



LegaSea Hawkes Bay
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To MPI and Commercial Industry Representatives,

First of all thank you to all involved for continuing dialog regarding the declining fish stock issue in the Hawkes Bay area.

From our recent meeting on Thursday, 27 August we note that Steve Halley from MPI in his opening address is "keen for a voluntary resolution" and that MPI "recognise the long standing issue here in the Hawke Bay".

The points outlined and tabled by the Commercial representatives to improve fishing (refer to meeting minutes) referred to actions that we agree are necessary but these alone will not improve the recreational fishing experience in the short term. These are actions that should have been undertaken many years ago and should be driven hard by commercial to look after the future of their own industry. We strongly dispute the claim that "commercial are confident that fish stocks in FMA-2 are currently sustainable". There is clearly a depletion issue.

It is very evident from the recreational Ramp Survey (nine years), and the commercial catch data from inside the 50 meter contour (five years), that fish stocks are on a dramatic decline within this area of Hawke Bay. This will naturally move the trawl effort deeper where it would be fair to assume that fish stocks will also decline at an increasing rate there too. The depletion issue will become more widespread under the current harvest volumes and methods.

We are looking to protect our inshore fish stocks from further rapid decline so the general public can enjoy the sport of fishing and catch a feed for the family, both now and into the future. Let's not lose sight of why we are "at the table" as the current fishing experience in the Hawkes Bay area is beyond unacceptable and we are requesting that commercial volunteer meaningful actions to address this. This is in line with MPI's desire for us to mutually agree.

We have tabled our bottom line solution regarding serious spacial separation plus the snapper spawning relief in the "Springs" area and the Lauchlan Ridge proposal.

For fish numbers to increase then the harvest effort must be moved and/or reduced, resulting in less fish being killed. Simple as that.

Are commercial prepared to back off their inshore fishing effort to allow a rebuild to take place? We know that many commercial fishers are also concerned about today's fishing experience compared to only a few years ago as they too know how hard this area has been fished down. Not publically, but behind closed doors, and as yet no meaningful solution has been offered. The public are very sick of this situation.



Should LegaSea Hawkes Bay and Commercial not agree, then we believe it is fair to table our actions moving forward so there are no surprises.

Firstly, if consultation with commercial cannot find a resolution then we would be forced to go very public about our discussions to date and the data we currently have. Our publications would be honest and accurate regarding the process and the solutions tabled from both parties for all to see.

Secondly, the focus would then go to MPI and the legal obligations not currently being met under section 311, 21 and 8 etc.

The recreational fishing public and those that treasure a sustainable fishery (Greens etc.) would then be called upon to rally and show their support for this issue.

The real solution to the declining fish stock issue is that the harvest volumes are too high and we would actively protest and lobby for serious quota reductions across FMA-2 for a number of key species. Recreational only areas would also be called for.

Through absolutely no input from LegaSea Hawkes Bay, fish stocks in our area has been highlighted as one of the top ten topics of interest when surveying the Hawkes Bay public about the amalgamation of Napier and Hastings.

LegaSea HB have been approached by television, radio, many newspapers, fishing magazines, fishing clubs, local councils along with many of the public, both within the province and outside, wanting to know what is happening. To this point we have kept our position within this group and would like to keep it that way. However if the situation does not change and an acceptable solution is not tabled, we will have no option but to accept the opportunity to engage with those wanting answers. Likewise, we would hand the situation over to the Ministry to undertake those actions as required by law.

We believe this is an honest up-front process for all to see. Commercial currently have the opportunity to change/improve the public perception of their industry within the Hawkes Bay area as our goal is to return fish stocks to abundance which will benefit us all.

The door is currently open to agree on compromises that will relieve the pressure and give recreational fishers the fair go they are legally entitled to.

We hope you are as serious about the future of your industry as we are and look forward to our next meeting later this month.

Yours sincerely

'The Team' at LegaSea Hawkes Bay