

**FISHERIES
MANAGEMENT
POLICY
DOCUMENT**

**Current Version
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1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to record all the NZSFC fisheries management and research policy objectives.

Where the constitution of the NZSFC are in conflict with the policy document, the constitution will prevail. The Board will review the policy document on an annual basis and any changes must be approved by the AGM.

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.

2.2 Professional Expertise and Funding

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

The NZSFC will employ professional help to do our submissions and research for Government and Ministry meetings and papers.

2.3 NZRFC Recognition

The NZSFC withdrew its membership from the NZRFC at the 2007 AGM. It offers no direct recommendation to individual clubs and allows them to determine their own level of support of the NZRFC.

2.4 NZ Marine Research Foundation

Officially launched in 1999 (Incorporated 1996) the NZMRF 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 NZ 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 Council moved that 50 cents per member be a donation in addition to affiliation fees to assist the NZMRF. In 2012 this amount was increased to \$1 per adult member, with Juniors to donate \$.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

IGFA Representatives act as a liaison between sport fishers in their areas and IGFA headquarters. 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. NZSFC IGFA representatives are selected by IGFA and provide valuable service to the NZSFC in retaining continuity between the NZSFC and IGFA. They are appointed by IGFA after consultation with the existing representatives. Ideally, they 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 Council 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-
 1. The NZSFC has a general interest in the well being of the fish stocks of the open ocean.
 2. Has specific interest in the pelagic straddling stocks that frequent the NZ EEZ.
 3. All forms of drift nets should be banned.
 4. Attend and contributes to Pacific Ocean conferences that further the aims of this Council on pelagic fisheries research and management.
 5. 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-
 1. Pursue better defined rights and access of its members to take or utilise saltwater fish as recreational fishers.
 2. 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.
 3. Pursue the optimal recreational take of a sustainable fish resource.
 4. Encourage, educate and regulate its own members in the best utilisation of its share of the take.
 5. 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.
 6. Monitor new developments and legislation with the NZ fisheries management area to ensure the interests of its members are served.
 7. Support the research into the use of "Smart" fishing technology in commercial and recreational fishing practices.

3.2 Management of Specific Fisheries

The NZSFC 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

The Council strongly supports the Ministerial adoption of International best practice targets of a minimum of **50% unfished Biomass**".

3.3 Fisheries Management System Policy

- a) The NZSFC supports the research and study of fisheries management systems that will deliver abundant fisheries and a diverse marine environment.
- b) Fisheries Manifesto.
 - 1. Establish a Royal Commission of Inquiry into fisheries management and the Quota Management System.
 - 2. Amend the Fisheries Act 1996 to include an Allocation Principle. The Minister will afford non-commercial users a clear preference in any allocations.
 - 3. Remove mobile, bottom-contact industrial fishing methods such as trawling, seining and dredging from the inshore zone.
 - 4. Establish a separate, well-resourced Ministry of Fisheries.
 - 5. 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 NZSFC 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 Maori customary and recreational, and other fishing related mortality.

Catch shares for recreational and 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 by the Minister of Fisheries and not subject to the Quota Management System or fixed catch share scheme.

Principle:

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 TACC being set by the Minister, adequately provide 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, Maori 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, longstanding 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

Council will make reasonable requests to source information that is relevant to NZSFC members' interests

Reasoning: NZSFC FMMP saw fit to write a policy simple OIA policy

Due to the amount of work to get information from the OIA - Ministry of Fisheries advised that we reword them. Therefore, it was agreed that we have to continue to request information in line with this policy.

4. Area Management

4.1 Marine Reserves

- a) The NZSFC 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 utilizes many of our offshore islands, many of which appear to be targeted for marine reserve status. The NZSFC 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 NZSFC 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.
 1. Marine biosecurity is not threatened
 2. Ability to enhance localised fishing
 3. Removal of access to safe anchoring areas
 4. Visual pollution aspects
 5. Hazard risk to navigation
 6. Hazard risk and survivability of structures in storm conditions
 7. Structure removal conditions established
 8. Size of water area required
 9. Source of feed and type and its interaction with other species. We do not support the utilization of wild New Zealand caught forage fish to feed farmed fish. See forage fish policy.
 10. Risk of disease and precautions taken
 11. Effects on water quality
 12. Product being farmed and effects on natural stock harvest of the same.
 13. Type of application and its ability to cater for public use of the defined area and surrounds
 14. The effect on seabed bio-diversity
 15. Safe anchorage areas are not impinged / impacted.

