

NZSF Fisheries Management Update

February 2011

To: New Zealand Sport Fishing Council members

From: New Zealand Sport Fishing Council Fisheries Management team



It has been a busy start to 2011. Most early effort from the Fisheries Management team was focused on developing submissions in response to two proposal papers released in late 2010. In addition, the results of consultation processes from the latter half of 2010 are now available for review.

Draft 2011 Deemed Value Standard

MFish released an Initial Position Paper, Draft 2011 Deemed Value Standard, in November 2010. The Fisheries Management team worked with its service providers, option4 and the Hokianga Accord Working Group to develop a joint submission in response to the proposals. This was submitted on 21 January. The Fisheries Management team is not aware of any further developments.

Several recommendations were made, as was a request for the Minister to implement practical controls to curb excessive fishing. We reiterated our earlier submissions that commercial landings in excess of the total allowable commercial catch (TACC), and for which no Annual Catch Entitlement (ACE) is held, ought to be proportionally reduced from the next year's ACE. Highlighted in the Appendix was an analysis of commercial catch in the problem region Area 2, which extends from East Cape, south to Wellington then northwards to Porirua Harbour.

A copy of the submission and other documents can be found online at http://www.option4.co.nz/Fisheries_Mgmt/deemedvalues.htm

Review of Rock Lobster Management

MFish initiated a review of sustainability measures and other management controls for Rock Lobster. An IPP was released in mid December, with submissions due by 2 February 2011. The Fisheries Management team, option4 and our contractors developed a submission, which was sent to MFish by the agreed extension date of 4 February.

Specific comments were made in response to the management proposals for Crayfish Areas 4 (Hawke Bay/Wellington), 5 (Canterbury/Marlborough), 7 (Otago) and 8 (Southern). We also took the opportunity to reiterate our concerns about the mismanagement of CRA 3 (Gisborne). If the commercial fishery is based mainly on harvesting new recruits then it will eventually fail. As joint submitters we urged the Minister to take a precautionary approach to enable the fishery to rebuild to a level that will provide for people's needs.

The ongoing use of concessions to enable commercial fishers to take animals smaller than the minimum legal size for amateur fishers continues to cause unnecessary conflict. It also undermines confidence in the quota management system and does not provide for social, economic and cultural wellbeing of all New Zealanders.

A copy of the submission and other documents can be found online at http://www.option4.co.nz/Fisheries_Mgmt/crayfish.htm

In-season Increase in Southern Bluefin Tuna TAC

A discussion document was released in November 2010 proposing an in-season increase in the southern bluefin tuna (SBT) commercial catch allocation and the recreational allowance. The NZSFC urged MFish to provide advice to the Minister that is consistent with precautionary principles. We do not believe that MFish should consider short term increases to the TAC for southern bluefin tuna when the scientific advice is that the spawning stock is critically low and continuing to decline.

Our submission asked the Minister to retain the existing TAC at 420 t. Further reductions in national quotas are forecast from the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT). We submitted that in 2011–12 that the baseline TAC should decrease to 380 t with no carry-over of ACE.

A partial decision was released on 17 February 2011. The Minister has decided to select the middle option that MFish provided which will set the TAC at 539 t for the 2010-11 fishing year. This includes an increase in recreational allowance from 4 t to 8 t and an increase of 114 t of in-season Annual Catch Entitlement for commercial fishers. It is unlikely that the commercial sector can catch their allocation.

NZSFC encourages recreational fishers to tag and release all southern bluefin tuna they catch in 2011. We will continue to remind MFish and the Minister of this cynical decision to increase catch when they know more cuts are needed in the years to come.

A copy of the submission and other documents can be found online at

<http://www.nzsportfishing.co.nz/index.cfm/PageID/187/ViewPage/2010-Submissions>

Marlborough Sounds Blue Cod

In late August 2010 MFish released a package of measures to support the reopening of the Marlborough Sounds Blue Cod fishery. NZFSC in conjunction with option4 submitted a response by 4 October. The joint submission acknowledged the effort of both the Marlborough Recreational Fishers Association and TASFISH in trying to achieve a sustainable Blue Cod fishery in the Sounds. We supported in principle the reopening, but remain cautious because there is so much debate around abundance levels. The Minister has agreed to some of the proposed measures and will reopen the fishery from 1 April 2011.

The submission and associated documents are available at

http://www.option4.co.nz/Fisheries_Mgmt/bluecod.htm#bco10

Coromandel Scallop in-season TAC review

In July 2010 MFish consulted on the in-season review of the Coromandel Scallop total allowable catch (TAC). NZSFC, option4 and the Hokianga Accord jointly responded to the proposals by 28 July, as did the Mt Maunganui Sport Fishing Club. The joint submitters rejected the proposed in-season catch increase for commercial harvesters. We also submitted that commercial dredging ought to be excluded from low-density areas to protect the environment. In September the Minister agreed to increase the TAC by the maximum level recommended by MFish and allocate that to commercial interests.

A range of documents is online alongside the joint submission at

http://www.option4.co.nz/Fisheries_Mgmt/coroscallops.htm

Statutory Body

NZ Sport Fishing is currently conducting an in-depth review of a statutory body and the likely consequences of forming such an organisation within the New Zealand fisheries management context. A paper is being written and expected to be available for your comment in approximately four weeks time.

Regards from the NZSF Fisheries Management team

Peter Campbell (Chairman), Mark Connor, Mark Hemingway and John Chibnall.