



Proposed amendments to the Fisheries Act

Consultation 2025

What we will cover today

- Context
- Proposals
- Next steps and timeframes
- How to make a submission
- Your questions



Context

- The Government is committed to lifting New Zealand's productivity and economic growth to increase opportunities and prosperity for all New Zealanders.
- The proposals are designed to:
 - reduce unnecessary regulation and support commercial fisheries to be more productive, while ensuring sustainability; and
 - make the fisheries system more responsive, certain and efficient.
- They leverage increased fisheries data and enhanced verification provided by on-board cameras, electronic reporting and fishery observers.
- The work has been informed by discussions of the Seafood Industry Forum, established by the Oceans and Fisheries Minister in February 2024.



Key Fisheries Act fundamentals unchanged

- The Quota Management System (QMS) and the requirement to provide for use while maintaining sustainability.
- The use of measures in addition to catch limits to manage the effects of fishing on the aquatic environment, such as closed seasons and managing fisheries interaction with protected species.
- Providing for customary and recreational fishing.
- Recognition of the Treaty of Waitangi (Fisheries Claims) Settlement Act 1992, and the creation of tools to provide for customary use and fishery management practices.
- Providing for the input and participation of tangata whenua.
- Requirements to consult with persons or organisations including Māori, environmental, commercial, and recreational interests.



Fisheries New Zealand

Tini a Tangaroa

Structure of the consultation document

- Part 1: Proposals to improve responsiveness, efficiency and certainty of decision making.
- Part 2: Greater protection for on-board camera footage and ensuring the on-board camera programme is workable.
- Part 3: Implementing new rules for commercial fishers that set out when QMS fish must be landed and when they can be returned to sea.



Part 1: Improving how we manage our fisheries

Proposals to make fisheries management more responsive to changes in the environment and fish populations and improve efficiency and certainty. Overall, they:

- Leverage verified commercial catch reporting supported by world leading electronic reporting and monitoring technology.
- Enable a shift to multi-year management with more upfront certainty on how, when and why catch limits will move up or down in advance.
- Enable refined operational and decision-making processes that will allow us to change catch limits up or down more quickly when there is evidence of greater abundance or sustainability concerns.
- Support the use of a broader range of management tools to respond more quickly to sustainability risks and utilisation opportunities.



Part 1: Improving how we manage our fisheries (continued)

Proposals

1. New provision for the Minister to set **multi-year catch decisions** for a stock in advance via a single decision (phased and temporary adjustments of up to five years).
2. Enable the Minister to approve **management procedures** for suitable QMS stocks that set out how and when catch limits will be adjusted over a given period (up to 5 years).
3. Better management of **fish stocks where we have low information** (without a reliable abundance estimate) via a new catch limit setting provision.



Part 1: Improving how we manage our fisheries (continued)

Proposals

4. Enabling the Minister to **account for social, cultural, and economic factors** when deciding on the appropriate rebuild period for a stock.
5. Enabling the Minister to **recognise non-regulatory (voluntary) sustainability measures** in decision-making (such as ACE shelving, catch spreading, area or seasonal closures).
6. Changes to **annual catch entitlement (ACE) carry-forward** arrangements from 10% to 15% and one-off carry-forward in exceptional circumstances, along with specific changes for rock-lobster.



Part 2: On-board cameras – greater protection for footage; and ensuring workability

These proposals are designed to ensure the on-board cameras programme cost-effectively meets its purpose and continues to inform fisheries management decision-making.

Fishers have raised concerns about the potential release of footage showing private or commercially sensitive information under the Official Information Act (OIA). We are consulting on two options to improve how camera footage is protected.

Proposal: greater protection for footage

- Option 1 - Greater recognition for current approach to requests for footage using the OIA.
- Option 2 - Exemption of footage from the OIA.

Under both options, MPI will continue to review footage for verification, research and compliance and enforcement purposes. We would continue to release key fisheries information derived from on-board cameras proactively and by request.



Part 2: On-board cameras (continued)

Proposals: ensuring workability

We are consulting on two additional proposals to help ensure the on-board camera programme is workable and cost effective.

