



Centro Harvest Subsidy

TASMANIAN ABALONE COUNCIL

TACL Centro harvest Subsidy

- ▶ TACL members had been advocating for action on this issue for many years and as a result, the TACL Board decided (at a meeting in 2015) to sponsor a harvesting trial.
- ▶ The Board determined that the best way to assist the new *C. rogersii* roe industry was to subsidise the cost of harvesting and processing until such time as an industry based on *C. rogersii* had “got on its feet”.
- ▶ An appropriate subsidy would assist the growth of a “new” export industry for Tasmania as well as reduce the degradation of productive abalone habitat.

TACL Centro Harvest Subsidy

- ▶ The key elements of the TACL Centro Subsidy Program for 2016 were as follows:
- ▶ TACL partial sponsorship of the urchin harvest dive rate was available - up to 100k (funded by the *TACL Abalone Industry Development Fund - AIDF*).
- ▶ Participation in the Centro harvest was available to abalone divers who also held Commercial Dive licenses. Consideration was also given to offering the opportunity to 3 or 4 of the dedicated and highly experienced urchin-only divers.
- ▶ Two designated harvest areas: Cape Pillar to the northern tip of Fortescue Bay in the SE (75% of effort) and north of St Helens in the NE (25% of effort) with precise areas yet to be determined.
- ▶ Divers to invoice TACL for 75 cents per kg with balance to come from processor totaling approximately \$1.50/kg dive rate.
- ▶ Centro harvesting to occur inshore (to a depth out to about 17 metres) targeting incipient barrens within the weed canopy.

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- ▶ This proposal was communicated to all holders of Fishing License – Commercial Dive (FLCD), as well as processing entities.
- ▶ (Note: about 26 of the current 53 FLCD's are held by abalone divers)
- ▶ The TACL Centro Subsidy Program commenced during the 2016 Centro harvest season and has been in operation ever since – with a progressive relaxation of various elements.
- ▶ In order to encourage maximum removal of urchins, diver participation was expanded to include all 53 current holders of FLCD's whether they were abalone divers or not.
- ▶ Spatial and temporal restrictions were also removed - they can currently harvest at any time of the year and at any location between Eddystone Point and Cape Pillar.
- ▶ Subsidy remains at 75 cents per kg, with processors paying varying rates dependent on roe recovery

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- ▶ The TACL has so far invested \$150k with a further 50k available from a second 100k tranche from the AIDF.
- ▶ TACL retains copies of every urchin dive docket submitted by divers to access the subsidy.
- ▶ Dataset includes kilograms harvested plus dive location plus buyer.
- ▶ Acknowledge Tashimi, RTS Paua Co as the major buyers in 2018.
- ▶ As of early November 2018, the total weight of *C. rodgersii* harvested under the TACL Centro Subsidy Program is 200,000 kgs which amounts to about 600,000 urchins removed from between St Helens/Bay of Fires region south to Maria Island.

TACL Centro Harvest Subsidy

- ▶ AIDF funding finishes shortly
- ▶ New subsidy source.....
- ▶ Abalone Industry Reinvestment Fund (AIRF)
- ▶ Governance Framework finalised – waiting on Ministerial sign off
- ▶ \$5.1 million in AIRF for Centro and stock enhancement (primarily)
- ▶ 50% for Centro - \$2.5 million
- ▶ Possible Commonwealth Government assistance
- ▶ Funds flow from early 2019
- ▶ Call for Expressions of Interest shortly