



FISHERIES MANAGEMENT POLICY DOCUMENT

**Current Version
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1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to record all the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council's fisheries management and research policy objectives.

Where the constitution of the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council is in conflict with the policy document, the constitution will prevail. The NZSFC Board will review the policy document on an annual basis and any changes must be approved by the Annual General Meeting.

2. NZSFC Policy Administration

2.1 Official Party Status

This Council has sought and received official recognition for being consulted and making submissions on the yearly plans of the Department of Conservation and Ministry for Primary Industries, now Fisheries New Zealand.

2.2 Professional Expertise and Funding

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council will move towards having professional services on yearly contract to Council and look long term at full employment as the need arises.

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council will employ professional help to do our submissions and research for Government and Ministry meetings and papers.

2.3 NZRFC Recognition

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council withdrew its membership from the New Zealand Recreational Fishing Council at the 2007 AGM. It offers no direct recommendation to individual clubs and allows them to determine their own level of support of the New Zealand Recreational Fishing Council.

2.4 NZ Marine Research Foundation

Officially launched in 1999 (Incorporated 1996) the [New Zealand Marine Research Foundation](#) is funded in part by this Council. Its prime purpose is to fund research projects that will assist in the long-term management of fish species beneficial to all New Zealand recreational anglers. Apart from assisting in funding and providing the Trustees of this Foundation, the Council has no direct control of the fund.

In 1990 the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council moved that 50 cents per member be a donation in addition to affiliation fees to assist the New Zealand Marine Research Foundation. In 2012 this amount was increased to \$1 per adult member, with Juniors to donate \$0.50 cents. In 2016 it was agreed that the donation would be increased to \$2.00 per adult member and \$1.00 per junior member.

2.5 IGFA Representatives

International Game Fish Association (IGFA) representatives act as a liaison between sport fishers in their areas and IGFA headquarters in Dania Beach, Florida, USA. Chosen for their integrity, fishing knowledge and concern for sportsmanship and conservation, they keep IGFA informed of local sportfishing activities, and help oversee world record catch claims in their areas.

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council's IGFA representatives are selected by IGFA and provide valuable service to the Council by retaining continuity between the NZSFC and IGFA. They are appointed by IGFA after consultation with the existing representatives. Ideally, the representatives should be spread geographically around New Zealand to give the greatest area of coverage.

Only Council accepted IGFA Reps will form part of the Council.

3. Fisheries Management

3.1 General

The objectives of the NZSFC are the foundations on which the Council bases its fisheries management policy. To this end the following will apply -

- a) Outside New Zealand's EEZ-
 - i. The NZSFC has a general interest in the well being of the fish stocks of the open ocean.
 - ii. Has specific interest in the pelagic straddling stocks that frequent the NZ EEZ.
 - iii. All forms of drift nets should be banned.
 - iv. Attend and contributes to Pacific Ocean conferences that further the aims of this Council on pelagic fisheries research and management.
 - v. Will make representations to NZ Government to encourage its active participation in International fisheries management applying to pelagic straddling stocks.
- b) Within New Zealand's EEZ-
 - i. Pursue better defined rights and access of its members to take or utilise saltwater fish as recreational fishers.
 - ii. Represent the members in the fisheries management process in a manner that reflects sustainable use of any fish resource by its members and other users of the resource.
 - iii. Pursue the optimal recreational take of a sustainable fish resource.
 - iv. Encourage, educate and regulate its own members in the best utilisation of its share of the take.

- v. Monitor the introduction of restricted areas, reserves or access to fish to ensure the interests of our membership are served by the greater good of such restriction.
- vi. Monitor new developments and legislation with the NZ fisheries management area to ensure the interests of its members are served.
- vii. Support the research into the use of “Smart” fishing technology in commercial and recreational fishing practices.

3.2 Management of Specific Fisheries

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council may from time to time introduce, alter or revoke management policies for individual fish species. These are as follows-

- a) The Council will recognise released fish as equivalent to tagged and released fish.
- b) The Council recognises only the legal bag limits of individual anglers and no boat quota.
- c) That the Council support a scientifically based tagging programme for specified species and encourage the release of these fish with tags attached. These include all Billfish (excluding Spearfish), Mako Sharks, Blue Sharks, Tuna and Kingfish. Sharks should be bigger than 5 kgs and Kingfish greater than 75 cm before tagging.
- d) The Council purchases suitable tags and on-sells them to clubs at cost. Price for tags sold to non-members will be double that of the member price,
- e) Tag Cards to be handed in to Weighmasters as soon as possible after fish are tagged.

