



MONTHLY REPORT FROM THE  
VRFISH OFFICE  
JULY 2007

## Welcome to the Monthly Report from the VRFish Office.

This newsletter should be sent on to all clubs and members of associations that you represent. Anyone wishing to receive this newsletter directly can e-mail Alison at [alison@vrfish.com.au](mailto:alison@vrfish.com.au) or phone (03) 9686 7077 to be added to the distribution list. If you have any difficulty reading or receiving this Report, this month's edition is also now on our website at [http://www.vrfish.com.au/news\\_index.htm](http://www.vrfish.com.au/news_index.htm)

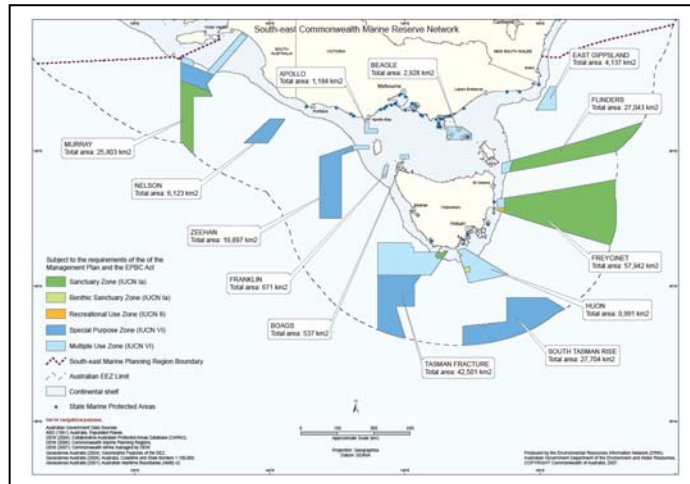
- **River Red Gum Forests Investigation** – Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) has released the River Red Gum Forests Investigation – Draft Proposals Paper for Public Comment. The Paper is available on the VEAC website [www.veac.vic.gov.au](http://www.veac.vic.gov.au). Eight community forums will be held in northern Victoria during August; dates are listed at the bottom of this newsletter and also published on the VEAC website. The Paper outlines over 100 recommendations. Closing date for submissions is 21 September 2007.
- **Plans for the next 5 Years** – VRFish has developed and published its 2007-2012 Strategic Business Plan and the 2007-2008 Business Plan. These documents will set-out VRFish's focus for the next five years. You can check out a copy on <http://www.vrfish.com.au/structure.htm>
- **No more setlines for New South Wales** – The New South Wales Department of Primary Industries has announced that setlines will be banned from New South Wales waters. This is welcomed news from VRFish, as we do not support “passive fishing” equipment and believes the use of setlines to target Murray cod or other freshwater fish species is totally unacceptable and unsustainable. VRFish wrote to Minister Ian Macdonald back in December 2006 about this issue and is extremely pleased with the decision. Other key changes are the size limit for Murray cod, the current legal length will be changed to 55cm after 1 December 2007 and to 60cm after 1 December 2008. For a full listing of changes to the NSW Regulations, go to [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au).
- **Abalone in the Central Zone** – VRFish has again been unsuccessful in making changes to the 60-day allocation of recreational fishing days in the Central Victorian Waters (CVWs). For a copy of the Fisheries Notice and the available fishing dates, please go to our website



[http://www.vrfish.com.au/Angler\\_Info.htm](http://www.vrfish.com.au/Angler_Info.htm). However, as a positive step forward Fisheries Victoria is keen to work with VRFish and PIRVic to undertake a study to assess the status of inshore reef areas in CVWs. Currently the review of the Abalone Fishery Management Plan is underway, which VRFish is participating on the steering committee.

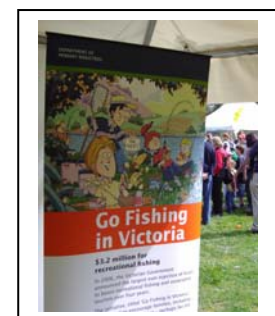
- **South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserve Network Declared** - A network of 13 new Commonwealth Marine Reserves has been declared in Australia's South-east Marine Region, extending from the far south coast of New South Wales, around Tasmania and Victoria and west to Kangaroo Island off South Australia. This is the first temperate deep sea network of marine reserves in the world.

