

SUBMISSION SUMMARY



Crayfish proposals 2017

New Zealand Sport Fishing Council

February 2017



In February 2017 the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council responded to the proposals from the Ministry for Primary Industries for the future management of three rock lobster stocks CRA 3, 4 and 7.

MPI proposed commercial catch reductions in CRA 3 and 4, and a commercial catch increase in CRA 7. The Council supported the catch reductions and rejected the proposed catch increase in CRA 7.

Crayfish 3 extends from East Cape to Wairoa. CRA 4 starts at Wairoa, continues down past Wellington and up the west coast to the Manawatu River at Foxton. CRA 7 is a unique fish stock in the South Island extending from the Waitaki River, north Oamaru, to Long Point, south of Balclutha.

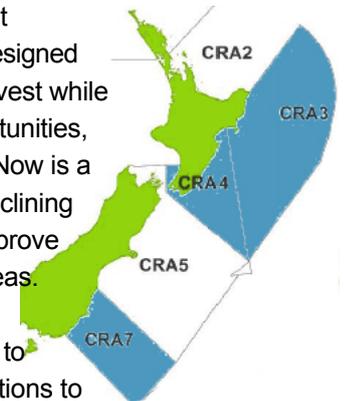
Maintaining diversity

It is widely recognised that rock lobster abundance is important for maintaining a diverse ecosystem. The Council submitted a precautionary approach needs to be taken in these highly valued rock lobster stocks, which are all managed using uncertain and incomplete information.



Credit: Ian McLeod

It is not sufficient that current management settings are designed to maximise commercial harvest while denying public fishing opportunities, both now and in the future. Now is a prime time to reverse the declining trends in abundance and improve public access in all these areas.



It is only fair and reasonable to expect the total catch reductions to be applied to the Total Allowable Commercial Catch in CRA 3 and 4 because it is commercial exploitation that has depleted these fish stocks. The effects of past mismanagement are still making an impact and denying reasonable public access today.

A serious omission in the MPI proposals was the absence of any reference to the existing concessions that enable commercial fishers to take crayfish smaller than the minimum legal size that applies to recreational harvest. Concessions apply in CRA 3, 7 (and 8). We consider this a serious omission of relevant information given the conflict these concessions have caused since the 1990s.

A lasting solution

A solution to past mismanagement is simple. Any new management settings must be tailored to meet the statutory Ministerial obligations to both Maori and recreational non-commercial fishing interests - to provide sufficient abundance to enable people to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing from fishing.