That Council adopt as Policy fisheries management targets of 40% unfished biomass, as a minimum.

That we remain supportive of recreational only fishing areas/with commercial fishing method restrictions. However, because of the perceived difficulties in implementing them, we strongly support the Ministerial adoption of International best practice targets of a minimum of 40% Virgin Biomass.

3.3 Fisheries Management System Policy

- a) The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council supports the research and study of fisheries management systems that will deliver abundant fisheries and a diverse marine environment.
- b) [Fisheries Manifesto](#) -
 - i. Establish a Royal Commission of Inquiry into fisheries management and the Quota Management System.
 - ii. Amend the Fisheries Act 1996 to include an Allocation Principle. The Minister will afford non-commercial users a clear preference in any allocations.
 - iii. Remove mobile, bottom-contact industrial fishing methods such as trawling, seining and dredging from the inshore zone.

- iv. Establish a separate, well-resourced Ministry of Fisheries.
 - v. Amend section 13 of the Fisheries Act 1996 to replace the minimum stock target of B_{MSY} with a minimum biomass target of B_{50} , that is 50% of the unfished original stock size.
- c) The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council will continue to establish policies that provide for the environmental, social, cultural and economic well-beings of non-commercial interests in the inshore zone.

3.4 Catch shares

Catch shares are a defined, fixed proportion of the total available catch in a fish stock. Catch shares are allocated annually to each fishing sector via a quota scheme. Total harvest of each sector is managed within, and measured against, the allocated share. Penalties apply for excess catches. In New Zealand catch shares are allocated to commercial fishing interests via the Quota Management System. Public fishing interests are provided for by legislation and Ministerial discretion.

The catch shares are allocated to commercial interests after the Minister has firstly set the Total Allowable Catch, and then set aside allowances to provide for public interests in fishing and the marine environment. The allowances can vary, reflecting the expected annual mortality associated with non-commercial fishing, both Māori customary and recreational, and other fishing related mortality.

Catch shares for recreational and Māori customary fishing would result in a demand from commercial interests that the amount of fish caught would be exactly measured. Currently systems are employed which are reliable indicators of the recreational catch

The recreational harvest estimation methodologies developed in New Zealand over the last 20 years offer remarkably accurate information on public catch. These catch estimates get more accurate each time they are run.

Goal: To ensure public fishing is adequately provided for by the Minister of Fisheries and not subject to the Quota Management System or fixed catch share scheme.

Principles:

1. Fishing interests are best provided for by having access to an abundant fishery and productive and a productive marine environment.
2. Scarcity of fisheries resources increases competition between sectors and fuels the debate to impose catch shares on public fishing.
3. The Minister remains the sole decision-maker when allocating fisheries yields, as he or she is the only voice that has statutory responsibilities for acting in the national interest. It is appropriate that allocations for cultural, recreational, tourism, conservation and commercial users are balanced against the national interest, and always deliver our kaitiakitanga [guardianship] obligations to those who follow.

Objectives:

1. Ensure public fishing remains outside of the Quota Management System or any fixed catch share regime.
2. The allowances set aside for non-commercial fishing, prior to the Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC) being set by the Minister, adequately provides for the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of all New Zealanders.
3. That fish stocks are maintained at or above 50% of unfished biomass to provide for public fishing and support ecosystem function.

Strategy:

1. Promote the need to maintain fish stocks at a target of 50% of its natural biomass state as a means to providing for public interests in fishing and the marine environment.
2. Promote the maintenance of well-informed Ministerial decisions to ‘allow for’ public fishing outside of the Quota Management System.
3. Elevate public awareness and understanding of the nature and extent of commercial and non-commercial, Māori customary and recreational, fishing interests.
4. Advocate for the restoration of depleted fisheries to:
 - a. better provide for public fishing; and
 - b. to reduce the perceived need for catch shares to be applied to public fishing.

3.5 Peak body for recreational fishing interests

New Zealand Sport Fishing Council will work with national and local organisations and groups advocating for improved fisheries management and a healthy marine environment.

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council has earned its place as a respected, long-standing national sporting body representing recreational fishing interests in New Zealand. A true Peak Body would be made up of a strong group of willing participants, including NZSFC, who get mutual benefit from such a coalition.

Goal

To provide the leadership to advocate for and protect the fishing and environmental interests of members and future generations.

