



# Fisheries New Zealand

Tini a Tangaroa



## Hauraki Gulf Fisheries Plan



**Foreword (minister)**



## **Table of Contents**

- 1. Overview**
  - 1.1. Purpose and Rationale**
  - 1.2. Scope**
  - 1.3. Legal Status**
  - 1.4. Operating Context**
  - 1.5. Ecosystem-based Fisheries Management**
- 2. Desired Outcomes, Management Objectives and Management Actions**
  - 2.1. Desired outcomes**
  - 2.2. Management Objectives**
  - 2.3. Management Actions**
- 3. Implementing the Plan**
  - 3.1. Annual Operational Plan**
  - 3.2. Annual Review Report**
  - 3.3. Annual Planning with Tangata Whenua**
  - 3.4. Hauraki Gulf Fisheries Plan Advisory Group**
  - 3.5. Monitoring and Evaluation**

## **1. Overview**

### **1.1. Purpose and Rationale**

The Hauraki Gulf is as an area of special significance recognised by its designation as a marine park under the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Act 2000. The park's proximity to the largest population centre in the country means there is significant pressure on the park relative to the wider fisheries management area (FMA) 1 in which it sits. These uniquely heavy pressures justify a new approach to fisheries management within the HGMP: an area-based plan authorised under Section 11A of the Fisheries Act (the Act).

### **1.2. Scope**

This Hauraki Gulf Fisheries Plan (the Plan) sets outcomes and objectives for the management of fisheries in the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park (HGMP) and, using the tools and associated regulations under the Act, proposes management actions to achieve them.

This Plan is nested within the overarching framework that the recently updated Inshore Finfish Fisheries Plan provides for the management of inshore finfish fisheries. In the absence of an updated Inshore Shellfish Fisheries Plan, this Plan also includes objectives and actions related to shellfish management in the HGMP. It is intended to work alongside Iwi Forum Fisheries Plans developed through the Iwi Fisheries Forum(s).

### **1.3. Legal Status**

This plan will have legal effect once approved by the Minister for Oceans and Fisheries (the Minister). It then becomes a matter that the Minister must take into account before deciding to set or vary a sustainability measure or make any decision or recommendation under the Act to regulate or control fishing. Nothing in this plan diminishes the legal requirement to ensure the purpose and principles of the Act are met. If there are conflicts between any part of this plan and the legislative obligations as set out in the Act, then the legislative requirements unequivocally take priority.

### **1.4. Operating Context**

[to be added prior to the finalisation of the fisheries plan for public consultation – it will include a characterisation of commercial, recreational, and customary fishing catch and effort and an overview of the current fisheries management regime]

### **1.5. Ecosystem-based Fisheries Management**

Ecosystem-based fisheries management (EBFM) is an integrated approach to managing the competing values and uses of fisheries resources while maintaining the ecosystems that support them. At a high level, EBFM considers a whole-of-ecosystem approach to manage fisheries and marine resources, taking into account the interactions among species, the physical environmental, and human activities. Importantly, it also considers humans as integral parts of the ecosystem and aims to consider and integrate all stakeholder values. This Plan reflects fisheries management's intention to employ EBFM within the HGMP. Key focus areas contributing to EBFM include:

- Increasing our understanding of aquatic ecosystem functioning, including the trophic interactions among species;
- Improving the environmental performance of fishing, with a focus on protecting benthic habitats from the adverse impacts of bottom contact fishing, reducing bycatch and waste, and supporting the long-term viability of protected species;
- Facilitating tangata whenua and stakeholder participation in regional and local fisheries management to ensure their perspectives are heard and considered;
- Considering the interdependencies between specific outcomes for fisheries management and broader environmental, social, and economic outcomes.

Framing fisheries management within this context will lead to more inclusive engagement and governance processes and a more holistic focus on maintaining ecosystem integrity. Such an approach is intended to deliver better outcomes for our Treaty partners and New Zealanders. It also steps our management approach towards wider ecosystems based management, recognising the full array of interactions within an ecosystem.