- b) That all marine aquaculture applications have had ample notification in a timely manner to enable meaningful submissions and consultation by the public, affected NZSFC Clubs and the Council itself.

4.3 Coastline Access Policy

The NZSFC 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 etc

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:
 1. Commercial, recreational and customary fishing efforts in the areas of interest;
 2. The relative ecological impacts of that fishing effort;
 3. The social cultural and economic benefits of recreational fishing.

4.5 Ahu Moana Policy

Policy

- The NZSFC recognises Ahu Moana as a form of localised fine-scale spatial adaptive management and will offer assistance and encouragement to build relationships between local fishing clubs, communities and mana whenua.

Definition

- Ahu Moana is localised marine management by mana whenua and local communities.
- The managed area would generally extend from Mean High-Water Springs (the high-tide mark) out to 1 kilometre offshore. In some places, it would extend further to take in significant fisheries or places.
- In attempting to evolve fisheries management, new systems with more local and indigenous involvement need to be at the forefront.

- Communities need a solution to rebuild local abundance of marine life that avoids both the inflexibility of no-take High Protection Areas and Marine Protected Areas (marine reserves) and the ineffectiveness of management at the Quota Management Area level.
- Ahu Moana is a community-based alternative to no-take High Protection Areas.

Objectives

1. The NZSFC supports the application of Ahu Moana –
 - a. When engagement, participation and consultation are offered to community and relevant clubs to work alongside mana whenua.
 - b. To be included as a section in the Fisheries Act 1996.

Strategy

1. Build relationships between fishing clubs and mana whenua, to pave the way for future collaboration around localised fisheries management.
2. Support Ahu Moana management if it meets the above objectives, in public consultation, public awareness, and co-managing capacity.

Discussion

1. In the past the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council has demonstrated consistent collaboration with mana whenua.
2. Application of Ahu Moana aims to restore abundance and diversity of marine life in local waters and revitalise the mauri (see Glossary 1) of the area.
3. Ahu Moana may allow for application of special rules for recreational, customary harvest, and commercial fishing from the appointed area.
4. The bringing together of mātauranga Māori and local knowledge, including that of recreational and small-scale commercial fishers, alongside scientific data, can better provide responsive and adaptive management and strengthen mana whenua relationships with local communities in their shared spaces¹.
5. A steering committee would be established. It would include mana whenua, local commercial fishers, recreational fishers, divers and spear fishers and environmental concerns. This committee would be supported by subject matter experts from NIWA, MPI or DOC etc.
6. The committee would be responsible for developing a restoration plan addressing localised issues in the area. This may include a set of specific rules for boating, fishing and/or accessing the area. For example, most shellfish species are ideal for Ahu Moana application as they are sedentary, local species.

4.6 *Customary Fisheries management Tools Policy*

Policy

- The NZSFC recognises the suite of customary fisheries management tools, and we encourage our affiliated clubs to take any opportunity to engage and participate with mana whenua to further develop these tools.

Discussion

1. We have no confidence in the Quota Management System to bring the necessary timely and fine scale management responses required to restore the abundance of our nearshore marine environment.
2. Developing and nourishing good working relationships with mana whenua can only benefit the marine environment, fisheries, and long-term community relationships.
3. The Quota Management System is failing our intertidal and nearshore fisheries, not to mention the communities that depend upon them for their social and cultural well-being.
4. The public have been stripped of fine scale local management mechanisms.
5. Tangata whenua have had both their kaitiakitanga and manaakitanga obligations recognised in statute with the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi Fisheries Settlement Deed and subsequent legislation that enables **mātaitai and taiāpure** customary fisheries management mechanisms as well as the customary fishing regulations for Māori (and others who may be endorsed by the permit issuers - ngā kaitiaki) to provide for tangi and other important hui, occasions.
6. Māori have a strong connection with kai moana, and it is vital to satisfy their sacred obligation to manaaki manuhiri (provide proper hospitality for visitors)
7. **Rāhui** - is an age-old Māori practice used to regulate human activity for the future well-being of the people and natural resources such as fisheries. 'Rāhui' translates 'to prohibit, or a prohibition'. It is used in the form of restriction/ prohibition of a resource, area, or activity. In fisheries it is used to ban harvesting of a particular species and can also apply to ban harvesting from a specific area. Rāhui is not something taken lightly by kuia and kaumatua when being laid. This is a binding obligation on themselves and to breach it is unthinkable for those engaged.
8. However, rāhui is not binding or enforceable on the public or commercial fishing sector. This is where **Section 186a and 186b (South Island) two-year regulatory closures** may be applied for. These mechanisms are administered by well-established statutory processes whereby Fisheries New Zealand must consult with all affected parties, consider submissions, make recommendations to their Minister who then decides whether to approve such a closure. This process is renewable.