Statutory Obligations

Section 12 of the Fisheries Act 1996

Consultation

1. *Before doing anything under any of [sections 11\(1\), 11\(4\), 11A\(1\), 13\(1\), 13\(4\), 13\(7\), 14\(1\), 14\(3\), 14\(6\), 14B\(1\), 15\(1\), and 15\(2\)](#) or recommending the making of an Order in Council under [section 13\(9\)](#) or [section 14\(8\)](#) or [section 14A\(1\)](#), the Minister shall—*

- a. *consult with such persons or organisations as the Minister considers are representative of those classes of persons having an interest in the stock or the effects of fishing on the aquatic environment in the area concerned, including Maori, environmental, commercial, and recreational interests; and*
 - b. *provide for the input and participation of tangata whenua having—*
 - (i) a non-commercial interest in the stock concerned; or*
 - (ii) an interest in the effects of fishing on the aquatic environment in the area concerned—and have particular regard to kaitiakitanga.*
- 2 *After setting or varying any sustainability measure, or after approving, amending, or revoking any fisheries plan, the Minister shall, as soon as practicable, give to the parties consulted in accordance with subsection (1) reasons in writing for his or her decision.*

Principles

1. All New Zealanders maintain the statutory ability to lobby government and decision-makers on fisheries and environmental matters and have their views impartially considered.
2. The ability to provide strong independent representation is compromised if an organisation is funded by the government, regardless of where the funds are sourced.

Objectives

1. Continue to represent our members and provide the necessary leadership to promote and protect recreational fishing interests in New Zealand.
2. Ensure any submissions to external agencies are well informed and of a professional standard.
3. Ensure there is broad understanding that a peak body will require cooperation and representation of all recreational fishing interests, regardless of membership rules
4. Ensure widespread understanding that a peak body will require sustainable long-term funding, most likely from an impost or licence to be applied to recreational fishing participants.

Strategy

1. Oppose the establishment of a government funded peak body and avoid having the public voice subsumed by a handful of people.
2. Maintain and build on the close relationships that have been developed with a range of representative organisations over many years.
3. Ensure the hard earned and treasured status for NZSFC of ‘trusted source’ to other organisations is maintained, by continuing to provide well informed submissions, engagement and participation in all relevant fisheries management and environmental forums.
4. Actively support LegaSea in reaching out to other organisations and the wider public, to better inform them and build alliances.

5. Actively support the need for healthy debate and different perspectives to be tabled in fisheries management discussions, as these can contribute to balanced decisions based on the merit of the submissions made.

3.6 Official Information Act (OIA) Requests

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council will use the Official Information Act to make reasonable requests to source information that is relevant to NZSFC members' interests.

3.7 Catch reporting

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council acknowledges the need for recreational harvest data. The Council supports the collection of recreational harvest information that is accurate and can be verified.

Recreational harvest surveys

Goal

High quality harvest estimates for recreational fisheries.

Problem definition

1. A range of survey methods have been used to collect information from recreational fishers to estimate annual harvest by species. Often changes to the survey method have resulted in large changes to estimates across all species.
2. Technology has changed methods of contacting survey participants (mail, landline, smart phone) so surveys must evolve, but some basic principles of obtaining a representative sample of participants remain.
3. Apps on mobile phones are powerful and easily scalable but self-selection by participants and voluntary reporting do bias results.
4. Recreational harvest from a number of sought-after species has increase, as stock abundance and fishing technology has improved (kingfish, southern bluefin tuna etc). Regular harvest estimates help with management and allocation decisions.

Objectives

1. Ensure that recreational fishers and organisations maintain confidence in the harvest estimates and survey methods used in fisheries management.
2. Recreational fishers continue to provide complete and accurate information when surveyed.
3. Ensure survey methods are fit for purpose and avoid misinformation and confusion about harvest survey results.

4. Insist that data standards and peer review of methods and results is maintained.
5. Collect information to monitor recreational fishery performance, the harvest in tonnes, and the size or age distribution of fish kept.