## 2. Desired Outcomes, Management Objectives and Management Actions

The plan employs a hierarchical structure of desired outcomes, management objectives, and management actions. The desired outcomes represent the aspirational and long term visions the plan seeks to achieve. These outcomes are underpinned by interdependent management objectives designed to realise them. Management actions describe specific and discrete steps that will be taken to achieve each management objective.

### 2.1. Desired outcomes

#### 1. Healthy, functioning aquatic ecosystems that support sustainable fisheries.

- *A healthy aquatic ecosystem is one that supports the ongoing biological productivity of its components and is resilient in the face of disturbance, providing for sustainable fisheries. Maintenance of biological productivity requires preservation of the interlinkages among species and their physical environment.*

#### 2. Fisheries resources are at levels which meet the needs of treaty partners and stakeholders.

- *Fisheries resources are managed to customised targets that account for the needs and capabilities of the sector(s) with an interest in them. For fisheries resources that are of importance to the recreational and customary sectors at the regional HGMP scale, the targets may be higher.*

3. Inclusive and integrated regional governance of fisheries.

- *Governance structures will provide greater opportunities for mana whenua and regional stakeholders to input and participate in the management of fisheries resources at the regional HGMP scale. Coordination with local and regional councils, the Hauraki Gulf Forum, and other government agencies will be integrated into fisheries management efforts for the HGMP.*

## 2.2. Management Objectives

<p>Healthy, functioning aquatic ecosystems that support sustainable fisheries</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Protect marine benthic habitats from any adverse effect of bottom contact fishing methods</li> <li>2. Protect ecologically important marine habitats from any adverse effects of fishing</li> <li>3. Mitigate impacts of fishing on the marine food chain</li> <li>4. Reduce bycatch and fishing-related deaths of non-fish and protected species</li> </ol>
<p>Fisheries resources are at levels which meet the needs of treaty partners and stakeholders.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. At the QMA level, ensure all harvested stocks of wild marine species are at or above target levels</li> <li>2. Identify and resolve localised depletion of fisheries resources in the park</li> <li>3. Ensure appropriate management of shared stocks by improving characterisation of non-commercial fisheries</li> <li>4. Decrease the mortality of undersized fish caused by all harvesting sectors and methods</li> <li>5. Provide for sustainable recreational and customary harvest of intertidal species</li> </ol>
<p>Inclusive and integrated regional participation in the governance of fisheries</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure that local tikanga and matauranga, and other local knowledge, inform fisheries management</li> <li>2. Facilitate utilisation of customary tools to enable local governance</li> <li>3. Increase capacity and provide greater opportunities for stakeholder participation in fisheries management</li> <li>4. Engage effectively with local councils to address Council-managed issues that affect fisheries management</li> <li>5. Partner with others working to improve the condition of the Hauraki Gulf</li> <li>6. Facilitate co-management of intertidal ecosystems</li> </ol>

## 2.3. Management Actions

The management actions describe specific steps for achieving the management objectives. Some actions, while relevant to the Hauraki Gulf Fisheries Plan, are not specific to the HGMP and will be progressed at a national scale. These actions are denoted by a \*.

### Desired Outcome 1.

#### Healthy functioning aquatic ecosystems that support sustainable fisheries

##### Management Objective 1.1: Protect marine benthic habitats from any adverse effects of bottom-contact fishing methods

###### Management Action 1.1.1

- Exclude bottom trawling and Danish seining from the HGMP. Designate corridors suitable for bottom trawling and Danish seining and create exemptions from the ban for these corridors.

###### Management Action 1.1.2

- Exclude recreational scallop dredging from the HGMP.

###### Management Action 1.1.3\*

- Fund research into alternative methods for scallop harvesting.

###### Management Action 1.1.4

- Designate commercial dredging access areas based on the current commercial dredging footprint with a process to review if new scallop beds are found.

###### Management Action 1.1.5

- Facilitate transition to alternative commercial scallop harvest methods and enable innovation for other alternative harvest methods.

