



9 December 2020

Tēnā koe

## Review of fisheries sustainability measures for 2021

Fisheries New Zealand is seeking feedback from tangata whenua, stakeholders, and the public on proposed changes to sustainability measures for 2021. Fisheries sustainability measures and other management controls are reviewed twice-yearly covering stocks with a 1 October and 1 April fishing year and provide for the sustainable use of our fisheries resources.

The proposals for each fishstock have been assessed using the best available scientific information, and with input from tangata whenua and stakeholders. MPI's Fishery Assessment Plenary Report is considered the best available information on stock status and is given significant weighting in these proposals.

Appendix 1 of this letter outlines the stocks we have chosen to review, along with a brief supporting rationale.

As part of this review, Fisheries New Zealand is also proposing a potential s11 closure of Cockle Bay/Tuwakamana to Intertidal Shellfish Harvesting. Recent survey results for this area suggests sustainability risks to the cockle populations, with declining numbers of large cockles. Information on this is summarised in Appendix 1.

More information on the proposed changes can be found in the full consultation papers on the Fisheries New Zealand website at: <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/consultations/review-of-sustainability-measures-2021-april-round/> Alternatively, hard copies of these documents may be requested at the email or post addresses provided below.

### Making a submission

All submissions should be received by **5pm Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021**.

Submissions should be emailed to: [FMsubmissions@mpi.govt.nz](mailto:FMsubmissions@mpi.govt.nz)

Alternatively, they can be sent by mail to the following postal address:

Sustainability Review 2021  
Fisheries Management  
Fisheries New Zealand  
PO BOX 2526  
Wellington 6140

## **Submissions are public information**

Note that your submission is public information. Submissions may be the subject of requests for information under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). The OIA specifies that information is to be made available to requesters unless there is sufficient grounds for withholding it, as set out in the OIA. Submitters may wish to indicate grounds for withholding specific information contained in their submission, such as the information being commercially sensitive or if they wish personal information to be withheld. Any decision to withhold information requested under the OIA is reviewable by the Ombudsman.

Nāku iti noa nā



Emma Taylor  
Director Fisheries Management  
Fisheries New Zealand

## Appendix One: Proposed sustainability measures for April 2021 sustainability round

**Table 1:** Stocks proposed to have the total allowable catch (TAC) reviewed as part of the 1 April 2021 sustainability round.

Species	Stock (area)	Fishing year	Proposal	Rationale for review
<b>Giant spider crab</b>	<b>GSC 3, 5 &amp; 6A</b> (Chatham Rise, South East Coast, Southland and Southern Offshore Islands)	<b>April</b>	↑	Giant spider crab in GSC 3, 5 & 6A are entirely taken as bycatch, mostly by large trawl vessels targeting squid. Observer data from the squid trawl fishery are strongly suggestive of an increase in giant spider abundance since the stocks were introduced to the QMS in 2004. This suggests an opportunity for the TACs and TACCs of these stocks to be sustainably increased.
<b>Blue cod</b>	<b>BCO 4</b> (Chatham Islands)	<b>October</b>	■	It is a priority action of the National Blue Cod Strategy to set a TAC and allowances for this stock. No change is proposed to the current TACC set for this stock.
<b>Elephant fish</b>	<b>ELE 7</b> (West Coast and Top of the South Island)	<b>October</b>	↑	Based on current stock status and recent catch information Fisheries New Zealand is proposing modest increases to the TAC, allowance for other mortality to the stock caused by fishing, and the TACC for ELE 7.
<b>Flatfish</b>	<b>FLA 2</b> (East Cape, Hawke's Bay, Wellington and Taranaki)	<b>October</b>	↓	The FLA 2 TACC has never been fully caught with catch historically well below the TACC. Information suggests that current catches are unlikely to be a risk to sustainability, but the sustainability of the TACC is unknown if catch were to increase to that level. This coupled with the fact that flatfish are typically found in harbours, estuaries and coastal waters where habitat degradation and pollution risks are of concern has prompted review of this stock.
<b>Giant stargazer</b>	<b>STA 1</b> (Waikato, East and West Coasts of Auckland and Northland, Bay of Plenty)	<b>October</b>	↑	STA 1 is a low knowledge stock. The increasing trend in commercial catch indicates that there may be an opportunity to provide for increased utilisation which is not inconsistent with the objective of maintaining the stock at or above a level that can sustain Maximum sustainable Yield (MSY). Accordingly, a small increase is proposed.

Species	Stock (area)	Fishing year	Proposal	Rationale for review
<b>Dark ghost shark</b>	<b>GSH 1</b> (East Coast of Northland and Auckland, Bay of Plenty)	<b>October</b>	↑	GSH 1 is a low knowledge stock, but best information available suggests there is room for increased utilisation. The TACC for GSH 1 was last reviewed in 2006, however no TAC, customary and recreational allowances, or other sources of fishing mortality have been set.
<b>Yellow-eyed mullet</b>	<b>YEM 9</b> (Waikato, West Coast of Auckland and Northland)	<b>October</b>	↓	Fisheries New Zealand is conducting a review of YEM 9, a low information stock, due to a potential sustainability concern with the current management settings. This concern arises from several factors: a consistent low level of catch in comparison to the TACC, known environmental degradation of some yellow-eyed mullet habitats, the potential for localised depletion in the Manukau Harbour, and recognition that yellow-eyed mullet play an important ecosystem role as a food source for seabirds, marine mammals, and other fishes.

**Table 2:** Summary of proposed s11 Closure of Cockle Bay/Tuwakamana to Intertidal Shellfish Harvesting.

Proposal	Rationale for review
<b>Closure to the take of intertidal shellfish</b> (Cockle Bay (Tuwakamana), Hauraki Gulf Coast of Eastern Auckland)	<p>Recent results of the Northern North Island Intertidal Shellfish Survey suggest there is a potential sustainability risk to the cockle population at Cockle Bay (Tuwakamana) as the number of large cockles (<math>\geq 30\text{mm}</math>) has declined over recent surveys. The local community has also expressed concern about the current state of the beds. Closing the beach to intertidal shellfish harvesting would remove one anthropogenic pressure currently affecting the cockle population at Cockle Bay, alleviating the harvest pressure that could be affecting the ability of cockles to reach larger sizes.</p> <p>If implemented, Fisheries New Zealand is proposing to review the closure after three years to determine whether the beach can be reopened for utilisation. The cockle beds would also continue to be surveyed periodically during the closure.</p>