Standards

Consideration needs to be given to most if not all of the following:

1. **Know the Sample Frame:** The survey will not cover all fishers, all boats, or all days of the year. If the survey results are being scaled up for the whole fishery, we need to know what sample frame will be used. See Table 1.
2. **Representative Sample:** To avoid a biased result the sample of fishers or days needs to be a fair representation within the sample frame. A random selection of fishers or days is best. Volunteers that self-select will be biased toward the most active (avid) fishers.
3. **Catch vs Harvest:** There needs to be a clear separation between fish kept (harvest) and catch which includes fish caught and released. Other information collected also needs to be fit for purpose.
4. **Low Attrition:** People who start the survey but do not continue can bias the results. They may no longer wished to participate in the study (resignations) or contact information changes or they are out of the country (suspended). Often attrition rate is a measure of how well the survey is tolerated by participants.
5. **Peer Review:** These must be a written research plan that can be peer reviewed prior to the survey starting. The Marine Amateur Fisheries Working Group is the best avenue for peer review.

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5. NZSFC will not support mandatory fisher registration or licencing for the primary purpose of providing cheaper harvest surveys.
5. NZSFC will challenge the validity of harvest surveys based on a self-selected sample of fishers with no defined sample frame, valid way of scaling results, or methods for reducing bias.
5. NZSFC accept trends in catch-per-unit-effort (CPUE) from avid fishers may be useful if consistently collected and regularly peer reviewed.

Survey types

Offsite surveys rely on contacting fishers and asking them to recall fishing events and catch. The National Panel Survey enrolls a random selection of about 7,000 fishers to the panel using Statistics NZ methods. They use a detailed computer assisted phone survey and provide a high level of support to maintain a high response rate and low attrition. This is the only method that covers all areas and platforms (land based, small boat, trailer and moored boat).

On-site surveys at boat ramps have developed a valuable time series of data for monitoring trends in recreational fishing effort, average weight by species, and harvest. The fish can be counted and measured by the interviewer and trip details are easily recalled by fishers. The Colin Murray ramp surveys in Napier and NIWA web camera and ramp surveys are good examples. For some specialist fisheries that are predominantly accessed by boat, on-site surveys provide acceptable harvest estimates.

Data collected on gamefish landed and tagged and released by NZSFC clubs has proved valuable for research and advocacy for billfish and tuna. Clubs will be encouraged to maintain good catch records and supply information to Council at the end of each season. A streamlined approach to this is needed.

There will be some use of apps or web forms to supplement data collected in structured surveys.

Table 1: Attributes of some of the survey methods discussed above.

Survey	National Panel Survey - NRB	Aerial-Access - NIWA	Access census - BWMR	National southern bluefin tuna - BWMR	Regional Phone App
Survey method	Off-site SMS and phone survey of panellists	Aerial count of boats fishing plus boat ramp catch	Coverage of all launch sites and marinas	Ramp Waihou Bay and Club records, Charter boat reports, s.111	Off-site self-reported catch
Sample frame	All NZ residents 15 years and older, all platforms	365 days in the year Boat-based harvest	365 days in the year Boat-based harvest	Ramp survey scales to total trailer counts at Waihou Bay	People with smart phones
Sample area	Main Islands of New Zealand	Fisheries Management Area 1	Western Bay of Plenty	New Zealand	South Island ?
Primary sampling unit	Meshblock, a small statistical unit of dwellings	Random selection of survey days in four strata	Random selection of survey days in four strata	Trailer counts at Waihou Bay. All year charter boat catch	Self-selected fishers that register and download the App
Other sampling units	Dwelling Then one randomly chosen fisher per dwelling, if any. Also sample of non-fishers	Maximum count of boats fishing from the air and creel surveys at 21 main access points	Survey at all boat access points (46) in the survey area	Phone survey of South Is SBT fishers. Unscaled catch	? unknown
Sample size	7013 fishers 1780 non fishers	45 days 19,856 boats interviewed	45 days 11,346 boats interviewed	Various	?

Sample intensity	7099 fisher respondents from a survey estimate of 695,000 fishers (1.02%)	12% of days	12% of days	Various	? unknown
Species with harvest estimates	Almost all 87 +	Snapper, kahawai, trevally, gurnard, tarakihi	Rock lobster, scallops, kahawai, gurnard	Southern bluefin tuna	? Partial blue cod, and paua harvest reported
Complemented data	Average fish weight from national boat ramp survey	Panel survey proportion of fish (by species) caught with land-based or set line methods in FMA1	Panel survey proportion of fish by boat-based methods outside the survey area and by land-based methods	Club weigh station records. Amateur Fishing Charter Vessel records	?