##### Management Objective 1.2: Protect ecologically important marine habitats from any adverse effects of fishing

###### Management Action 1.2.1\*

- Get the draft guidelines for applying section 9(c) (Habitats of Particular Significance for Fisheries Management) approved for use.

###### Management Action 1.2.2

- Using section 9(c) guidelines, identify habitats of particular significance for fisheries management in the Gulf and document in a habitats database.

###### Management Action 1.2.3

- Design and implement protection measures and monitoring regime for HoPSFM in park, prioritising according to estimated level of risk.

Management Action 1.2.4

- Collaborate with the Department of Conservation to implement marine protected areas within the Gulf for the protection of habitats and biodiversity.

Management Action 1.2.5

- Alongside implementation of marine protected areas, the concept of Special Management Areas will be explored including consideration of appropriate gear restrictions and a reporting framework.

**Management Objective 1.3: Mitigate the impacts of fishing on the marine food chain**

Management Action 1.3.1

- Scope and commission a research project to assess the impacts of forage fish (EMA, JMA, PIL) removals on the marine food chain in the Hauraki Gulf.

Management Action 1.3.2

- Review the TACs of important forage species in FMA 1 and modify as needed to ensure impacts of removals on the Gulf food chain are mitigated.

**Management Objective 1.4: Reduce bycatch and fishing-related-deaths of non-fish and protected species**

Management Action 1.4.1\*

- Devise policies and procedures for guiding FNZ's response to protected species bycatch notifications received through NFPS reports and, for seabirds, coordinate this process with the DOC Seabird liaison program.

Management Action 1.4.2

- Continue to support the black petrel working group.

Management Action 1.4.3

- Maintain the black petrel Electronic Monitoring Programme.

Management Action 1.4.4

- Establish a system to enable reporting of seabird and marine mammal bycatch by recreational fishers in the park.

Management Action 1.4.5\*

- Implement a programme to better estimate recreational fishing seabird bycatch.

Management Action 1.4.6\*

- Guided by the NPOA-seabirds implementation framework, continue to support the ongoing refinement, improvement, and uptake of seabird mitigation measures. Formalise a process for transitioning new mitigation



measures into legally accepted ones once research has demonstrated their effectiveness.

Management Action 1.4.7

- Scale up existing programmes focused on education and outreach targeted towards recreational fishers to reduce seabird bycatch.

Management Action 1.4.8\*

- As part of the review of the NPOA-sharks, support the review and adoption of shark handling and release guidelines.

Management Action 1.4.9

- To protect vulnerable reef species, implement netting restrictions on or around reef systems

**Desired Outcome 2.**

**Fisheries resources meet the needs of treaty partners and stakeholders.**

**Management Objective 2.1: At the QMA level, ensure all harvested stocks of wild marine species are at or above target levels**

Management Action 2.1.1

- Work with stakeholders (recreational, customary, commercial, non-take) to determine their fisheries resource needs and priorities within the HGMP.

Management Action 2.1.2

- Identify and prioritise stocks for management interventions. Input these recommendations to annual sustainability round and research prioritisation processes.

Management Action 2.1.3

- Set management targets and TACs to achieve/restore abundance at stock levels.

Management Action 2.1.4\*

- To enable more responsive management, support changes to the Fisheries (Amateur Fishing) Regulations 2013 and section 297(1) of the Act to provide for recreational management controls to be set by the Minister through notice in the Gazette rather than through regulation.

Management Action 2.1.5

- Support development of reference points for the Coromandel scallop fishery and work with industry to formalise the voluntary CPUE limit rule management approach.

### **Management Objective 2.2: Address localised depletion of fisheries resources within the park**

#### Management Action 2.2.1

- Define and develop criteria for localised depletion.

#### Management Action 2.2.2

- Identify key stocks that may suffer from localised depletion within the HGMP. Of these stocks, identify which are utilised by all sectors and which are targeted primarily by non-commercial fishers.

#### Management Action 2.2.3

- For stocks at risk of localised depletion, develop criteria on a per-species or species group basis. Develop decision rules for more responsive management within the park.

