental Monitor.

Then yesterday in a Statement made by the Federal Minister for Environment, Heritage and the Arts, Peter Garrett said “in addition, the Port must set aside at least \$500,000 for protection of the Ramsar wetland areas, at least \$100,000 for migratory bird monitoring and at least \$300,000 for protection of the Australian grayling.”

This equates to only \$100,900,000!

VRFish Chairman, Geoff Cramer, today released a statement, saying that recreational and professional fishing, aquaculture, tourism and added value from Marine Protected Areas alone have a net worth of close to \$2 Billion per annum.

Let’s set a more realistic environmental bond of at least \$5,000,000,000.

“There are obvious shortcomings in the process, and vital information has been ignored in the Supplementary Environmental Effects Statement. Hence, any current decisions and assessment are based on flawed, undisclosed or inadequate data and we request a further and immediate re-assessment” concluded Geoff Cramer.

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