

Hauraki Gulf Plan 2023

March 2023

What's happened to the Hauraki Gulf?

The Hauraki Gulf Marine Park is one of New Zealand's most productive and biodiverse marine environments. Unfortunately, decades of overfishing and land run-off has damaged the Park's waters and the seabed. Now, many fish stocks are depleted.

FISHERIES PLAN

In 2021 the Government released the Revitalising the Gulf action plan to address the ongoing degradation of the Gulf's waters. A core component of the action plan devised by Fisheries New Zealand (FNZ) is the Hauraki Gulf Fisheries Plan.

FNZ's objective is to restore the health of the Hauraki Gulf marine environment. This is not achievable with the current Fisheries Plan because bottom trawling will still be permitted, in 'corridors', and commercial scallop dredging can continue if the fishery reopens.

Public consultation on the draft Fisheries Plan occurred between January and March 2023.

BOTTOM TRAWLING MUST GO

In March 2023 LegaSea collaborated with the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council, the New Zealand Angling & Casting Association, other organisations and individuals to develop an alternative plan.

Recommendations for the Minister for Oceans and Fisheries:

1. Ban bottom trawling, scallop dredging, and Danish seining in the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park.
2. Restore fish populations to a minimum of 50% of their estimated, natural level.
3. Designate the Marine Park as a separate area so catch limits can be better managed.
4. Integrate marine protection and fisheries management measures to restore biodiversity and fish abundance.

WHAT NEXT?

The Hauraki Gulf Alliance, a coalition of environmental and recreational fishing organisations, will continue advocating for an end to destructive mobile bottom contact fishing methods in the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park.

FNZ will consult on locations for trawl corridors mid-2023. The Minister will decide whether to proceed with the draft Fisheries Plan.

Any decisions must seek to prohibit bottom-contact fishing methods that destroy the seabed habitat, to better protect the whole ecosystem.

[Fisheries plan timeline](#)

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