

Submission to MPI on MOK3 catch

By the Kaikoura Boating Club Inc.

The Kaikoura Boating Club has about 400 member families (397 as at 1 Nov 2013). Membership rights include all family members living at the same address and any guests accompanying those members, and thus represent some 2,000 individuals on the water in any year.

The club maintains 3 ramps, one each on the north and south side of the peninsula and one near Oaro at Boat Harbour. The objects of the Club are to provide members with facilities for boating and to lobby for the preservation and enhancement of recreational fishing opportunities for members.

The graph in figure 2 of the MPI Review of controls for MOK3 shows a rise of commercial catch in 2006 and 2007. This rise is consistent with changes in fisher behaviour trying to catch the increased TAR3 TACC under the 2005 Adaptive Management Program (AMP). About 20% of MOK3 is recorded as by-catch to targeting TAR in the set-net fishery.

There is a significant drop in commercial MOK3 catch in 2008-09 consistent with reduced set netting due to the introduction of the Set Net Ban. MOK3 catch then increase as commercial fishers adapt to the new situation and attempt to catch the available TAR3 ACE (which they cannot do).

The introduction of that ban had a substantial effect on recreational fishers, as very few recreational fishers set net more than 4 miles off shore. The paper refers to the 1999-2000 diary survey giving estimates of between 36 and 70T of recreational catch. This was an important recreational fishery.

The 2011-12 NZ Marine Recreational Marine Fishing Survey was (as acknowledged) not structured in a way that would provide any useful information on MOK3 catch. It is acknowledged that the fishery is currently substantially lower than the peak of some 70T, yet anecdotal evidence is that it is still a substantial recreational fishery in the South Island, and is definitely a substantial recreational fishery in the northern part of its migration.

It is our contention that it is just a matter of time for recreational fishers to adjust, and develop new technologies, until their catch returns to figures more like the 70T historically acknowledged. Recreational behaviour is slower to change than commercial behaviour, particularly as recreational fishers do not enjoy the exemption to the 4 mile set net exclusion zone enjoyed by the commercial sector south of Kaikoura.

The Kaikoura Boating Club strongly objects to a recreational allowance of only 5T in option 1. The best credible evidence is that recreational take was at least 10 times the amount being allowed, and there is every likelihood of catch returning to those levels in the near future.

It seems highly likely to us that the increased commercial catch results from a combination of factors including:

Increased commercial effort due to the increased TAR3 TACC under the AMP; and

Temporarily decreased recreational take due to the set net ban.

It seems to us that the most sensible course of action is to acknowledge that the AMP is not working, and reduce the TAR3 TACC to previous levels, thus reducing the set net effort for TAR, and the major bycatch of MOK3.

It seems that the only real effect of the TAR3 AMP has been a substantial increase in MOK3 catch.

Given that this blue moki stock is right now an important recreational fishery in the northern part of its migration, removing the TAR3 AMP seems a far more realistic option in allowing for people to meet their reasonable social, economic and cultural needs.

Kaikoura Boating Club rejects both option 1 and option 2 – and all the logic underlying them.