

Charter Boat Association
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Department of Conservation
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Submission not in support of the Hauraki Gulf Marine Protection Proposals

Submitters

1. The NZ Charter Boat Association represents and provides a voice New Zealand's Charter Boat Operators, advocating for a bountiful marine environment, the promotion of New Zealand as a high-value, low-impact international and local tourist fishing destination.

Submission

2. As charter operators, we acknowledge there are environmental issues within the Marine Park. **Therefore, we offer the following recommendations:**
 - a. We recommend that DOC and FNZ invest in a more comprehensive analysis of the economics of charter vessels and tourism operators in the Marine Park and consider this data in the Revitalising the Gulf process.
 - b. We endorse the use of localized management tools, such as an Ahu Moana approach. This would mean fishing impacts can be mitigated through a variety of other tools including reductions in daily bag limits, rāhui, or the removal of destructive fishing techniques. These are solutions that we are already supportive of.
3. Saltwater fishing is one of the most popular outdoor activities in New Zealand. To support this there are secondary industries comprising of retailers, manufacturers, wholesalers, and support services, working to help ensure fishers enjoy their day on the water. The financial contribution of the marine recreational fishing industry to New Zealand's economy is significant. See the appendix and supporting data from the New Zealand Marine Research Foundation.

4. Upcoming economic opportunities will be hindered. In the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park, there is a growing number of specialist saltwater flyfishing operations. New Zealand is just picking up on this international market sector and will likely see considerable growth if we have accessible and robust fisheries.
5. Charter Boats provide a service to the many Kiwis that cannot afford to buy a boat and get on the water and catch their own food.
6. Charter Boats are progressive in fish sustainability. Operators in the Charter Boat Association only catch enough fish to align with 'fish for a feed' principle and we are evolving with the times and focusing on showing Kiwis how fishing helps with self esteem, a sense of purpose and culture, mental health and overall wellbeing.
7. The Hauraki Gulf Marine Park is inseparable from regional tourism in areas such as Mangawhai, Leigh, Whitianga, Tairua, Pauanui, Whangamata, Waiheke and Coromandel township. Domestic and international tourists often visit the areas to go fishing. They rent accommodation, eat in restaurants and shop in our local retail outlets. The economic impact of a recreational fisher is substantially more than simply renting a charter boat or guide.
8. We are concerned about the apparent lack of economic research around the displacement of tourism both in the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park and on land bordering the Marine Park. Our concern is the adverse effect it will have on the region's ability to generate income and create employment opportunities. Specifically:
 - a. The impact on tourism providers and in particular charter vessel operators in the Marine Park.
 - b. It will create further economic turmoil for local coastal communities heavily reliant on tourism. Particularly as many are still struggling from economic losses created by the COVID restrictions between 2020-2022.
9. Because of COVID international tourism has waned. Now, Tourism NZ is investing significantly to attract international visitors back to New Zealand. For many, charter operators are the only opportunity for international tourists to get out and fish. The proposals compromise our industry by closing off well-known areas for charter-based fishing, thus compromising our businesses.
10. Finally, as a sector, the economic benefit of every fish we harvest is substantially more than the commercial fishing industry. Particularly with international tourists who spend thousands and the entire event is experiential. They can't take the fish with them so normally fish are caught and released with harvest being kept to a minimum of what can be eaten in the coming days.

Additional Information

A research survey from 2014-15 highlighting the economic contribution recreational fishing has in New Zealand has some data bringing greater awareness around the role of Charter operators in the New Zealand economy. See the following points and **Table 1** in the appendix.

11. More than 375,000 New Zealand residents fished marine waters in the Upper North Island region (Figure 1), spending more than 1.71 million days fishing.
12. Around 76% of fishers were boat-based, adding up to 1.18 million days fishing.
13. Roughly 43% of the international visiting fishers (47,000) fished in the Upper North Island (Table 1). Approximately 16,000 travelled for the primary purpose of saltwater fishing and 6,400 of those fishers hired a charter boat service.
14. The annual trip-related economic contributions in the north half of the North Island (North Cape down to Taranaki region and Gisborne region) can be found in the below table (table 2). The direct contribution of New Zealand resident marine fisher spending on trip-related goods and services in the Upper North Island was \$124 million per annum in 2014-15. See **Table 2** in the appendix.
15. The total economic contributions stimulated by resident and international fishers trip-related spending are noteworthy (Table 2). Collectively, the total annual contribution to the New Zealand economy by marine recreational fishing activities in the Upper North Island includes \$343 million in output, \$148 million in value added (GDP) benefits plus 2,000 jobs and household income of \$73 million.
16. Charter Vessel catch reporting data is readily available and accessible. See [here](#).
17. Most 88% of charter vessel catch in the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park is snapper, a species that is abundant in this area.

Appendix

Table 1. Participation in marine fishing among international tourists visiting the Upper North Island

	All visiting fishers	Fishing as a primary purpose of visit	Fishing as a secondary purpose of visit
Total international marine fishers	60,842	15,707	45,135
International visitors using a charter boat service	24,832	6,411	18,421
International visitors not using a charter boat service	36,010	9,296	26,714

Table 2. Total economic contributions of trip-related, per annum spending on marine fishing in the Upper North Island by residents and international visitors

Trip-related spending*	Direct contributions	Indirect & induced contributions	Total contributions
New Zealand residents			
Direct spending	\$175,054,155		
Output	\$123,610,598	\$135,493,756	\$259,104,354
Value Added (GDP)	\$47,554,166	\$63,048,976	\$110,603,142
Employment	909	600	1,509
Income	\$28,015,870	\$26,039,395	\$54,055,265
New Zealand visitors			
Direct spending	\$50,098,338		
Output	\$39,744,883	\$43,887,708	\$83,632,591
Value Added (GDP)	\$17,408,382	\$20,311,765	\$37,720,147
Employment	385	196	581
Income	\$10,624,316	\$8,327,441	\$18,951,756
Trip-related spending by all fishers			
Direct spending	\$225,152,493		
Output	\$163,355,481	\$179,381,464	\$342,736,945
Value Added (GDP)	\$64,962,548	\$83,360,741	\$148,323,289
Employment	1,294	796	2,090
Income	\$38,640,186	\$34,366,836	\$73,007,021

*Direct spending values reflect consumer-based prices. Prior to applying the economic multipliers, these values were adjusted to exclude import leakages and the goods & service tax. All output, value-added, employment, and income values reflect the contributions based on the adjusted direct spending.