9. The NZSFC has had good experiences and outcomes working with mana whenua to implement mātaimai, rāhui and Section 186a closures.
10. A good example is the Ngāti Hei rāhui, which the NZSFC and LegaSea were raising public awareness around and supporting local iwi in spreading the word from 2020 onwards.
11. In 2021, we worked with Ngāti Pāoa to lay down rāhui around Waiheke for scallops, mussels, crayfish and pāua. This was followed by a Section 186a closure process.
12. As of 2021, we are working with Ngāti Manuhiri and local communities to achieve rāhui and S186a closure for scallops.
13. In the Bay of Islands, the Council and club have developed excellent relationships with mana whenua working together on the Te Puna mātaimai and the subsequent bylaw promulgation for no-take of mussels from the Black Rocks.
14. Ahu Moana is a form of localized management, a collaborative process between mana whenua and local communities. It is not a customary fisheries management tool, as its strength lies in the collaborative process between stakeholders. See NZSFC Ahu Moana Policy.

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

- a) The Council to 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

- a) The Council to pursue a management change that has Kahawai as a recreational only species.

5.7 Snapper

- a) At the 2012 AGM the NZSFC agreed to adopt the Snapper 1 Policy.

[HYPERLINK](#)

5.8 Gurnard

- a) A Gurnard Policy was adopted at the 2013 AGM and confirmed at the 2014 AGM.

[HYPERLINK](#)

5.9 Crayfish

- a) The CRA3 Policy was adopted at the 2014 AGM

[HYPERLINK](#)

- b) 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 FMA1

- a) The FMA1 Policy was adopted at the 2014 AGM

[HYPERLINK](#)

5.11 Set Netting

- a) The NZSFC accepts set netting by recreational anglers as a legitimate form of recreational fishing for food. The NZSFC 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

- a) 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 Pink Maomao

The NZSFC support the addition of pink maomao 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 in the following table (Appendix 1)'

Given the low productivity and increasing demand for pink maomao a bag limit of three pink maomao per person be adopted for the Auckland Fisheries Management Area. These to be included within the amateur bag limit of 20 mixed fin fish per person.

5.15 Hapuku & Bass

Goal

Restore abundance of hapuku and bass in New Zealand waters.

Hapuku were once abundant in a wide range of depths in New Zealand but were overfished by the time the quota 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 hapuku and bass areas 1 and 2 (HPB1 and HPB 2) have been steadily declining and there is across sector support for urgent action to rebuild stocks.

Objectives

- Rebuild hapuku and bass populations in New Zealand to 50% of the unfished biomass.
- Ensure robust breeding populations are maintained in selected areas.

Maintain a high value niche fishery for commercial, recreational and customary fishers

Strategy

Urgent

- Reduce the Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC) in HPB 1 and HPB 2 below current catch levels and prohibit targeting to ensure hapuku and bass are taken as bycatch in commercial and non-commercial fisheries.
- Reduce the daily bag limit for recreational fishers to (two) per person per day during the rebuild phase and two per person per day after that.
- Limit the number of hooks used by recreational fishers to (two) hooks per line.
- Set a HPB accumulation limit for fishers on charter boats and private vessels to (three) fish per multi day trip.
- Close large areas of reef to all bottom fishing for 10 years where local depletion has or is occurring. Full Rahui 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.
- NZSFC club committees or Zone members to recommend suitable areas to be closed to all bottom fishing to help rebuild hapuku and bass populations in their region.
- Start a series of monitoring projects:
- Collect length and location (approx.) of catch by commercial and charter boats.
- FNZ initiated longline survey on fixed sites and age catch. Repeat to show trends.
- Set lines with breakaway hook tags (fish not brought to surface) to track movement.
- Determine baselines and relative management objectives.

