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NZ Sport Fishing Council submission on Proposed extension of the shellfish and seaweed emergency fishing closure along the Kaikōura and Cape Campbell coastline

Recommendations

1. The Minister for Primary Industries extends the emergency closure to the maximum term allowed under his powers given by section 16(3) of the Fisheries ACT 1996, emergency closure regulations. This would see the closure in place until 20th November 2017.

NZ Sport Fishing Council - LegaSea

2. The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council (NZSFC) appreciates the opportunity to submit on the proposed extension of the shellfish and seaweed emergency fishing closure along the Kaikōura and Cape Campbell coastline. MPI notified the opening of consultation on 20th January 2017, with submissions due by 31st January 2017.
3. The NZ Sport Fishing Council is a national sports organisation with over 32,000 affiliated members from 57 clubs nationwide. The Council has initiated LegaSea to generate widespread awareness and support for the need to restore abundance in our inshore marine environment. Also, to broaden NZSFC involvement in marine management advocacy, research, education and alignment on behalf of our members and LegaSea supporters. www.legasea.co.nz.
4. We are committed to ensuring that sustainability measures and environmental management controls are designed and implemented to achieve the Purpose and Principles of the Fisheries Act 1996, including “maintaining the potential of fisheries resources to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations...” [s8(2)(a) Fisheries Act 1996]
5. NZSFC representatives are available to discuss this submission in more detail if required. We look forward to positive outcomes from this review and would like to be kept informed of future developments. Our contact is Dave Lockwood, secretary@nzsportfishing.org.nz.

Submission

6. The submitters support the proposed extension of the shellfish and seaweed emergency fishing closure along the Kaikōura and Cape Campbell coastline.

7. There has been a known loss to a large yet undefined portion of the biomass in this area, to open the fishery before the extent of the damage is fully understood would be irresponsible and would risk further damage to this shellfish stocks.
8. Paua, the species which is likely to be most affected by the earthquake and the subsequent closure, has particularly high value for local recreational, customary and commercial interests.
9. There have been no valid estimates of the loss of paua or the biomass, age structure or survivability of the remaining stocks. These must be known before harvest can continue.
10. The effect of loss of habitat from the rise of parts of the seabed must be quantified in order to start understanding whether the new areas allow sufficiently for larval settlement and juvenile growth.
11. These stocks should be allowed to undergo their spawning cycle, with regular monitoring this will show how viable the current stocks may be.
12. With the likely loss of major portions of the stock biomass, new sustainability measures must be decided upon and set according to reliable surveys to avoid unsustainable harvesting. There are currently no such estimates.
13. The submitters acknowledge and support the submission presented by the Paua Industry Council (PIC), which was sighted on the 26th January 2017. It is our understanding that the PIC also wish for the closure to remain in place until further research is undertaken to better understand how to implement a recovery plan for each area.
14. It is also our understanding that the PIC intends to shelve the ACE that would have been taken from the waters affected by the closure, to ensure undue pressure is not placed on the surrounding areas. This sensible move is very much appreciated and applauded by the submitters.