

# Fact sheet: Consumption advice for recreationally caught game – East Gippsland



Environment  
Protection  
Authority Victoria

Publication 1672.2\* August 2018  
\*This replaces 1672.1 issued October 2017

Fact sheet

Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA) provides the following recommendations for recreational hunters and fishers in the East Gippsland area:

## Heart Morass Wetland

- Do not consume fish, eels or ducks caught at the Heart Morass Wetland.

## Dowd Morass Wetland

- Do not consume ducks from the Dowd Morass Wetland.
- Do not consume more than 2-3 serves of fish and eel per week from the Dowd Morass Wetland.

## Lower Latrobe River

- Do not consume more than one serve of eel per month from the Lower Latrobe River bounded by Heart Morass, or
- Do not consume more than one serve of carp per week caught from the Lower Latrobe River bounded by Heart Morass.
- Note, at the time of publication there is no precautionary consumption advice for recreational fishing of redfin, yellow belly, mullet or estuary perch from the Lower Latrobe River.

This precautionary advice has been issued following further testing of per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) levels undertaken by EPA Victoria, Victorian Fisheries Authority and Department of Defence (Commonwealth) in the vicinity of its East Sale RAAF site and the adjacent Heart Morass, Lower Latrobe River and Dowd Morass Wetlands.

## What is the reason for this advice?

EPA has received further results from Department of Defence testing for PFAS in the vicinity of its East Sale site and the adjacent Heart Morass Wetland. The results demonstrate increased human health risks from the consumption of recreationally caught fish from the Heart Morass Wetland, in addition to recreationally caught carp and eel from the Lower Latrobe River.

EPA is working with an Interagency Working Group to undertake testing of biota for PFAS across the state. Preliminary results confirmed elevated PFAS concentrations and potential risk to human health from consuming recreationally caught ducks from the Heart Morass and adjoining Dowd Morass Wetlands. Further information regarding EPA's Interagency Work can be found in EPA's *Interim position statement on PFAS* (EPA publication 1669): [epa.vic.gov.au/our-work/publications/publication/2018/august/1669-2](http://epa.vic.gov.au/our-work/publications/publication/2018/august/1669-2)

## Further information

Information regarding the health effects of PFAS and health-based guideline values for PFAS can be found here:

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-pfas.htm>

For further details about this fact sheet, contact EPA on:  
**1300 372 842** (1300 EPA VIC)

For further details regarding the PFAS investigation at RAAF Base East Sale, Defence's project team can be contacted on:  
1800 793 201  
[eastsale.defence@senserva.com.au](mailto:eastsale.defence@senserva.com.au)

Information about the Department of Defence's national program to manage the impacts of PFAS can be found here:

<http://www.defence.gov.au/Environment/PFAS/>



Authorised and published by Environment Protection Authority Victoria  
200 Victoria Street, Carlton VIC 3053  
W [epa.vic.gov.au](http://epa.vic.gov.au) | T 1300 372 842 (1300 EPA VIC)

# Consumption advice for recreationally caught game – East Gippsland

---

EPA has received results from the Victorian Fisheries Authority testing of eel and carp in the Dowd Morass. Results demonstrated a slightly elevated human health risk for children consuming more than four serves of eel and fish per week. For the protection of child consumers, EPA has adopted the recommendation of Food Standards Australia and New Zealand to limit consumption of fish and eel to 2-3 serves per week.

EPA continues to actively work with key Government Departments on researching and managing impacts related to PFAS contamination.

## What is PFAS?

PFAS are a group of chemicals that include perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorohexane sulfonate (PFHxS).

As they have heat, water and stain-repelling properties, PFAS have been widely used in a range of industrial and consumer products both in Australia and internationally, including in fire retardants, waterproofing, food preparation, food packaging, furnishings, clothing and recreational equipment.

PFAS are a concern because they can persist for a long time, both in the environment and in humans.

## What are the health effects of PFAS?

Food Standards Australia New Zealand and enHealth report there is no consistent evidence that PFAS are harmful to human health.

However, since these chemicals remain in humans and the environment for many years, it is recommended that as a precaution human exposure to PFAS be minimised wherever possible.

## I have been catching and eating fish and game from the Heart Morass Wetland. Should I be concerned?

People who have eaten fish, eels and ducks are not considered to be at risk of any adverse health effects.

However, EPA recommends that to minimise exposure to PFAS, people do not consume anything caught from the Heart Morass Wetland.

With duck hunting season recently closed, hunters may have frozen ducks with high PFAS concentrations that should be disposed of.

## Further background on Department of Defence testing for PFAS

Defence has commenced a national program to investigate and manage the impacts of PFAS on, and in the vicinity of, some of its bases around Australia. Further information regarding Victorian sites currently under investigation can be found on EPA's website:

<https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/our-work/current-issues/water-quality/cfa-regional-training-centres>