The reserves in the South-east Network are all in Commonwealth waters, between 3nm and 200nm off the coast, with the total area of the reserves being 226,458 square kilometres. They protect typical examples of the marine environment of the South-east Marine Region. Some reserves contain examples of striking features of the region, such as submerged mountains and canyons, whilst others include typical examples of the sea floor, such as muddy bottoms and vast undulating plains.



The reserves come into effect on 3 September 2007 and are managed by the Department of the Environment and Water Resources. The activities allowed in the South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserve Network are based on a system of zones which allow and prohibit certain activities. While some fishing methods are allowed in some zones of some of the reserves, demersal trawl, Danish seine, scallop dredge and gillnetting below 183 metres are not allowed in any of the reserves. For more information contact the South-east Region Manager on (02) 6274 1111 or visit the website: <http://www.environment.gov.au/coasts/mpa/southeast>.

- **Family Fishing Days** – The dates have been set for the next couple of Family Fishing Days. September 2 – Kennington, September 22 – Lilydale and October 20 – Eildon Pondage. Make sure you keep on eye on the Go Fishing in Victoria website for full details and registration [www.dpi.vic.gov.au/fishing](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/fishing). It's a great day out!



- **2007-08 Boating Safety and Facilities Program Opening Soon** – The 2007-08 Boating Safety and Facilities Program is expected to open shortly. \$5 million will be allocated to a range of projects throughout the State and is funded by re-investing recreational boat operator licensing fees and vessel registration revenue. Funding in this year's Program will be allocation across; Boating Facilities and Community Harbours, Education and Training, Search and Rescue, Navigation Aids and Signage and

Marine Communications categories. For additional information, call MSV on 1800 337 222 or visit [www.marinesafety.vic.gov.au](http://www.marinesafety.vic.gov.au)

- **Grants at a Glance** – Craig Stoodley and Richard Peers (Grants Projects Officers) are the latest edition to the MSV Boating Safety and Facilities Program grants team. Their main function is to act as a liaison between MSV and grant recipients. This includes maintaining relationships and monitoring the projects of current grant recipients, in addition to encouraging organisations to apply for grants where a need exists. Richard and Craig are available to applicants to recipients of grants to give advice on category requirements and also to provide interpretation, guidance and clarification for organisations when applying for and claiming a grant.
- **New Abalone Virus Website** – The Victorian Abalone Divers Association have recently released a website to provide information to fishers about the ganglioneuritis virus, the website also includes the bio-security protocols. The website provides expert reports and general information about the location of the virus, check out <http://www.vada.com.au/Virus/Virus.htm>
- **Boat Launching Facilities** – VRFish continues to work with the Government concerning the unsatisfactory boat launching facilities that exist throughout Victoria. Following the public meeting that was organized at Walkerville in May, Bob Pearce also attended a similar meeting at Torquay. Currently, VRFish has prepared a list of priorities for new and improved boat launching facilities and these were presented at a high level meeting today – for a copy check out <http://www.vrfish.com.au/Submissions.htm>. VRFish intends to continue to highlight this problem until steps are taken to resolve it. The relevant arms of government responsible for these facilities must make it clear to us that they are listening and want to help to bring boat launching facilities up to standard. We have some cause for cautious optimism that progress is starting to be made on this important issue for recreational fishers.
- **Upcoming events** -
  - 6/8 – VEAC Community Forum @ Shepparton Golf Course
  - 7/8 – VEAC Community Forum @ Gannawarra Shire Council Building, Cohuna
  - 8/8 – VEAC Community Forum @ Comfort Resort Echuca Moama
  - 8/8 – Review of Victorian Fisheries Consultative Arrangements @ 1 Spring Street, Melbourne
  - 13/8 – VEAC Community Forum @ Nathalia Community Centre
  - 14/8 – VEAC Community Forum @ Quality Motel, Mildura
  - 15/8 – VEAC Community Forum @ Best Western Resort, Swan Hill
  - 16/8 – VEAC Community Forum @ The Old Town 'n' Country Tavern, Wangaratta
  - 19/8 – Maritime History in Victoria Seminar @ RMIT Stoney Hall [www.sdfv.org.au](http://www.sdfv.org.au)
  - 30/8 – Abalone Virus Update Meeting @ Quest Warrnambool

