

# **NZSFC Fisheries Management Update 11**

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## **When money trumps environmental sense**

Money and commercial interests have won the latest round of decisions, with sanction from our fisheries Minister and international commissioners managing Pacific tuna. Consequently, there will be less public access to crayfish, yellowfin and other tunas in the future.

There is widespread disappointment with these latest developments.

However, the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council and its supporters are determined to continue advocating and working together with other groups to achieve 'more fish in the water & a healthy marine environment'.

## **Crayfish decisions**

On March 27<sup>th</sup> David Carter, the Minister for Primary Industries, released his management decisions that will apply from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012.

Despite the evidence and intense advocacy from the NZSFC and Gisborne locals, the Minister has agreed to increase commercial catch limits in Crayfish 3 (CRA3).

This increase applies while the commercial concession remains in place. This concession enables commercial fishers to take crayfish smaller than the recreational minimum size limit - bizarre.

Needless to say, local recreational and environmental interests are outraged at the decision and have organised a public meeting to enable people to express their views. A media statement was released soon after the decisions were made public –

<http://nzsportfishing.org.nz/index.cfm/PageID/3/ViewPage/News/fullarticle/187>

Commercial catch limits in the Wellington/Hawke Bay and Marlborough/Canterbury management areas remain the same. In the Otago management area, CRA7, commercial catch limits have been decreased and the non-commercial allowances remain stable.

A review of the crayfish commercial concessions was undertaken late 2011. A decision on whether they will be removed or retained is expected by the end of May.

[http://www.option4.co.nz/Fisheries\\_Mgmt/crayfish.htm](http://www.option4.co.nz/Fisheries_Mgmt/crayfish.htm)

## **Saving our tuna**

There were high hopes that the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) meeting in Guam, in late March, would agree to new measures to limit tuna harvest in the Pacific.

New Zealand and other Pacific Island countries wanted meaningful catch reductions for bigeye tuna, and measures to reduce bycatch when fishing for skipjack.

Despite some heated debate, a few distant-water fishing nations blocked new conservation measures resulting in a rollover of old rules.

Those rules were implemented in an attempt to reduce bigeye catch by 30% and limit yellowfin catch to 2004 levels, but these weren't effective as anticipated because of a number of loopholes and exemptions.

## **Protection lost**

Even worse is the expiry of the purse seine closure for large pockets of international waters, leaving pirate vessels and freeloading companies to move back into these areas.

It also means there will be no area free from purse seine vessels using Fish Aggregation Devices (FADs), a method with a high bycatch of juvenile tuna and other marine life.

**NZSFC supports Greenpeace**

The NZ Sport Fishing Council supported Greenpeace's Save Our Tuna campaign leading up to and during the WCPF Commission meeting. This included an online petition and a clever Twitter campaign.

Commission delegates could not escape the Twitter messages as they were projected onto a giant, virtual aquarium in the conference foyer. Our #Saveourtuna tweets were displayed live on the screen.

Some comments generated strong reactions, both good and bad. Either way, the numerous tweets triggered many discussions with the Greenpeace team.

**Make a smart choice**

Think about what you can do to save our tuna. Choose FAD-free tuna, now available in the Pam's range at local supermarkets.

Consumer choice and supermarket policy is an effective way of getting the message through to fishing companies to stop using FADs.

**LegaSea**

Advocacy and working Together with groups like Greenpeace are two of the Council's work streams that would benefit from more resources. Please, make your contribution and get some sharp looking gear at [www.LegaSea.co.nz](http://www.LegaSea.co.nz) – together we can, and will, make a difference.