



## **LegaSea backs Review of Fisheries Act but focus has to include recreational fishing**

For immediate release

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Recreational fishing advocacy group LegaSea is pleased to hear the Primary Industries Minister Nathan Guy announce a major review of the Fisheries Act, but spokesman Scott Macindoe says the government needs to broaden its focus to take into account the value of recreational fishing.

“We congratulate Minister Nathan Guy for having the courage and clarity to acknowledge the need for review, because even after 30 years under the quota management system many of our most precious fish stocks are well below where they should be,” Mr Macindoe said.

“The government has called for seafood revenue to double by 2025 but we’re already at the maximum amount of fish we can take out of the sea, so if we want to hit that target we need to change our focus away from taking as much as we can from the ocean and move towards higher-value activities,” Mr Macindoe said.

LegaSea believes recreational fishing has a substantial economic value despite only taking six per cent of New Zealand’s total catch each year, and this needs to be recognised in any overhaul of the Fisheries Act.

“Recreational fishing is hugely popular in New Zealand,” he said, “Over 900,000 Kiwis and 100,000 international visitors give it a go here each year and that has a big impact on the economy yet the government doesn’t know how large that impact is because it’s never been studied as a whole.”

To help address this, LegaSea is getting behind the New Zealand Marine Research Foundation’s recently commissioned study on the economic contribution of recreational fishing in New Zealand, which will take into account what Kiwis buy, rent and catch as well as indirect benefits such as tourism and fishing media.

“The ground breaking research commissioned by the New Zealand Marine Research Foundation couldn’t be more timely – it will at last give New Zealand a true steer as to where real value opportunities lie in our inshore fisheries,” Mr Macindoe said.

The study will be conducted by Florida-based Southwick Associates, who have over 25 years experience as specialists in the economics of recreational fishing and have carried out a number of similar studies around the world. Southwick Associates has retained two local research providers; Blue Water Marine Research and Moana Consultants to ensure the global methodology is appropriately tailored to NZ conditions.

LegaSea has launched a crowd funding campaign on Give a Little to help pay for the study, calling on lovers of recreational fishing around New Zealand to help out.

New Zealand Marine Research Foundation will receive 100% of the net funds raised through the crowd-funding effort, for the costs of conducting the research and promoting the findings of the research, ultimately to support healthier and more abundant fisheries in New Zealand.

“This isn’t a tug of war between recreational and commercial fishing over fishing quotas, this is about making sure we can hand a healthy fishery down to our grandchildren,” Mr Macindoe said.

Money can be donated to the campaign at [www.whatsfishingworth.co.nz](http://www.whatsfishingworth.co.nz)

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