#### Management Action 2.2.4

- For key stocks utilised by all sectors that suffer from localised depletion, explore voluntary removal agreements with industry, combined with monitoring using new ER/GPR data.

#### Management Action 2.2.5

- For key recreational/customary stocks that suffer from localised depletion, reduce recreational bag limits (species-specific and mixed) and/or prohibit bulk harvesting methods.

#### Management Action 2.2.6

- Advance scientific research on kina populations to improve understanding of the variation in their spatial distribution, density, and condition.

#### Management Action 2.2.7

- Facilitate the co-development of a kina management plan. The plan should address the environmental impacts of kina barrens, supporting Desired Outcome #1.

### **Management Objective 2.3: Ensure appropriate allocation of shared stocks by improving characterisation of non-commercial fisheries**

#### Management Action 2.3.1

- Require recreational fishing charter vessels to report all their catch in FMA 1.

#### Management Action 2.3.2

- Pilot an app for ACV reporting to improve timeliness and accuracy of reported data. Identify options for data validation.

#### Management Action 2.3.3

- Consider how ACV-reported data might be integrated with aerial overview and NPS harvest and effort estimates.

Management Action 2.3.4

- Work with iwi/ eventual Hauraki Gulf Fisheries Forum to improve customary reporting.

Management Action 2.3.5

- Explore options for improving catch and effort information for recreational fisheries in the Hauraki Gulf.

(Options could include: increasing the frequency, specificity, or coverage of existing recreational surveys in the Park; creating a park-specific recreational survey; or encouraging self-reporting. An angler registry for the Marine Park would provide a suitable reference frame.)

**Management Objective 2.4: Decrease mortality of undersized fish caused by all harvesting sectors and methods**

Management Action 2.4.1

- Analyse ER disposal and SNX/TAX reports to evaluate the effectiveness of existing management measures intended to decrease the mortality of undersized fish caused by the commercial sector.

Management Action 2.4.2

- Encourage recreational fisher groups to develop a 'move on' practice as to reduce incidental catch of snapper below the MLS.

- Progressing management action 1.2.3 will also support this objective.

**Management Objective 2.5: Provide for sustainable recreational harvest of intertidal species.**

Management Action 2.5.1

- Update baseline knowledge of intertidal species distribution and harvest.

Management Action 2.5.2

- Review management settings of intertidal shellfish harvest on the hard shore.

Management Action 2.5.3

- Adopt blanket seasonal closures for intertidal shellfish harvesting (i.e., no harvesting in summer).

Management Action 2.5.4

- Support community efforts to monitor/restore intertidal species. (relates to 3.6.1)

**Desired Outcome 3.**

**Inclusive and integrated regional participation in the governance of fisheries**

**Management Objective 3.1 Ensure that local tikanga and mātauranga, and other local knowledge, inform fisheries management**

Management Action 3.1.1

- Establish a collaborative HGMP Fisheries Plan Advisory Group to provide opportunities for regional participation in fisheries management in the Gulf.

Management Action 3.1.2

- Facilitate the formation and sustained operation of a Hauraki Gulf iwi fisheries forum.

Management Action 3.1.3

- Clearly communicate our research prioritisation and sustainability round processes and identify opportunities for stakeholder input (relates to 3.1.1).

Management Action 3.1.4

- Explore ways in which local knowledge can be used in fisheries science.

**Management Objective 3.2 Utilise customary tools to enable effective local governance**

Management Action 3.2.1

- Facilitate transition to kaimoana regulations.

Management Action 3.2.2

- Where rohe have been gazetted, support iwi in efforts to establish mātaimai, taiāpure.

**Management Objective 3.3 Increase capacity and provide greater opportunities for stakeholder participation in fisheries management**

Management Action 3.3.1

- Design a targeted outreach and communications strategy for fisheries stakeholders in the HGMP.

Management Action 3.3.2

- Invite industry and iwi forum reps, kaitiaki to attend fisheries science education program.

