

# Review of the New Zealand Marine Research Foundation project on The Economic Contribution of Recreational Fishing in New Zealand

Response to questions from NZSFC Zone 3, 4 and 8 meeting April 2017

## **1. Where are we at with the peer review and publishing of the Southwick research?**

A 12-page public report was published in March 2016. It was presented at the New Zealand Fisheries Symposium in April 2016. A draft technical report was made available at that time. Both reports were presented to the Marine Amateur Fisheries Working Group so that they could recommend the results be taken into account by the Minister when making management decisions.

Representatives of commercial fishing interests attempted to undermine the survey method and results. MPI Policy decided to fund an independent peer review by survey and economic experts from NRB and Prof Ralph Townsend. In addition, MPI wanted to grade the Technical Report against their Research and Science Information Standard for New Zealand Fisheries (RSIS). As a result of reviewers' comments and discussions at the Working Group, a new section on 'The Context and Limitations of the Survey and Results' was added to the 170-page Technical Report.

The main issues raised by reviewers were: the self-selected nature of the online survey; the technical detail of methods were not all completely and precisely described in the report; the data available to estimate expenditure on fishing by international visitors was limited; and that the survey data was not supplied to MPI or reviewers. These had a bearing during the grading of the report.

Rob Southwick will be presenting a paper on the current survey results at the 8<sup>th</sup> World Recreational Fishing Conference in July 2017. This will be published as a peer reviewed scientific paper in the conference proceedings.

## **2. How did it fare with MPI information grading?**

At the final review meeting on 12 December 2016 the Technical Report was graded as Two – Medium or Mixed Quality for information that has been subjected to some level of peer review against the requirements of the Standard and has been found to have some shortcomings with regard to the key principles for science information quality. However, the report is still useful for informing management decisions.

**Important notes:** 1. The Research and Science Information Standard for New Zealand Fisheries is intended for reviewing stock monitoring and stock assessment reports. 2. None of the MPI or fishing industry economic reports have been reviewed or graded against this Standard.

## **3. Will we be following through with a research project to achieve comparison of recreational and commercial values of these inshore fisheries?**

At this stage the New Zealand Marine Research Foundation does not have the funding for another economic research project.

This initial research measured the economic activity associated with recreational fishing, not what an extra tonne of fish was worth to recreational fishers, nor the consumer surplus, which is the value over and above what is spent to catch a fish. The species-based estimates in the report are the best

that could be achieved with the available data, noting that these assume that all the expenditure for each trip is for the stated target species.

To get an unbiased estimate of what a fish is worth to the average recreational fisher compared to its commercial value is a different and difficult question requiring data different survey approach. MPI has been encouraged to fund such a project, to date they insist all available funds are being used for the National Panel Survey (NPS) of recreational harvest. NZSFC has asked that the 7000 people recruited for the NPS be asked if they would participate in a follow on survey, which could be the next economic survey.

Research team

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