



Fisheries New Zealand

Tini a Tangaroa

# FISHERIES NEW ZEALAND SUSTAINABILITY REVIEW

## ROCK LOBSTER

### (CRA 7 & 8)

Rock lobsters/crayfish (kōura) are taonga for tāngata whenua, highly valued by recreational fishers, and support valuable export markets, regionally important industries, and employment. Spiny rock lobsters are also ecologically important predators in rocky reef ecosystems.

The CRA 7 (Otago) and CRA 8 (Stewart Island, Southland, Fiordland) rock lobster stocks are thought to be interrelated and because of this they are scientifically assessed together.

A latest assessment update for these stocks suggests that their abundance is high and increasing. The combined biomass of CRA 7 and CRA 8 is estimated to be at 54% of unfished spawning stock biomass ( $SSB_0$ ), in relation to the default target of 40%  $SSB_0$  (see Figure 1). Biomass in CRA 8 alone is estimated to be even higher, at a level of 62%  $SSB_0$ .

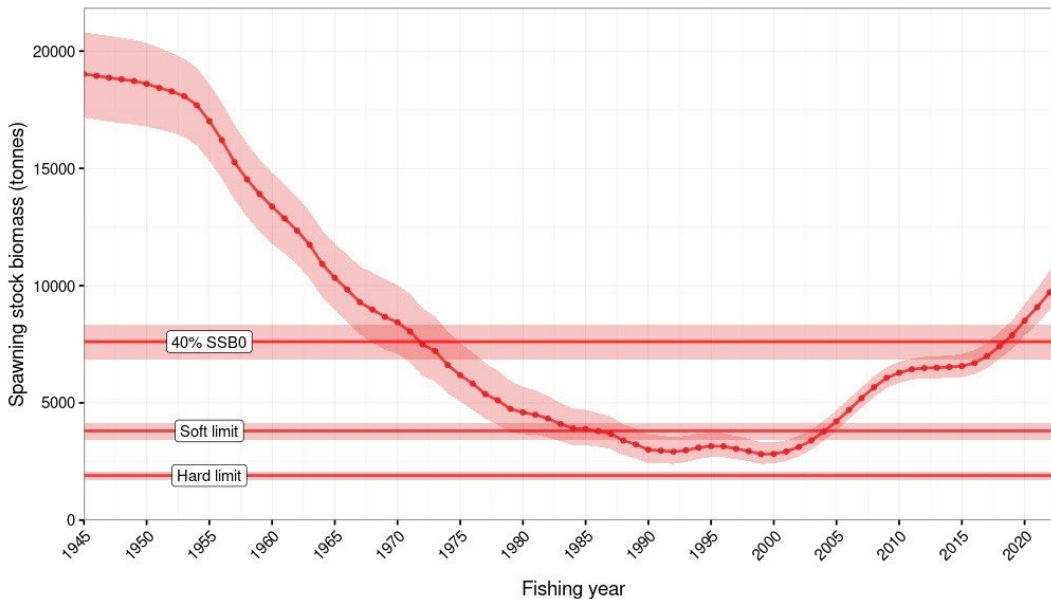
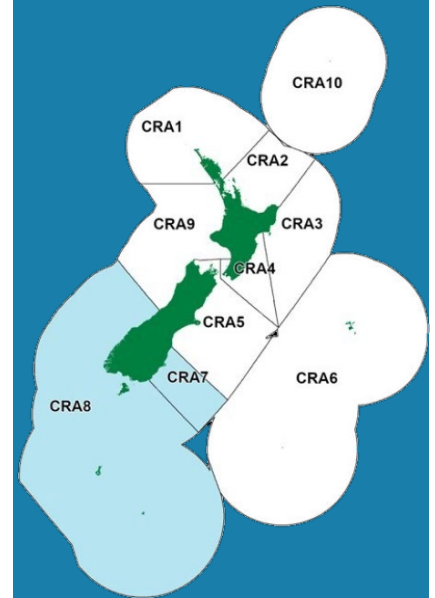


Figure 1. 2023 Combined spawning stock biomass (tonnes) of CRA 7 & CRA 8.

