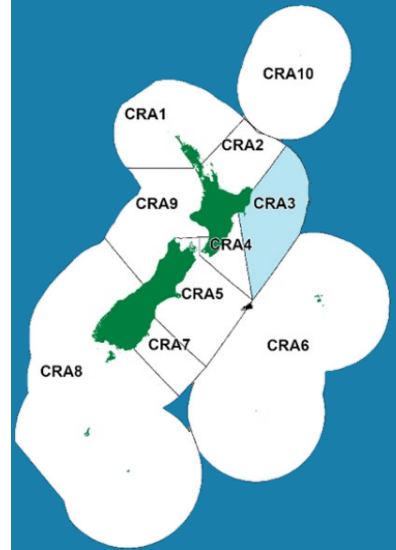




FISHERIES NEW ZEALAND SUSTAINABILITY REVIEW ROCK LOBSTER (CRA 3)

Recent science information showed the biomass of rock lobster in CRA 3 to be above the management target, but the current and future status of the stock is now uncertain because of the effects of Cyclones Hale and Gabrielle.

While the cyclone impacts cannot be fully evaluated yet, it is considered that spiny rock lobster habitat, and in turn the CRA 3 fishery, has been impacted – especially because juvenile rock lobsters are vulnerable to the effects of sediment deposition smothering rocky reef habitat where they settle. In light of the severity of the cyclone, and anecdotal reports from some commercial fishers, habitat impacts are anticipated, though the degree of biomass decline is uncertain as it cannot be modelled at present. Fisheries New Zealand (FNZ) is proposing a range of options which provide different levels of precaution and are intended as an immediate approach while the impacts of the cyclones are better understood. Any reduction would apply predominantly through a decrease in the commercial catch limit (TACC).



Proposed management options (in tonnes) for CRA 3 from 1 April 2024.

Option	TAC	TACC	Allowances		
			Customary Māori	Recreational	All other mortality caused by fishing
Option 1 (<i>Status quo</i>)	302	195	20	12	75
Option 2	248 (↓ 54)	156 (↓ 39)	20	12	60 (↓ 15)
Option 3	220 (↓ 82)	136 (↓ 59)	20	12	52 (↓ 23)
Option 4	194 (↓ 108)	117 (↓ 78)	20	12	45 (↓ 30)

FNZ is also consulting on a reduction to the recreational daily bag limit. Recreational harvest levels tend to be linked to the abundance of rock lobsters. As abundance is anticipated to have been impacted, it is anticipated that recreational harvest will also have been impacted. Current recreational harvest levels cannot presently be modelled due to uncertainty associated with the cyclone impacts, so FNZ is not proposing to modify the recreational allowance. However, FNZ considers that reducing the recreational daily limit may help address uncertainty in the sustainability of current recreational harvest, until the stock can be adequately assessed.

Proposed recreational daily limit options (in number of rock lobsters) for CRA 3 from 1 April 2024. The combined daily limit is for spiny and packhorse rock lobster together.

	Combined daily limit	Max spiny rock lobster daily limit
Option A (<i>current settings</i>)	6	6
Option B	6	3 (↓ 3)

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>

HOW TO HAVE YOUR SAY

Send your feedback via email to:
FMSubmissions@mpi.govt.nz

Consultation closes at 5pm on 2 February 2024.