

Media Release

The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC

Minister for Agriculture

Minister for Regional Development

Deputy Leader of the Government
in the Legislative Council

Victorian
Labor

**DELIVERING
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Wednesday, 31 October 2018

GIVING THE GIPPSLAND LAKES BACK TO RECREATIONAL ANGLERS

A re-elected Andrews Labor Government will give the Gippsland Lakes back to recreational anglers, phasing out commercial fishing to boost local tourism and create jobs.

Removing the nets from the Gippsland Lakes will mean more fish for recreational anglers and more fishing tourists for the local economy.

Labor will buy out the last commercial fishing licences in the Lakes over four years and introduce a sliding catch cap, with all licences to be removed by 2022.

The Labor Government has already started buying out commercial fishing licences to end netting in Port Phillip Bay by 2022 and Corio Bay by the end of this year.

Just as they have been in Port Phillip Bay and Corio Bay, Gippsland Lakes licensees will be properly compensated as part of the buyout.

Four years ago, Labor promised to grow fishing participation to one million anglers by 2020 - we're well on the way to achieving that goal, but there's still more to do. Under Labor, fish stocking will grow to 10 million fish per year by 2022, giving every Victorian angler a better chance at getting a bite.

In another boost for Gippsland tourism, Labor will invest \$1.5 million for a new on-water café on Bullock Island in partnership with the Lakes Entrance Fishermen's Co-Operative Society.

The café will be a major drawcard for visitors and locals alike, selling fresh local fish and featuring a viewing area and waterfront decking. Labor will also invest \$200,000 for the Victorian Fisheries Authority to develop a fishing tourism plan in consultation with recreational fishers, tourism boards and local government.

Quote attributable to Minister for Agriculture Jaala Pulford

"Whether you fish on the coast, on our stunning bays and inlets or in pristine freshwater lakes and rivers – only Labor will deliver for recreational anglers."

Quote attributable to Member for Eastern Victoria Harriet Shing

"We've listened carefully to what the community has said about the Gippsland Lakes – and that's why we'll remove the nets, phase out commercial licences and hand these unique waters back to recreational fishers."

Quote attributable to Labor Candidate for Morwell Mark Richards

"This is a game changer for local fishers and for fishing tourism in Gippsland – it'll mean more fish, better facilities and more visitors to the Gippsland Lakes."

Quotes attributable Labor Candidate for Gippsland East Mark Reeves

"When it comes to recreational fishers only a Labor Government will deliver the support they need and return these waters back to them."

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