

Submission summary

Blue cod 8 (BCO 8) review 2025/26

Proposal [online here](#).

Full submission [online here](#).



Fisheries New Zealand proposals

In July, Fisheries New Zealand (FNZ) reviewed Blue cod 8 (BCO 8) management (Figure 1). The proposals included changes to the Total Allowable Catch (TAC), Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC) and allowances set aside for Recreational and All Other Mortality caused by fishing (Table 1). FNZ also proposed reductions to the recreational daily limit (Table 2).

Table 1: Proposed management option (in tonnes) for BCO 8 from 1 October 2025.

Option	TAC	TACC	Allowances		
			Customary Māori	Recreational	All other mortality caused by fishing
<i>Status quo</i>	226	34	2	188	2
Option A1	58 (↓ 168)	34	2	20 (↓ 168)	2
Option A2	16 (↓ 210)	5 (↓ 29)	2	8 (↓ 180)	1 (↓ 1)
Option A3	10 (↓ 216)	2 (↓ 32)	2	5 (↓ 183)	1 (↓ 1)

Table 2: Proposed recreational daily limit options (in number of blue cod) for BCO 8.

Option	Maximum blue cod daily limit
Option B1 (<i>current settings</i>)	10
Option B2	2 (↓ 8)
Option B3	1 (↓ 9)

Background

In waters on the southwest coast, between Wellington and Waikato, blue cod have gone from iconic catch status to scarce. Fisheries NZ does not know if current catches are sustainable.

Since 2012 there has been a 84 percent drop in blue cod catches by recreational fishers.

Not once in the past 39 years has the legal limit stopped or constrained commercial harvest in the BCO 8 management area.

Now, after decades of mismanagement under the Quota Management System, blue cod need to be rescued from depletion. This adds to the concerns that elevated sea temperatures may be impacting on kelp forests, which blue cod depend on for shelter and food.

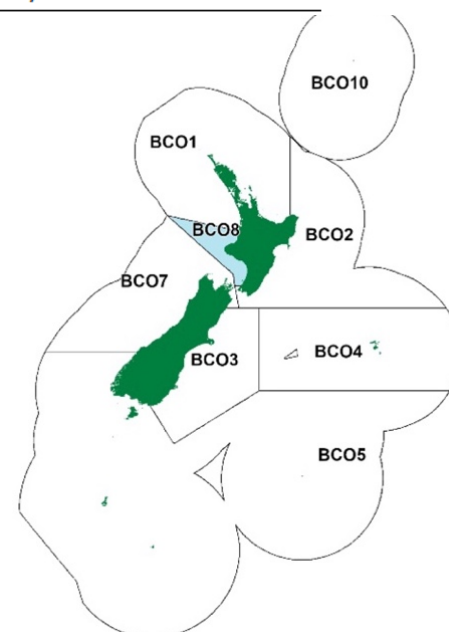


Figure 1. Blue cod 8 Quota Management Area.

Joint recreational submission

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council, LegaSea, New Zealand Angling & Casting Association, and New Zealand Underwater, have submitted a comprehensive response to the review.

There are so few blue cod they are now just a bycatch species in commercial fisheries. Recreational fishers would accept a 60% cut to their daily bag limit if a comprehensive blue cod rebuild plan was established. Because without decisive precautionary measures, depletion and habitat destruction will further undermine blue cod abundance.

Sustainability under the Fisheries Act requires maintaining fish stocks for future generations and mitigating adverse environmental impacts. Blue cod 8 needs to be reviewed within five years to assess stock health, catch levels and habitat impacts. Minister Shane Jones is due to make a decision by October 1st, 2025.

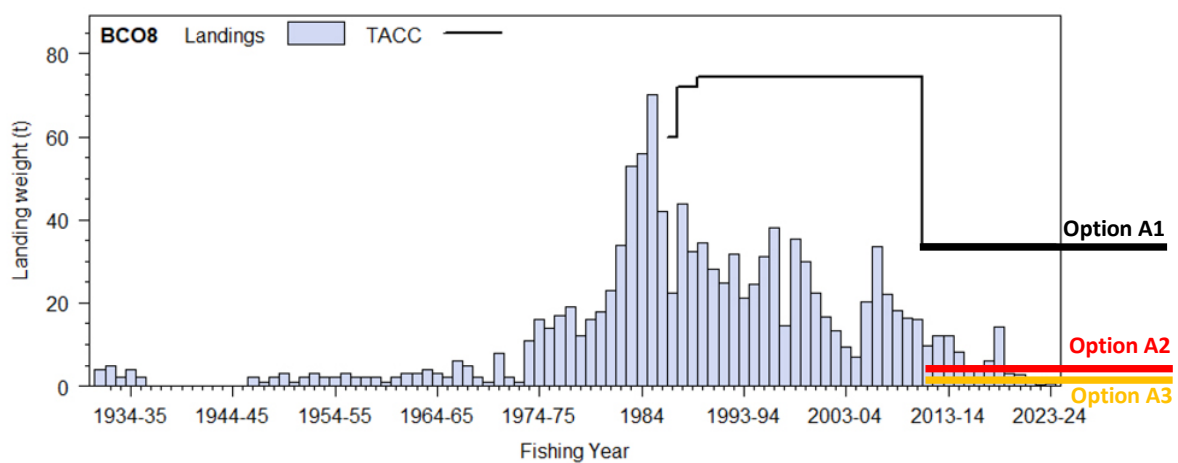


Figure 2. Commercial landings for Blue cod 8 (BCO 8). The black line is the current total allowable commercial catch setting and option A1 (34 tonnes). Red line indicates where the total allowable commercial catch will be if option A2 (5 tonnes) is approved. Orange line is option A3 (2 tonnes) this is the option supported by joint recreational submitters.