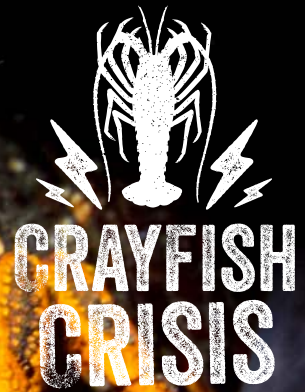


# SUBMISSION SUMMARY



## Controls for recreational crayfish harvest

[www.legasea.co.nz](http://www.legasea.co.nz)

December 2018

Rock lobster is an important species and fishery in the Hauraki Gulf and Bay of Plenty areas (CRA 2). There are extensive areas of rocky coastline and reefs around the Gulf islands, Coromandel, and Bay of Plenty. Historically, crayfish were abundant and played a significant role in coastal ecosystems. After years of excess exploitation stocks are now depleted, and in the Gulf they are described as “functionally extinct”.

An alliance of the largest representative recreational fishing organisations in Aotearoa has responded to Fisheries New Zealand’s latest proposals to manage recreational crayfish catch. A submission was made on December 19th and any changes are expected in mid-2019.

### Voluntary bag limit reduction

MPI propose to reduce the individual daily bag limit for spiny rock lobster from 6 to 3, and introduce telson clipping as a means to identify recreational catch, to reduce illegal sales.

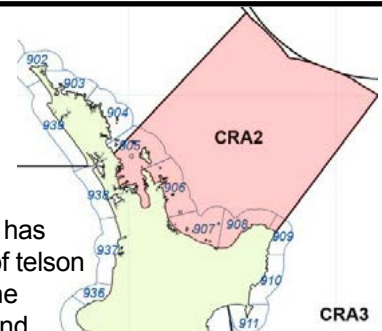
The alliance submitted it was unfair that recreational fishers were expected to bear the brunt of years of excessive commercial exploitation. However, in the interests of contributing to a rapid rebuild of this severely depleted fishery, the alliance is promoting a voluntary bag limit reduction from 6 to 3 over the summer of 2019 until new regulations are in place.

### Telson clipping

The alliance supports compliance initiatives to stop illegal take across all sectors. There is no evidence in New Zealand to support the claims that telson clipping is an effective deterrent for large-scale poaching. A whole tail does not prove the fish was legally landed by a

commercial fisher. It merely makes every crayfish that is not telson clipped available for sale.

Also, Fisheries New Zealand has not proven that the benefits of telson clipping in CRA 2 outweigh the implementation, monitoring and enforcement costs. In Australia, telson clipping was most effective at reducing illegal sales from crew taking crayfish from commercial vessels.



### Traceability - a realistic solution

To ensure only legal commercial crayfish are sold we need traceability and clear identification of commercial catch that is destined for the local market. This would make it more difficult for poachers to get around than telson clipping.

Traceability is becoming increasingly popular amongst restaurateurs and consumers. That is because traceability provides the added benefit and assurance to everyone in the food chain that they know where and when their fish was caught.

### What next?

The Minister will make a decision in early 2019 and any new regulations will apply mid-year. We are supporting the Minister to review Fisheries Act provisions that enable commercial fishers to take crayfish from their vessels under amateur regulations, and to take fish smaller than the minimum legal size in certain areas of New Zealand. We want crayfish abundance restored to healthy levels.