

NZSFC Hooked Up

Fisheries Management summary

October 2016

Fisheries Management Annual Report

The Fisheries Management Annual Report 2015-16 has been published. It was available for delegates and attendees at the Whangamata AGM. Hard copies are available from Dave, please email him secretary@nzsportfishing.org.nz. It is also online at <https://goo.gl/zxoivx>. The Fisheries Management - Marine Protection team welcome your feedback on the report and any suggestions you have for next year's edition.

Special request: Please, we need new images for our publications, including the Annual Report. We particularly need fishing pictures, children, adults, the fish, the cockpit, the scene. If taking photos of people and their fish, please remember NO SUNGLASSES, as they do not project a good image for the person or our publication. Highest resolution possible image. Please email or call Trish if you want to discuss this further. trish@legasea.co.nz.

Billfish Symposium

A report by John Holdworth from the 6th Billfish Symposium is provided elsewhere in this magazine.

Snapper 1 Management Plan process

During September MPI held four public drop-in meetings and two iwi fisheries forum meetings to discuss the SNA1 Management Plan. John Holdsworth participated in the most popular meeting, with around 27 attendees, in Whangarei. The other public meetings were poorly attended (16 people total) and MPI is now reconsidering its approach to advertising and the concept of drop-in meetings.

The SNA1 plan was developed and discussed in 26 joint sector meetings between February 2014 and July 2016. The NZSFC was the major contributor to the plan development in terms of documents produced to inform discussions. A positive outcome has been the agreed stock management target of 40% of unfished biomass, to be achieved by 2041. Also, an interim target of 30% of unfished biomass by 2025. The team acknowledges the Plan is what it is, yet it could have been so much more useful in guiding future management and decisions. However, being a collaborative process meant that only agreed outcomes were included in the final plan. The team is considering the merits of a survey to the LegaSea database, or a wider survey of public opinion.

Hauraki Gulf Spatial Plan

Scott Macindoe has done his best to represent the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council in the Hauraki Gulf Spatial Planning process. The Working Group has settled on a plan that has now gone further up the foodchain for review before being sent to Wellington for ratification. Three Ministers, Nick Smith (Environment), Nathan Guy (MPI) and Maggie Barry (Conservation) will consider the Plan and make recommendations to their Cabinet colleagues.

Once again this was a collaborative process with a much broader participant base than the SNA1 plan. This wider input and need for broader agreement is reflected in the plan. From a fisheries management perspective we are hopeful that the decision makers will see merit in giving meaningful support to a separate Fisheries Management Area for the Hauraki Gulf. In our view this is the most effective way to achieve the necessary catch reductions to rebuild abundance and restore productivity to the marine environment of the Gulf.

Submissions

Our team has made 15 submissions during 2016. The most recent Ministerial decisions were announced on September 8th and apply from 1 October 2016.

- a. **Southern scallops (SCA7)** - NZSFC submission recommended the SCA7 fishery is closed to all fishing until abundance surveys indicate a surplus yield is available for harvest. When the stock has recovered to an abundant level the Minister ought to allow a staged resumption of scallop harvest, for non-commercial use then commercial use when more yield is available to sustain both non-commercial and commercial exploitation. <http://goo.gl/qbxOCq>

Minister's decision: On July 12th Nathan Guy announced the partial closure of the Scallop 7 fishery for the upcoming season. The closure applies from 15 July and finishes on 14 February 2017.

- b. **Jack mackerel 3** – NZSFC submission recommended the Minister decrease the current Total Allowable Catch (TAC) to cover existing use only. That meant halving the Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC) and establishing allowances for other fishing related mortality and non-commercial use, both recreational and customary. In the submission we noted the importance of jack mackerel in the foodchain, between plankton and larger predators, given that pilchard and anchovy are less common in southern waters. <http://goo.gl/ei5HqH>

Minister's decision: The Minister reduced the TACC by 49%, no effort has been made to split the species so more targeted management can be applied.

- c. **Bluenose** – NZSFC submission supported the Ministry's option 3, as a minimum, to rebuild the depleted bluenose fishery to the default target stock size of 40% of unfished biomass (B40). Catch reductions must not be deferred again, as they were in 2013/14 on the promise of more data gathering. Bluenose has all the characteristics of an overexploited stock and must be rebuilt now. <http://goo.gl/jB8JfI>

Minister's decision: TACC reduced by 18% nationally, MPI's Option 2. MPI recommended Option 2 to the Minister, while also acknowledging that it was unlikely to achieve the target biomass within the rebuild timeframe, but could be an interim measure while a Management Procedure is developed by MPI and commercial interests.

- d. **John dory 7** – NZSFC submission was only one of two submissions to MPI on JDO7. NZSFC advocated that precautionary management is required for this important fish stock because the fishery is showing signs of growth overfishing, particularly in the Tasman and Golden Bays. The proposed TACC increase goes against all reasonable expectations and environmental principles. <http://goo.gl/XAosMz>

Minister's decision: TACC increased by 27%.

- e. **Paua 7** – NZSFC submission supported the Ministry's and paua industry's call for cuts to commercial harvesting to rebuild the PAU7 fish stock. We supported the proposed 60% TACC reduction. Paua 7 has been below target stock size for nearly 20 years. The NZSFC objects to shelving as there is no statutory support for shelving, and the Minister is responsible for rebuilding and maintaining PAU7 in an abundant state. <http://goo.gl/XMF5OE>

Minister's decision: TACC reduced by 50%. We will need to monitor management of this fishery given the Minister's statement, *"Over time I expect all sectors to play a role in rebuilding abundance in this fishery....I have therefore directed the Ministry to begin a **shared fishery approach** this year to discuss these matters, and investigate what, if any, additional management controls may be required to ensure **any rebuild of the stock is not undermined by increasing recreational harvest**"*.

- f. **Snapper 7** – NZSFC submission recommended the Minister increase the TAC to cover existing use but rejected any TACC increase. SNA7 was overfished in the 1970s and 80s and it remains below the target stock size There has been an increase in snapper biomass and in amateur catch requiring an increase in the recreational allowance. <http://goo.gl/7zXfVJ>

Minister's decision: TACC increased by 25%. Recreational allowance increased by 178%. The Minister is again seeking a *"shared fisheries engagement approach"* and notes, *"My decisions give these sectors (recreational and commercial) equal shares in a larger fishery and I am very interested to see how they make the best use of this opportunity"*.