### **Management Objective 3.4 Engage effectively with regional councils and local boards to address Council-managed issues that affect fisheries management**

#### **Management Action 3.4.1**

- Incorporate a “local councils” component in the outreach and communications strategy (Management Action 3.1.1) for the HGMP.

#### **Management Action 3.4.2**

- Build and strengthen relationships with regional councils and local boards to enable network governance of complex issues that affect the Gulf.

### **Management Objective 3.5 Partner with others working to improve the condition of the Hauraki Gulf.**

#### **Management Action 3.5.1**

- Collaborate with DOC on efforts to develop, implement, and monitor a network of marine protected areas within the Gulf (see 1.2.4).

#### **Management Action 3.5.2**

- Actively participate in mussel reef restoration efforts and assist with protection of sites.

### **Management Objective 3.6 Facilitate co-management of intertidal ecosystems**

#### **Management Action 3.6.1**

- Assist in design and piloting of ahu moana projects that can support achievement of 1.2.3 (protecting HoPSFM) and 2.4.4 (sustainable intertidal harvest).

## **3. Implementing the Plan**

Implementation of the Plan will be delivered through the national annual planning and services delivery cycle described in the Inshore Fisheries Plan (Appendix 3). This annual cycle generates two key documents: The Annual Operational Plan (AOP); and the Annual Review Report (ARR). These will provide the vehicle to operationalise the management objectives and actions described in this plan and enable efficiencies across the broader inshore fisheries management services.

### **3.1. Annual Operational Plan**

For each year of the plan’s lifecycle, an Annual Operation Plan (AOP) for the HGMP will be prepared to set out the actions that will be undertaken during that financial year and, where possible, years two and three. The actions specified in the AOP will serve to implement the objectives set out in the Plan and other relevant planning documents.

To ensure Fisheries New Zealand continues to operate within available resources, all proposed services will be prioritised each year, informed by our engagement with Iwi and Māori and stakeholders as part of the annual planning cycle.

### 3.2. Annual Review Report

An Annual Review Report (ARR) for the HGMP will be prepared each year to assess the annual performance of the HGMP fisheries plan against the actions specified in the previous AOP and reports on progress towards meeting the management objectives outlined in the Plan.

The ARR process helps to identify gaps in performance and identify emerging issues for further analysis. This in turn enables new management actions and services, and necessary adjustments to existing services to be identified, for inclusion in the next HGMP AOP.



Figure 1: Fisheries New Zealand Annual Planning Cycle

### 3.3. Annual Planning with Tangata Whenua

[To be added following further engagement]

### 3.4. Hauraki Gulf Fisheries Plan Advisory Group

[Terms of Reference to be finalised]

### 3.5. Monitoring and Evaluation

[In discussion with Sustainable Seas regarding a project to develop a monitoring and indicator framework for the Hauraki Gulf based on EBFM principles]

## Legislative Context

The Act outlines the laws that relate to the governance of fisheries resources and how they should be managed, and recognises New Zealand's international obligations relating to fishing.

### **Treaty of Waitangi (Fisheries Claims) Settlement Act 1992:**

The Treaty of Waitangi (Fisheries Claims) Settlement Act 1992 (the Settlement Act) gives effect to the settlement of claims relating to Māori fishing rights. Obligations under the Settlement Act can be considered in two broad categories:

- Specific obligations relating to use – both commercial and non-commercial, and
- More general obligations relating to the right of tangata whenua to participate in fisheries management decisions and have their values and aspirations given particular regard.

The Minister has legal obligations [can expand on these] to iwi under the Fisheries Protocols that are attached to the Deed of Settlements.

The Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Act 2000 recognises the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park as being nationally significant. The purpose of this Act is to:

- a. integrate the management of the natural, historic, and physical resources of the Hauraki Gulf, its islands, and catchments;
- b. establish the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park;
- c. establish objectives for the management of the Hauraki Gulf, its islands, and catchments;
- d. recognise the historic, traditional, cultural, and spiritual relationship of the tangata whenua with the Hauraki Gulf and its islands; and
- e. establish the Hauraki Gulf Forum.

