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FISHERIES & AQUACULTURE

2 Hamra Avenue
West Beach SA
GPO Box 1625
ADELAIDE SA 5001
Tel (08) 8207 5333
www.pir.sa.gov.au

NOTICE TO FISHERS**Unit values, Total Allowable Commercial Catch and other quota arrangements for the Vongole Fishery for the 2026/27 quota period**

The Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) convened a meeting of Vongole licence holders on 27 May 2026 to seek advice on the setting of the Total Allowable Commercial Catches (TACCs) for the Coffin Bay, West Coast and Port River zones of the Vongole Fishery for the 2026/27 quota period.

The April 2026 SARDI Advice Note “Coffin Bay Vongole Fishery – 2025 Harvestable Biomass Estimate” classified the Coffin Bay Zone of the Vongole Fishery as “sustainable” and estimated the harvestable biomass in the Coffin Bay Zone from the 2025 Fishery Independent Survey at 3,464 tonnes.

The May 2025 SARDI Advice Note “West Coast Vongole Fishery – 2024 Harvestable Biomass Estimate” classified the West Coast Zone of the Vongole Fishery as “sustainable” and estimated the harvestable biomass in the West Coast Zone from the 2024 Fishery Independent Survey at 555 tonnes.

At the meeting of 27 May 2026, the majority of Vongole Fishery licence holders recommended TACCs for the Coffin Bay and West Coast zones of the fishery of 70 tonnes and 22 tonnes, respectively.

As delegate of the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, I have considered the TACC and determined the quota unit values, for the Coffin Bay, West Coast and Port River Vongole fishing zones of the Vongole Fishery for the 2026/27 quota period after consideration of the following information:

- the objects of the *Fisheries Management Act 2007*
- the Vongole Harvest Strategy
- the SARDI Advice Note of April 2026 “Coffin Bay Vongole Fishery – 2025 Harvestable Biomass Estimate”, which reports specifically on the Coffin Bay zone of the fishery
- the SARDI Advice Note of May 2025 “West Coast Vongole Fishery – 2024 Harvestable Biomass Estimate”, which reports specifically on the West Coast zone of the fishery
- advice from the Vongole Fishermen’s Association of South Australia.

As delegate of the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, I have determined the quota unit values required under Regulation 9(2) of the Fisheries Management (Vongole Fishery) Regulations 2021, and the associated TACCs, for the Coffin Bay, West Coast and Port River Vongole fishing zones of the Vongole Fishery for the 2026/27 quota period as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: Vongole quota unit value and TACCs for the respective zones of the Vongole Fishery for the 2026/27 quota period.

Vongole Fishing Zone	2026/27 TACC (kg)	No. quota units	2026/27 Quota unit value (kg)
Coffin Bay	70,000	1000.0	70
West Coast	22,000	1000.0	22
Port River	0.0	890.3	0

Please note that Regulation 23A of the Fisheries Management (General) Regulations 2017 prohibits the take of bivalves, including Vongole, in the Port River. Therefore, the quota unit value and TACC for the Port River zone for the 2026/27 quota period has been set at zero (0) (see Table 1).

Please note, the Vongole Harvest Strategy provides an upper limit for the Coffin Bay Zone TACC of 64 tonnes, 6 tonnes below the recommendation from licence holders of 70 tonnes for the 2026/27 quota period. Given the 2025 harvestable biomass estimate of 3,464 tonnes and that when developing the Vongole Harvest Strategy the upper limit of 64 tonnes was based on restricting market supply, I consider the Coffin Bay TACC of 70 tonnes for the 2026/27 quota period to be sustainable (see Table 1).

Carry-over arrangements

Regulation 9(3)(f) of the Fisheries Management (Vongole Fishery) Regulations 2021 provides for carry-over of uncaught quota on individual licences at a default level of up to 10% of the entitlements on the licence unless the Minister determines a lesser amount.

Following consideration of advice from Vongole Fishery licence holders at the meeting of 27 May 2026 and the current SARDI advice on stock biomass, I can advise the default carry-over arrangements of up to 10% of quota entitlements will be maintained for uncaught quota from 2025/26. Please note that any quota entitlements carried over from one quota period to the next can only be fished in that quota period and cannot be transferred.

Over-catch arrangements

Regulation 9(3)(g) of the Fisheries Management (Vongole Fishery) Regulations 2021 provides that where an over-catch amount on a licence for a quota period, quota entitlements may be deducted on that licence by the Minister in the subsequent quota period.

In consideration of advice from Vongole Fishery licence holders during the meeting held on 27 May 2026 and the current SARDI advice on stock biomass, I can advise the default over-catch arrangements will be maintained as follows:

- where over-catch amounts are less than 10% of quota entitlements in the 2026/27 quota period, each kilogram in excess of the quota entitlements may be deducted from the quota entitlements on that licence in the subsequent quota period (2027/28) at a rate of 1:1.
- where over-catch amount exceeds 10% of the quota entitlements held on a licence, each kilogram in excess of the quota entitlements may be deducted from the quota

entitlements on that licence in the subsequent quota period (2027/28) at a rate of 2:1.

Variations for uncaught or over-caught quota entitlements will be considered following the completion of the 2026/27 quota period, with adjustments to quota entitlements applied to licences as soon as practicable following the commencement of the 2026/27 quota period.

Should you have any further queries regarding these matters, please contact Steve Shanks, Manager – Commercial Fisheries, on telephone on 08 8429 0197 or email at Steve.Shanks@sa.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G Begg', with a stylized, cursive script.

Prof Gavin Begg
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE