

VARIATION REQUEST - FISHERIES NATURA PLAN (*Mytilus edulis*) CASTLEMAINE HARBOUR 2016-2026

Date Submitted: 17th September 2019

Submitted by: The Secretariat of the Bottom Grown Mussel Forum on behalf of industry members in Castlemaine

Proposed Variation: Conduct fishing activity in an area previously mapped by industry members as being unsuitable for seed fishing.

Rationale/Justification: Since 2016 there has been significant changes to the substrate of Castlemaine Harbour as a result of movements in the sand banks due to winter storms. The area where this is particularly noticeable is in the channel between Rossbeigh and Inch. This has resulted in areas previously mapped as being unsuitable for seed fishing (characterised by a rocky substrate) silting over and becoming suitable for fishing.

The major seed bed identified in 2019 partially overlaps such and area.

The spatial extent of the seed bed and the tonnage available is within the normal parameters of recent seed settlements in the area and this variation request does not represent any intensification of fishing activity and thus does not represent an increase in disturbance levels.

Map 1 – 2019 Seed Bed location