The Fisheries Act (s11) requires that, in setting or varying any sustainability measures in the Gulf, the Minister takes account of s7 and s8 of the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Act. These sections recognise the national significance of the life supporting capacity of the Hauraki Gulf, and define management objectives for its protection.

Other legislation which contributes to the management of the wider fisheries ecosystem include the:

- Resource Management Act 1991 which is New Zealand's primary legislation for managing the environment, including air, soil, fresh water and coastal marine areas;
- Wildlife Act 1953 which gives partial or full protection to all but one species of seabird; and
- Marine Mammal Protection Act 1978 which makes provision for the protection, conservation, and management of marine mammals within New Zealand waters.
- Marine Reserves Act 1971, which provides for the establishment of marine reserves which, aside from exceptions, exclude all forms of fishing.

## Strategic context

### Strategies, Standards and Policies

New Zealand Government has a number of strategies, standards and policies that provide further direction on how obligations with regard to fisheries will be met. The Plan's objectives, services and annual planning processes are designed to be consistent with these strategies, standards and policies. Where there are specific actions that need to be undertaken to deliver on these products, these will be reflected in the management actions in this Plan and captured in the National Inshore Finfish Annual Planning Framework.

**Table 1: Key strategies, standards and policies in operation**

Strategy, Standard or Policy	Description
<b>Treaty Strategy</b>	Is developed and agreed with Iwi and Māori and provides for input and participation, and consultation processes to meet Treaty obligations and legislative requirements. Key elements of the Strategy include support for Iwi Fisheries Forums and the development of Iwi Forum Fisheries Plans
<b>Harvest Strategy Standard</b>	Is a policy statement which provides guidance on setting fishery and stock targets and limits for stocks managed within New Zealand's Quota Management System (QMS).
<b>Quota Management System Introduction Process Standard</b>	Sets out a process for Fisheries New Zealand to identify stocks or species to be considered for QMS introduction.
<b>MPA Policy</b>	Provides a process for establishing a network of marine protected areas network utilising a range of management tools under the Marine Reserves Act 1971, the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Fisheries Act 1996.
<b>National Coastal Policy Statement</b>	Provide a guide for local authorities in their day to day management of the coastal environment.
<b>Regional Plans</b>	Developed by regional councils to assist them to carry out their functions in order to achieve the sustainable management purpose of the Resource Management Act. Regional councils have the purpose of protecting biodiversity and this could include some controls on fishing activity.
<b>National Plan of Action for Seabirds</b>	Is aimed at reducing the incidental catch of seabirds in New Zealand Fisheries and sets out high-level and medium-term objectives to achieve this.



<b>National Plan of Action for Sharks</b>	Sets out five-year goals and objectives, for maintaining the biodiversity and the long-term viability of all New Zealand shark populations.
<b>Snapper 1 Management Plan</b>	Sets out a rebuild plan and a range of measures to increase the snapper population in the SNA1 fishery.
<b>Sea Change Government Response strategy</b>	Sets out how the Government has responded to the Sea Change - <i>Tai Timu Tai Pari</i> - Hauraki Gulf Marine Spatial Plan. The Hauraki Gulf Fisheries Plan has been delivered as part of the Government's response to the Sea Change Tai Timu Tai Pari Marine Spatial Plan. [This can be discussed more once the final report is complete]
<b>Aquaculture strategy</b>	Sets out the Government's commitment to ensure aquaculture growth is environmentally sustainable and takes into account other uses and values of the coast and waterways. Also ensure iwi and broader Maori aspirations, including kaitiakitanga, are promoted.

Other government work programmes are exploring ways to strengthen and improve management tools that will influence the delivery of healthy and sustainable fisheries. These include:

- The Fisheries Change Programme, an MPI led programme to strengthen and modernise the way we manage our fisheries, ensuring their sustainability.
- Marine Protected Areas Policy reform [to be updated]
- Action for healthy waterways. This is a Government initiative led by the Ministry for the Environment to strengthen Government obligations to protect and restore our waterways.

Appendix 3: The Hauraki Gulf Fisheries Plan within National Planning Framework

