

Valuing Victoria's professional fishing and aquaculture industries

The near east region produces a diversity of sustainable seafood from Corner Inlet, San Remo, and the Mornington Peninsula. While links to tourism and hospitality exist and the region is increasingly known for its seafood, there's opportunity for more engagement with the public.



Near east fisheries make **significant economic contributions**

\$26m
the added value
professional fisheries
contributed to the near east
region in 2016/17

298
the number of
full-time jobs
professional fishing
provided in the near east
region in 2016/17



Victorians prefer
local seafood

90%
say it's important to
produce seafood
in Victoria and **reduce**
reliance on
imports*



Consuming seafood is part of
travelling the
Victorian coast

81%
of Victorians say
eating **local seafood**
is an important part of their
coastal holiday
experience

88%
of tourism operators say
the fishing industry adds to the
character of
towns



The fishing industry voluntarily
collaborates in research
and projects to **improve**
environmental health

82%
of assessed Victorian
fish stocks are classified as
'sustainable' or
'recovering'



Fishing contributes to the
sense of identity
in near east coastal communities

83%
of residents agree fishing is
important to their
cultural heritage
and **community**
identity

Valuing Victoria's professional fishing: measuring economic and social contributions in Near East Victoria

The near east region includes communities on the Mornington Peninsula and the Gippsland communities of San Remo and Corner Inlet. Fisheries include Southern Rock Lobster, live Wrasse, abalone, Southern Scalefish and Shark, inshore trawl, and the inshore net fisheries of Port Phillip Bay and Corner Inlet. The near east accounted for 16% of the professional catch in Victoria in 2016/17. The Mornington Peninsula suffered a substantial contraction and loss of seafood in 2016 when the sustainable, small-scale net fishery in Port Phillip Bay was shut to make way for recreational fishing. Corner Inlet is now the only bay and inlet net fishery in Victoria. The fishing industry helped build communities in the near east, and the Corner Inlet fishery is important for the very small, remote communities of Port Albert, Port Welshpool and Port Franklin. While the fisheries of San Remo have contracted, the industry has reinvigorated itself by focussing on selling locally caught fish direct to consumers and creating links with tourism and recreational fisheries.

Valuing Victoria's wild-catch fisheries and aquaculture industries

This research project, conducted by the University of Technology Sydney (UTS), for the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation, investigated how the Victorian fishing and aquaculture industry contributes to the wellbeing of regional communities, and to Victoria overall. The study found the industry in the near east contributes to wellbeing in five main ways:

- economic diversity and resilience
- food supply
- tourism and recreation
- environmental health
- social fabric

Economic diversity and resilience – Near east fisheries make significant economic contributions

- Professional fisheries contributed \$26 million of added value to the near east in the 2016/17 financial year.
- Professional fisheries contributed 298 full-time jobs in the region in that period.
- The industry supports a range of business and job opportunities, from on-the-boat work through to businesses that service the industry, along with supply chain, tourism and hospitality operations.
- 81% of residents surveyed believe the industry supports their local economy and provides jobs.

Food supply – local seafood is in demand

- In San Remo, the industry has developed a market for direct sales to consumers.
- Corner Inlet seafood is highly prized and recognised for its quality in Melbourne and locally.
- 90% of Victorians believe it's important to produce local seafood and reduce reliance on imports.
- 62% of the hospitality sector surveyed says demand for local seafood is growing.

Tourism and recreation – The seafood industry is part of the coastal travel experience

- 88% of Victorians expect to eat local seafood when visiting the coast.
- International visitors, particularly from Asia, are the group of visitors most interested in eating local seafood
- 69% of Victorians holidaymakers surveyed enjoy watching commercial fishers at work.
- Professional and recreational fishing are often portrayed as being at odds. But the study found evidence professional and recreational fishers positively intersect, through shared interests and infrastructure.

Environmental health – The industry helps manage fish stocks and the marine environment

- Data collected by the industry is used for managing commercial and recreational fisheries sustainably.
- 82% of Victorian fish stocks assessed are classified as 'sustainable' or 'recovering'.
- The near east industry undertakes voluntary practices aimed at improving environmental health – for instance, Corner Inlet fishers monitor seaweed loss and carry out habitat restoration.

Social fabric – Fishing contributes to the sense of identity in near east coastal communities

- 83% of residents surveyed in coastal towns agree fishing is important to heritage and identity.
- Near east fishing businesses support and donate to local events and charities.
- Grassroots activities like the San Remo Fishing Festival foster social connections and identity.

For more information, see: uts.ac/VictoriaFisheriesAquaculture

Victoria's fisheries and aquaculture: economic and social contributions FRDC Project No 2017-092

Source: Valuing Victoria's Wild-Catch and Aquaculture Industries, UTS

*Percentages are from survey responses