Medium Term

- Separate species reporting and management of hapuku and bass.
- Apply Rescue Fish principles to maintain a high value niche commercial fishery, without open access, once the rebuild is achieved.
- Develop a cross sector agreement on monitoring and HBP 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

- To reduce predation by bronze whalers on fish hooked by recreational fishers.
- To avoid encouraging bronze whalers to hang around fishing boats.
- 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

- Observe and learn how to avoid attracting sharks when recreational fishing.
- Do not process fish or discard fish waste in the area you are fishing.
- Do not use burley in areas where bronze whalers are likely to be.
- Move away from an area if sharks are around, or your catch has been taken by a shark.
- Tag and release bronze whalers if caught and recover tags if recaptured, to collect information on movement patterns and residency times.
- 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

Reasoning:

NZSFC FMMP were requested to write a policy for the Scallop issues

5.18 Bluenose Policy

Proposal

Goal

Restore abundance of bluenose in New Zealand to 50% of un-fished levels.

Objectives

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

Strategy

Urgent

- Update bluenose commercial catch per unit effort and stock assessment by region.
- Encourage fishers to limit bluenose catch to no more than three per person per day. Current daily bag limit is five per day.
- Produce a FishCare guide for bluenose fishers and include bluenose vs ocean blue-eye ID.
- Review fine scale catch data and close some areas to all bottom fishing for a period where local depletion has or is occurring.
- 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
- Introduce a management system at a local or regional level.
- Apply Rescue Fish principles to maintain a high value niche fishery, without open access

5.19 Reef Fish Policy

Proposer: Richard Baker

Seconder: Scott Macindoe

Speaker at AGM: Richard Baker

The NZSFC support the addition of the following species: 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 in the following table (Appendix 1)'

pink maomao, blue maomao, grand daddy hapuku, pigfish / wrasses

Given the low productivity and increasing commercial & recreational demand for these species, a daily bag limit of three of any of these fish per person be adopted for the Auckland Fisheries Management Area. The maximum of 3 of any of these species is to be included within the amateur daily bag limit 20 mixed fin fish per person.

The species need protection - these are being targeted.

Recent media exposure has highlighted the issue, with what could only be illegal commercial levels of harvesting from recreational boats.

5.20 Tarakihi

- Restore tarakihi abundance around New Zealand to 50% unfished biomass
 - The stocks will be rebuilt and maintained at or above the target level in each fisheries management area.
 - The stocks can meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations; and
 - Those needs have been adequately identified and allowed for.
1. A 45% reduction of the Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC), subject to flexibility. Reduce the eastern tarakihi TACC in 2022 to ensure rebuild targets are reached by 2032.
 2. Divide TAR 1 into two separate management areas into separate east and west coast Quota Management Areas.
 3. Protect juvenile tarakihi by applying a 'move on' rule if more than 10% (by number) are being caught in an area.
 4. Line fishers to use circle hooks that are size 4/0 or larger for tarakihi to lessen likelihood of gut-hooking.
 5. Support a mixed amateur daily bag limit, which includes tarakihi, of 20 finfish per person in the North Island, and 30 finfish per person in the South Island. The South Island clubs do not support any change to the status quo.

5.21 Pāua

Monitor and support local initiatives to enhance customary and recreational fisheries, while sustaining a niche commercial fishery.

Strategy

- Apply localised fine-scale spatial management to pāua fisheries nationwide.
- Support applications for customary management controls proposed by hapu.

5.22 Forage Fish

The NZSFC does not support industrial harvest of forage fish for low value export or to feed reared fish in aquaculture.

Strategy

1. Adopt conservative measures when adjusting catch allowances.

2. Develop public awareness material designed to help the public understand the critical importance of these species in the ecosystem and how overharvest risks cascading impacts on other predatory species such as kingfish, marlin, and tuna.
3. Apply an ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management, as forage fish are a vital component of marine food webs.
4. Support an amateur daily bag limit of 50 forage fish, excluding large blue mackerel, skipjack tuna, kahawai, or mullet species.

5.23 Red Gurnard Policy

Policy

- Restore red gurnard abundance around New Zealand
- The stocks will be rebuilt and maintained at or above the target level in each fisheries management area.
- The stocks can meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations; and
- Those needs have been adequately identified and allowed for.
- Improve yield per recruit by reducing the mortality of small fish.
- Phase out the use of trawl gear in inshore waters.
- Encourage an ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management and human induced impacts on our marine environment.