1. Amend regulations relating to the scope of coverage and operation of cameras by removing requirements for some vessels – bottom longline 32m or larger (currently 3 vessels); all vessels less than 8m (currently 3 vessels); and set net vessels using the mothership and tender model (currently 7 vessels).
2. Options to clarify camera use requirements:
 - Option 1 – require on-board cameras to operate port-to-port; and
 - Option 2 – require on-board cameras to operate when fishing and during transit to and from fishing locations.



Part 3: New landing and discard rules

The Government has decided to allow the return of QMS species where vessels are monitored by an observer or on-board camera system.

Monitoring provides greater certainty of fisher-reported data. The purpose of this proposal is to make the best use of verified information and lower operational costs for industry by giving them more options about what to do with catch they may not want.

Proposed implementation:

- Introduce a new exception provision to the Fisheries Act (existing provisions will also remain) allowing the Minister to permit the return of QMS species if monitored.
- Introduce a monitored return exception for all QMS species under the new proposed provision.
- Require all monitored returns to be balanced with ACE or incur deemed values.
- Remove some existing landing exceptions to minimise verification and reporting complexities and adjust catch settings.



Other matters

Proposal to allow use of approved innovative fishing gear to release fish at depth

Consultation document also covers two further minor and technical proposals



How to have your say

Submissions can be made:

- Online
- Via email
- Via post

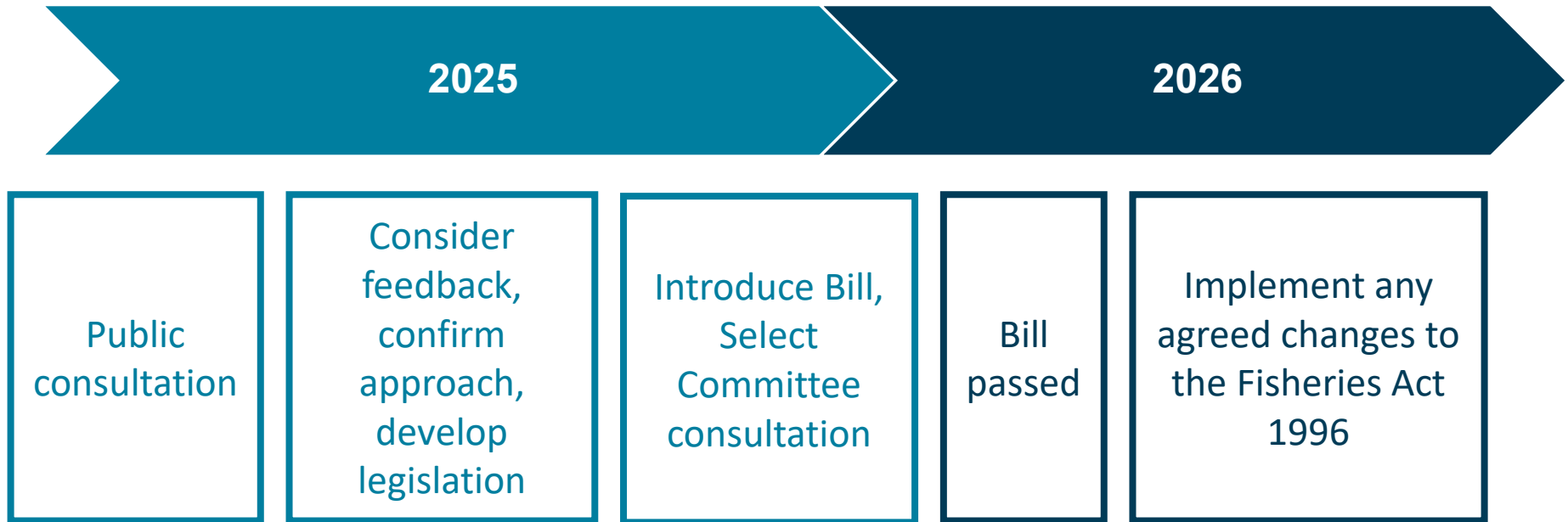
A submission template is on our website:

<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/fisheries-reform-proposed-amendments-to-the-fisheries-act>

Consultation closes at 5:00pm on 11 April 2025



Process and timeline



First half of 2025

Ongoing phased roll-out of on-board cameras on the inshore commercial fishing fleet



Opportunity for questions



Thank You