4. Area Management

4.1 Marine Reserves

- a) The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council is not opposed to the establishment of marine reserves in situations where it has been clearly established that a need for special protection exists. This should not include average or typical examples of marine habitats, but rather areas that are "particularly fragile and/or vulnerable to a range of potential impacts and enforcement is more practical than other mechanisms." The onus should be on the proposer to justify the need for marine reserve status.
- b) Justifying the establishment of reserves by arguing the benefits of spillover effects, genetic variation and regeneration of juvenile fish are extremely tenuous arguments at best, which we do not support. Whatever the possible benefits, marine reserves cannot be justified as fisheries management tools.
- c) The nature of our fishing activities utilises many of our offshore islands, many of which appear to be targeted for marine reserve status. The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council will vigorously oppose any marine reserve proposal that attempts to take the total area around any offshore island, such as has occurred at the Poor Knights. Such action seriously disadvantages our members. If marine reserve status can be justified in the case of any offshore island, it must follow the basic pattern of the Tuhua (Mayor Island) reserve, where only a portion of the waters are reserved for "no take", such compromise to be reached through genuine negotiation between our members and other stakeholders.
- d) That all marine reserves applications have had ample notification in a timely manner to enable meaningful submissions and consultation by the public, affected New Zealand Sport Fishing Council clubs and the Council itself.

4.2 Aquaculture

- a) As new and improved technologies are found increasing demand is going to be made on our coastline and offshore waters for space to carry out aquaculture. While the NZSFC is not against all aquaculture development, the allocation of public water space to a commercial entity which, will restrict or prohibit public access for the foreseeable future should be opposed until the greater benefit to the public is established. Each venture should be judged on its merits and consideration of the following should be addressed.
- i. Marine biosecurity is not threatened.
 - ii. Ability to enhance localised fishing.
 - iii. Removal of access to safe anchoring areas.
 - iv. Visual pollution aspects.
 - v. Hazard risk to navigation.
 - vi. Hazard risk and survivability of structures in storm conditions.
 - vii. Structure removal conditions established.
 - viii. Size of water area required.
 - ix. Source of feed and type and its interaction with other species.
 - x. Risk of disease and precautions taken.
 - xi. Effects on water quality.
 - xii. Product being farmed and effects on natural stock harvest of the same.
 - xiii. Type of application and its ability to cater for public use of the defined area and surrounds.
 - xiv. The effect on sea bed biodiversity.
- b) That all marine aquaculture applications have had ample notification in a timely manner to enable meaningful submissions and consultation by the public, affected New Zealand Sport Fishing Council Clubs and the Council itself.

4.3 Coastline Access Policy

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council recognises and wholly supports the rights of its members and the people of New Zealand to enjoy unimpeded access to our beaches and coastline for the purposes of launching vessels and the gathering of food.

4.4 Spatial planning/ Marine Protected Areas, RMA application

Goals

1. Prevent additional controls on recreational fishing under the RMA; (over and above current fisheries act)
2. Support controls on commercial bulk harvesting methods where there is an identified/proven issue with that method.

Strategy

1. Put pressure on the Regional Council's to require the appellants to provide proof/technical evidence that shows/supports the benefits of the proposed MPA as part of their initial application under the RMA. This should also apply to any central government parties
2. Focus on the overarching goals/challenges/outcomes rather than discussion going into micromanagement of issues
3. Consistent with point 2 above, put forward evidence on:
 - a. Commercial, recreational and customary fishing efforts in the areas of interest;
 - b. The relative ecological impacts of that fishing effort;
 - c. The social cultural and economic benefits of recreational fishing.

5. Management of Specific Fisheries and Methods

5.1 Marlin

The sale, commercial trade or transshipment of any marlin within NZ no matter where sourced, be prohibited by law

5.2 Sharks

The practice of finning of sharks in any form is prohibited.

5.3 Kingfish

Goal

To enhance the world class recreational fishery for kingfish in New Zealand.

Objectives

- a) Ensure there is an abundance of large kingfish around New Zealand to provide ecosystem services and high quality recreational fishing
- b) That kingfish stocks and the biomass of prey species on which they depend are maintained or increased.
- c) The economic, social and cultural importance of non-commercial fisheries for kingfish is described and recognised.