Strategy

1. Divide the GUR 1 Quota Management Area at North Cape to recognise that there are separate gurnard stocks on the east and west coast of the North Island with different management requirements.
2. Promote management changes to restore gurnard abundance using best available information. This includes setting both a target stock biomass of 50% of the unfished stock size and a rebuild time frame.
3. Stop killing juveniles. For the past 25 years it has been common commercial practice, when targeting gurnard, to discard gurnard below the “market size” even though there has been no minimum legal size for commercial fishers.
4. Undertake regular fishery independent trawl surveys to establish a time series of data to monitor stock abundance, estimate biomass and age a representative sample of population.
5. Oppose the use of mobile bottom contact fishing methods, including trawling, that causes damage to the benthic environment and reduces productivity.
6. Oppose the use of CPUE based management targets and decision rules. Significant changes to commercial fishing gear, techniques and technology, and market demand over the last 15 years means that gurnard Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) is not an adequate measure of relative abundance for making management decisions.
7. Apply a precautionary approach when setting to fisheries management settings to account for the mixed species fishery that dominates commercial gurnard catches.
8. The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council will initiate research and consultation with recreational fishers about measures that could be embraced to reduce fishing related mortality, to better look after the environment and to accelerate the rebuild of gurnard stocks. This includes the

FishCare guides with practical advice and voluntary measures to help recreational fishers achieve these outcomes.

9. The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council will encourage recreational fisheries to cooperate with fisheries harvest surveys that are fit for purpose and have been peer reviewed.

5.24 Commercial Spearfishing Policy

NZSFC actively supports members, individuals and organisations seeking to promote sustainable fishing techniques that protect reefs and other benthic marine environments from physical damage and wastage due to unintended catch.

Policy

1. No gill netting of fish around offshore reefs and outcrops.
2. Support commercial fishers transitioning away from gill netting reef species and adopting the more selective harvest technique of spearfishing, on the basis that:
 - a. Adoption does not negate the need for ongoing fisheries management; and
 - b. The declining biomass of reef species due to overallocation and overharvest needs to be addressed by effective fisheries management.
3. To minimise the risk of conflict between commercial and non-commercial spearfishers, spatial controls defining the area where commercial spearfishing can occur must apply.

Objectives

1. To extend the protection from gill netting applying to the 19 species named in the Sale of Reef Fish Schedule applying to the Auckland and Kermadec Fisheries Management Area, to all of New Zealand's Fisheries Management Areas¹;
2. Enable spearfishing to encourage selective fishing, while excluding specific species from harvest;
3. Reduce wastage from gill netting around reefs by encouraging more selective harvesting techniques such as spearfishing; and
4. Reduce the potential for spatial conflict by defining areas where commercial spearfishing is prohibited.

6. Animal Welfare, Minimising Impacts

6.1 Animal Welfare

Commonly accepted recreational fishing methods like commercial fishing are currently exempt from the NZ Animal Welfare Act. The NZSFC 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. To gain wide fisher acceptance will require the development of methods that equal or improve catch rates and welfare of the targeted fish.

¹ Fisheries (Auckland and Kermadec Areas Commercial Fishing) Regulations 1986 s20E Sale of Reef Fish Schedule.

The Council should also develop public surveys when necessary to gauge if collective public opinion indicates that a particular practice is no longer acceptable.

The NZSFC 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. The NZSFC in conjunction with its NZ IGFA representatives, fishing media contacts and known fishing celebrities will develop and promote best practice methods. The NZSFC will, when suitable alternatives or better solutions to best practice are found, introduce these as recommended or compulsory requirements as necessary to our rules.

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 NZSFC.

6.2 Jimi or Spiking,

Iki Jimi spiking your catch is now permitted by the IGFA and the NZSFC when claiming a World or National record catch. It is also permitted when claiming NZSFC national, tournament or club recognition. However not all fish should or can be Iki Jimi spiked for their scientific welfare and safety reasons. The following methods for dispatching fish are those recommended as the NZSFC’s policy.

The only fish that should be Iki Jimi straight from the water is snapper - all others that can be, should be stunned first. The popular caught fish that can be Iki after stunning are all the tunas, kingfish, kahawai, mahimahi and wahoo. Stunning is achieved by a single blow to the top the head just behind the eyes.

Method.

Tunas, yellowtail kingfish, and kahawai- after stunning then can be Iki Jimi spiked in the top of the head about 1 to 2cm behind the eyes depending on their size.

Snapper can be Iki Jimi spiked in the slight depression above and behind the eye on a 45° angle forward. 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. Sharks should be stunned and may take several blows.

6.3 Commercial Spearfishing

See clause 5.24 - Management of Specific Fisheries and Methods