

9 November 2005

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Tasmanian Conservation Trust comments on: Assessing the ecological sustainability of the Tasmanian octopus fishery

This document provides a good basis for the management of this fishery.

While there are grounds to be optimistic about the sustainability of this fishery, there remains a need for ongoing monitoring and more research.

Research could follow a similar pattern to that which has been undertaken to support the Tasmanian Calamari fishery.

A more explicit management process would help to ensure that this fishery continues to be sustainable and that TAC and latent effort were properly managed. A formal management structure should be considered for this fishery, with a management plan and the formal involvement of a Fishery Advisory Committee (FAC). This document could be turned into a management plan with relatively little work.

One issue that should be addressed is the use of commercial net in Eaglehawk Bay. One fisher has an entitlement to use this gear. It is a source of frustration amongst other fishers, both commercial and recreational, that this is permitted.

While probably not significant in terms of the sustainability of the target species of octopus, there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that there is a loss of amenity to other fishers.

The use of gill nets may also result in unacceptable levels of bycatch, particularly as it appears that nets are being set in a shark nursery area. netting in eaglehawk bay - shark nursery but dead end pop amenity bycatch

The recreational fishery currently has a bag of five. This is too high and should be reduced to two, to reduce waste, increase amenity and encourage sustainable fishing practices.