Strategy

- a) Promote the intrinsic value of large kingfish as part of a healthy marine ecosystem.
- b) Promote a high value sport fishery for kingfish as a priority for fisheries managers and decision makers.
- c) Promote conservative fishing methods including catch and release by recreational fishers and charter operators.
- d) Reduce release mortality by using best practice fishing methods, and promote the use of non-offset circle hooks when targeting kingfish with bait.
- e) Kingfish are an important species in fishing tournaments. Measure and release should be encouraged.
- f) Tagged kingfish should be greater than 75 cm and measured, nose to tail fork, on release and recapture with the location accurately recorded.
- g) Promote a bycatch-only allowance for commercial fishing and the use of Schedule 6 live release to remain within the TACC.
- h) Promote a ban on set nets on deep reefs and offshore pinnacles regardless of fisher's stated target species.
- i) The Ministry for Primary Industries must closely monitor and report annually kingfish catch by trawlers and purse seine vessels in New Zealand jack mackerel fisheries. Hot spots of kingfish catch need to be identified and protected by ensuring those vessels avoid these areas with the use of time/area closures, if necessary.

5.4 Tuna

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council will pursue a suitable tagging programme for yellowfin tuna to encourage higher release of these fish and give recognition to the angler.

5.5 Swordfish

National policy on broadbill swordfish

Goal

Maintain and enhance the world class sport fishery for swordfish in New Zealand

Objectives

1. Ensure that swordfish abundance is maintained in New Zealand and across the wider region.
2. Ensure the iconic status of swordfish as a premium international sport fish is widely recognised and allowed for in New Zealand.
3. Maintain catch rates of large swordfish (over 200 kg).
4. Avoid local depletion and serial depletion of areas.

Strategy

1. Effective and timely management response to low abundance in New Zealand waters.
2. Learn from international experience with serial depletion and effective management responses to local depletion.
3. Monitor the size structure and total landings of swordfish catch weighed by NZSFC clubs.
4. Encourage sport fishers to tag and release swordfish under 90 kg that are in good condition.
5. Negotiate catch spreading and gear separation with commercial fishers to avoid overfishing on the most accessible areas to sport fishers.

5.6 Kahawai

The Council will pursue a management change that has kahawai as a recreational only species.

5.7 Snapper

At the 2012 AGM the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council agreed to adopt the [Snapper 1 Policy](#).

5.8 Gurnard

In conjunction with the Hawke's Bay Sports Fishing Club, the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council adopted a policy applicable to the Gurnard 2 management area at the 2013 AGM and confirmed the [Gurnard 2 policy](#) at the 2014 AGM.

5.9 Crayfish

In conjunction with the Gisborne-Tatapouri Sports Fishing Club, the 2014 AGM of the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council adopted the [CRA3 Policy](#).

National policy on rock lobster fisheries

Goal

To restore rock lobster abundance in all regions of New Zealand

Objectives

1. Ensure that the vital ecosystem services provided by healthy populations of rock lobsters are restored.
2. Ensure the social, economic and cultural importance of non-commercial fisheries for rock lobster is widely recognised and allowed for.
3. Ensure that rock lobster abundance and availability can provide for the foreseeable needs of current and future generations.
4. Achieve a cooperative, balanced approach to management of commercial fisheries and excellent stakeholder engagement.

Strategy

1. Improve data quality and monitoring tools to track rock lobster abundance and ecosystem health.
2. Promote a range of spatial management tools that will ensure widespread ecosystem health.
3. Promote the use of commercial fishing effort limits (pot limits) to help prevent overfishing.
4. Remove the concession allowing undersize rock lobster to be landed by commercial fishers.
5. Improve reporting and validation by installing IEMRS and cameras on commercial boats.
6. Restructure the National Rock Lobster Management Group to include a wider range of interests and expertise.
7. Assist research into recreational harvest estimates and trends in the fishery.
8. Take an evidence-based approach to the effectiveness of management initiatives such as telson clipping.

5.10 Fisheries Management Area 1

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council adopted the [Fisheries Management Area 1 Policy](#) was at the 2014 AGM.

5.11 Set Netting

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council accepts set netting by recreational anglers as a legitimate form of recreational fishing for food.

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council advocates that set nets do not need attendance at all times except in specified areas when in the interests of public safety or demonstrably in the interests of endangered species preservation attendance is recommended.

5.12 Other Species

The Council monitors the introduction of new species into the ITQ system for acceptability by its members.

5.13 Southern Bluefin Tuna

Goal

To achieve the responsible development of a high value recreational fishery for southern bluefin tuna in New Zealand.

Objectives

1. Ensure that stock abundance increases in line with the southern bluefin tuna management plan and New Zealand's international obligations.
2. Ensure the social, economic and cultural importance of non-commercial fisheries for southern bluefin tuna is widely recognised and allowed for.
3. Achieve a cooperative, balanced approach to management of commercial fisheries and excellent stakeholder engagement.

