



**NATIVE FISH AUSTRALIA (Vic) Inc.**  
PO Box 162 Doncaster 3108

Travis Dowling  
Executive Director Fisheries Victoria  
DEDJTR  
1 Spring Street  
Melbourne 3001

Dear Travis,

**Re: Fisheries (Murray cod bag and size limits & Trout cod) Notice**

Native Fish Australia (Vic) has recently been contacted by you requesting feedback in relation to the extension of Trout cod (Fisheries Notice 6/2015) and Murray cod (Fisheries Notice 14/2015). At a recent committee meeting of NFA(Vic) we discussed the merits of these two "temporary" regulations. Due to the extremely limited consultation period, we have not been able to consult with our members, and **request more time in the future to allow true consultation with members and supporters.**

Murray cod and Trout cod are a valuable angling species that are presently protected by both the federal EPBC Act and the Victorian F&FG Act due to a number of factors including their perceived historically low numbers is across the Murray Darling basin. Trout cod & Murray cod are especially vulnerable to angling during their breeding period as we have already documented in the recent NFA (Vic) publication "**Proposal for the Introduction of a Seasonal Angling Closure on the Ovens River**".

NFA (Vic) continues to **fully supports** the **current slot limits and bag limits** for Murray cod in Victoria, and would like to see if slots can also be extended to other recreational species such as **Southern River blackfish** (*Gadopsis marmoratus*) which has suffered a major decline across much of its natural range. Blackfish are another long lived native species that need further protections to aid in their recovery.

With some trepidation, we continue to support the **trial** for twelve months of the removal of the closed season for Murray cod in Lake Eildon.

We say this for a number of reasons as listed below;

- Murray cod have and do breed in Lake Eildon. They are annual spawners. It might be that they have spawned but not successfully recruited. We would

like to see some scientific research conducted into what is happening to this natural recruitment.

This support **does not extend** to any other impoundments in Victoria **at this stage**.

We also continue to **support the small recreational fishery for Trout cod at Lakes Sambell & Kerford**. In our previous submission (May 2105 & attached), we raised a number of issues around the opening of this fishery. These included;

- **There needs to be a clear plan for the delisting of Trout cod from Critically Endangered/Endangered to Vulnerable**
- **There needs to be a plan for the intensive stocking of at least two other waterways designated for recreational fisheries.**
- **There needs to be substantially better management of both lake Sambell and Lake Kerford.**
- **Populations of Trout cod in both lakes are not yet ready for the demands of a sustainable 'put and take' recreational fishery.**

**We are yet to receive any feedback on these important issues!**

With the opening of Lake Eildon for year round Murray cod angling, there is now the opportunity to **revaluate our proposal for a seasonal closure for the Ovens river to protect breeding endangered Trout cod and Macquarie perch**. Opposition to this proposal in the past has centred on restricting angling opportunities in the area, but with the opening of Eildon there is a readily available alternative close by.

With the implementation of these trials, there is need for a education and awareness campaign on correct handling techniques for both Murray cod & Trout cod for successful release. We believe this needs to be implemented ASAP

If you would like to discuss any of the points raised, I can be contacted on the number below or via [nfavic@yahoo.com.au](mailto:nfavic@yahoo.com.au).

Yours faithfully



Tim Curmi  
President  
Native Fish Australia (Vic) Inc  
Mob: 0417 419 765

24 August 2016