Fisheries New Zealand (FNZ), with input from the National Rock Lobster Management Group (NRLMG) is seeking feedback on the use of management procedures in CRA 7 and CRA 8 (see overleaf for more information on management procedures).

In line with information from the latest stock assessment update and the new management procedure developed for CRA 8, FNZ is also seeking feedback on options to increase the catch limits in CRA 8 from the upcoming 1 April 2024 fishing year.

**Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa**  
New Zealand Government



**For the full  
rationale for the  
proposed  
options, read the  
technical  
discussion paper  
available here:**

[https://www.mpi.govt.nz/  
consultations/review-of-  
sustainability-measures-  
2024-april-round](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/consultations/review-of-sustainability-measures-2024-april-round)

## HOW TO HAVE YOUR SAY

Send your feedback via  
email to:

[FMSubmissions@mpi.govt.nz](mailto:FMSubmissions@mpi.govt.nz)

Consultation closes at  
5pm on 2 February 2024.

## Management procedures

Fisheries New Zealand is consulting on re-instating management procedures in CRA 7 and CRA 8.

A management procedure is a set of 'decision rules' that can be used to guide the setting of commercial catch limits based on changes in abundance (measured by changes in commercial catch rates). The use of management procedures allows FNZ to respond quickly to changes in stock abundance on an annual basis because there is a more settled approach to how to respond to different levels of abundance. Commercial stakeholders support the use of management procedures because they provide greater certainty about processes that can be followed to achieve management goals (e.g., ensuring low sustainability risk, optimising economic yield, and minimising fluctuations in catch).

Management procedures do not automatically predetermine or decide the catch limit settings for stocks. They help to guide in when and how catch limit reviews are considered. If a TAC or TACC change is required, this is still subject to the usual process of consultation and requires a Minister's decision via a sustainability round process. When reviews are initiated, FNZ considers all of the best available information (including management procedures) to determine appropriate options for public consultation. Following consultation, the Minister maintains discretion in deciding on catch limit settings that they consider meet the statutory requirements of the Fisheries Act 1996.

More information on management procedures, including specific details of the management procedures proposed in CRA 7 and CRA 8, is provided in the full technical discussion paper (linked on page 1).

## Proposed catch limit options for CRA 8

Proposed management procedure and Total Allowable Catch (TAC) options for CRA 8 from 1 April 2024 (figures are all in tonnes).

Option	Total Allowable Catch (TAC)	Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC)	Allowances		
			Customary Māori	Recreational	Other mortality caused by fishing
<b>Current settings</b>	1,453	1,251	30	33	139
<b>Option 1</b> ( <i>Reject the use of the new management procedure. Set the TAC, allowances, and TACC as follows</i> )	1,459 (↑ 6)	1,251	30	39 (↑ 6)	139
<b>Option 2</b> ( <i>Confirm the use the new management procedure. Set the TAC, allowances, and TACC as follows</i> )	1,601 (↑ 148)	1,392 (↑ 141)	30	39 (↑ 6)	140 (↑ 1)

Option 1 would reject the use of the new CRA 8 management procedure and would apply an increase of six tonnes to the TAC and recreational allowance to align the settings with new estimates of recreational harvest. Option 2 would accept the use of the new management procedure and in line with the procedure, would apply an increase to the TAC of 148 tonnes. This would include an increase of six tonnes to the recreational allowance to align with new estimates of recreational harvest, an increase of one tonne to the allowance for other mortality caused by fishing, and an increase of 141 tonnes to the TACC to support increased commercial utilisation.

Fisheries New Zealand welcomes feedback and submissions on these options proposed, or any alternatives.

## Questions for submitters

- Do you support the use of management procedures in CRA 7 or CRA 8? Why?
- Which option do you support for the TAC and allowances of CRA 8? Why?
- If you do not support any of the options listed, what alternative(s) should be considered? Why?
- Are the allowances for customary Māori, recreational, and other sources of mortality appropriate? Why?
- Do you think these options adequately provide for social, economic, and cultural wellbeing?
- Do you have any concerns about potential impacts of the proposed options on the aquatic environment?
- What are your thoughts on the ecological importance of rock lobster in CRA 7 and CRA 8?