Strategy

1. Distribute information on best practice fishing techniques and fisheries management obligations for southern bluefin tuna.
2. Promote a daily bag limit of 1 fish per person in the North Island and 2 per person in the South Island.
3. NZSFC clubs will encourage fishers to weigh or report southern bluefin tuna that are kept and tag fish that are released.

4. Represent the views of recreational tuna fishers in fisheries management and government forums.

5.14 Reef fish

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council agreed on a policy for pink maomao at the 2019 AGM. A revision is required to include protections for additional reef species that are being targeted at levels beyond reasonable recreational needs.

At the 2021 AGM the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council supported the following policy amendments -

1. The addition of pink maomao, blue maomao, granddaddy hāpuku, pigfish and wrasses, to the '[Sale of Reef Fish' schedule](#) which reads 'No person shall sell or possess for sale any species of fish taken from the Auckland Fishery Management Area that is specified....'
2. Given the low productivity and increasing commercial and recreational demand for these species, a recreational daily bag limit of three (3) of any of these fish per person applies in the Auckland Fisheries Management Area.
3. The maximum of 3 of any of these species is to be included within the amateur daily bag limit of 20 mixed fin fish per person, per day.

5.15 Hāpuku & Bass

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council agreed on a policy for hāpuku and bass at the 2020 AGM. A revision is required to enable a reduction of catch below current levels and prohibit targeting. The revised policy of 2021 is a more precautionary approach to managing hāpuku and bass.

Goal

Restore abundance of hāpuku and bass in New Zealand waters.

Problem definition

Hāpuku were once abundant in a wide range of depths in New Zealand, but were overfished by the time the quota management system was established in 1986. A lack of any effective management since then means it is easily forgotten how prolific they once were.

New technology and fishing gear have, until recently, helped maintain catches by steadily exploiting more distant and deep grounds where bass have also been over-fished.

Commercial catches in hāpuku and bass areas 1 and 2 (HPB1 and HPB 2) have been steadily declining and there is cross-sector support for urgent action to rebuild stocks.

Objectives

1. Rebuild hapuku and bass populations in New Zealand to 50% of the unfished biomass.

2. Ensure robust breeding populations are maintained in selected areas.
3. Maintain a high value niche fishery for commercial, recreational and customary fishers.

Strategy

Urgent

1. Reduce the Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC) in HPB 1 and HPB 2 below current catch levels and prohibit targeting to ensure hāpuku and bass are taken as bycatch in commercial and non-commercial fisheries.
2. Reduce the daily bag limit for recreational fishers to 2 per person per day during the rebuild phase.
3. Set a hāpuku accumulation limit for fishers on charter boats and private vessels to 3 fish per person, per multi-day trip.
4. Limit the number of hooks used by recreational fishers to 2 hooks per line.
5. Close large areas of reef to all bottom fishing for 10 years where local depletion has or is occurring. Full Rāhui or closure under regulation would help compliance. Select the most useful closures, not the least fished areas, and encourage high levels of support and compliance.
6. **NZSFC club committees or Zone members to recommend suitable areas to be closed to all bottom fishing to help rebuild hāpuku and bass populations in their region.**
7. Start a series of monitoring projects:
 - a. Collect length and location (approx.) of catch by commercial and charter boats.
 - b. FNZ initiated longline survey on fixed sites and age catch. Repeat to show trends.
 - c. Set lines with breakaway hook tags (fish not brought to surface) to track movement.
 - d. Determine baselines and relative management objectives.

Medium Term

1. Separate species reporting and management of hāpuku and bass.
2. Apply Rescue Fish principles to maintain a high value niche commercial fishery, without open access, once the rebuild is achieved.
3. Develop a cross-sector agreement on monitoring and a hāpuku catch management system, at a local or regional level.

5.16 Bronze whaler sharks

Goal

To fish successfully without undue interference from bronze whaler sharks.

Objectives

1. To reduce predation by bronze whalers on fish hooked by recreational fishers.
2. To avoid encouraging bronze whalers to hang around fishing boats.
3. To collect information and develop strategies to avoid losing hooked fish to bronze whalers.

Bronze whalers occur in the North Island and top of the South Island however, the following strategies could also apply to mako and blue sharks in other areas.

Strategy

1. Observe and learn how to avoid attracting sharks when recreational fishing.
2. Do not process fish or discard fish waste in the area you are fishing.
3. Do not use burley in areas where bronze whalers are likely to be.
4. Move away from an area if sharks are around, or your catch has been taken by a shark.
5. Tag and release bronze whalers if caught and recover tags if recaptured, to collect information on movement patterns and residency times.
6. Create a “notice board” for fishers to report the date and location of predation by bronze whalers to help warn others.

