



Office of Hon David Carter

Minister for Primary Industries

B11-799

Dear Stakeholder

This letter outlines my decision on a review of rock lobster Concession Area Minimum Legal Size (MLS) Regulations in CRA 3 (Gisborne), CRA 7 (Otago) and CRA 8 (Southern).

I have decided to retain all of the existing rock lobster Concession Areas MLS Regulations for commercial fishers.

In making my decision, I have considered the submissions received on the Ministry for Primary Industries initial advice paper, the views of the National Rock Lobster Management Group and the final advice from the Ministry. I have also considered the relevant legislative provisions and my obligations under the Fisheries Act 1996.

You can find copies of the initial advice paper, submissions and the final advice paper on the Ministry's website at: www.fish.govt.nz/en-nz/Consultations/Archive/default.htm.

Concession areas provide the commercial sector with significant economic benefits and their removal would have a negative impact on their business. I understand that some recreational fishers consider concession areas to be unfair. However, information on the negative impacts of concession areas on the recreational sector is uncertain, and I consider the impacts are more directly related to overall abundance issues rather than differences in rules between sectors.

The CRA 8 (Southern) fishery has been maintained at very high abundance levels for many years and it is adequately providing fishing opportunities for all sectors.

In comparison to CRA 8, stock abundance in the CRA 3 (Gisborne) and CRA 7 (Otago) rock lobster fisheries has not been managed at such high levels in recent years. I strongly support the rebuild of abundance in these fisheries and encourage tangata whenua and stakeholders to work together to ensure that this occurs. I consider that as abundance increases in these fisheries, fishers from all sectors will reap the benefits.

I note that the management approach used for rock lobster fisheries aims to ensure there are adequate numbers of lobsters available for all sectors. I am confident that ongoing application of the decision rules that are now used in many rock lobster

fisheries, including all of those with concession areas, will maintain or improve rock lobster abundance over time.

I would like to thank everyone that has participated in the review of rock lobster concession areas over the last few years.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'David Carter', written over a faint circular stamp.

Hon David Carter
Minister for Primary Industries