5.17 Scallop Dredging Policy

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council supports measures to reduce bottom contact fishing methods that have dredged the seabed environment and productive ecosystems for many years.

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council:

1. Promotes low impact scallop harvesting methods such as selective hand gathering by diving where possible.
2. Opposes non-selective dredging of scallop beds by commercial and recreational fishers.
3. Supports exemptions for dredging in specific areas where it is proven to have low impact on benthic communities.

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council considers that recreational dredging is acceptable in areas where commercial dredging occurs, and acknowledges that there are areas where dredging is the only feasible option when there are:

1. High tidal/current flow
2. Low water visibility
3. Depth over 30 metres

4. Dredges without tines and/or equipped with a pressure plate

5.18 Bluenose Policy

Goal

Restore abundance of bluenose in New Zealand to 50% of unfished levels.

Objectives

1. Rebuild bluenose populations in areas that have been depleted.
2. Ensure robust breeding populations are maintained.
3. Maintain a high value niche fishery for commercial, recreational and customary fishers.

Strategy

Urgent

1. Update bluenose commercial catch per unit effort and stock assessment by region.
2. Encourage fishers to limit bluenose catch to no more than three per person per day. Current daily bag limit is five per day.
3. Produce a FishCare guide for bluenose fishers and include information to enable accurate identification of both bluenose and ocean blue-eye species.
4. Review fine scale catch data and close some areas to all bottom fishing for a period where local depletion has or is occurring.
5. NZSFC club committees or Zone members to recommend suitable areas to close to all bottom fishing to help rebuild the bluenose population in their region.

Medium Term

1. Introduce a management system at a local or regional level.
2. Apply Rescue Fish principles to maintain a high value niche fishery, without open access.

6. Animal Welfare, Minimising Impacts

6.1 Animal Welfare

Commonly accepted recreational fishing methods are currently exempt from the NZ Animal Welfare Act. The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council nevertheless accepts that it should show guidance on best practise on fish welfare even where these are in conflict with commonly accepted fishing methods and techniques. It is only with knowledge of what is best practise for fish welfare will changes to methods and techniques be made that enable us to replace the less desirable methods.

Gaining wide fisher acceptance will require the development of methods that equal or improve catch rates and welfare of the targeted fish. The Council will also develop public surveys when necessary to gauge if collective public opinion indicates that a particular practice is no longer acceptable.

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council recognises the "[Welfare of fish during recreational fishing and after release](#)" document as written by Dr PS Davie and RK Kopf as its referral document for best practise of fish welfare.

Most recommendations of the fish welfare document are readily accepted as this improves survival of released fish or eating qualities of kept fish. A notable exception is the practise of retaining and using fish live for baiting. As societal attitudes evolve this will need further consideration by the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council.

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council, in conjunction with its NZ IGFA representatives, fishing media contacts and known fishing celebrities will develop and promote best practice methods.

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council will, when suitable alternatives or better solutions to best practice are found, introduce these as recommended or compulsory requirements as necessary to our rules.

6.2 Jimi or Spiking

Iki Jimi spiking your catch is now permitted by the IGFA and the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council when claiming a World or National record catch. It is also permitted when claiming NZSFC national, tournament or club recognition.

Not all fish should or can be Iki Jimi spiked for scientific, welfare or safety reasons.

The following methods for dispatching fish are those recommended as the NZSFC's policy -

1. The only fish that should be Iki Jimi straight from the water is snapper - all others that can be, should be, stunned first.
2. The popularly caught fish that can be Iki Jimi spiked after stunning are –
 - a. all the tunas;
 - b. kingfish;
 - c. kahawai;

- d. mahimahi; and wahoo.
3. Stunning is achieved by a single blow to the top the head just behind the eyes.

Methods

1. **Tunas, yellowtail kingfish, and kahawai** - after stunning then can be Iki Jimi spiked in the top of the head about 1cm to 2cm behind the eyes, depending on their size.
2. **Snapper** - can be Iki Jimi spiked in the slight depression above and behind the eye on a 45° angle forward.
3. **Marlin and Sharks** - should not be Iki Jimi spiked because of skull protection of their small sized brain. They are also both too dangerous to handle.
4. **Sharks** - should be stunned and may take several blows.