

2015 review of the fishing rules for Marlborough Sounds blue cod

Ministry for Primary Industries

March 2015

Closing Date: 15 Jun 2015

Contact: Blue Cod Management Group

Email: MSbluecod@mpi.govt.nz

Your views sought

The Blue Cod Management Group wants to get everyone involved in developing potential options for the Marlborough Sounds blue cod fishery before an official consultation document is released for further feedback in the middle of this year.

Background

The Blue Cod Management Group, made up of recreational, commercial and Ministry for Primary Industries representatives, is leading a review of the blue cod fishery in the Marlborough area. The group is asking the local fishing community for their views on current issues facing the blue cod fishery and potential tools and solutions to support a review of the current fishing rules. The intention of the review is to strike a balance between ensuring a healthy population of blue cod and ensuring ongoing use and enjoyment of this fishery.

Why are we reviewing the rules?

The fishery closed in 2008 to provide for the recovery of the blue cod populations in the Marlborough Sounds. The current recreational fishing rules were implemented as a package in 2011 when the fishery was re-opened. The rules were designed to complement one another and ensure an increase in blue cod populations while enabling recreational fishers to use the fishery.

Summary of current management measures

Bag limit – maximum of two blue cod per person per day

Seasonal opening – 20 December to 31 August

Size limits – minimum legal size of 30 cm, maximum legal size of 35 cm (the ‘slot limit’)

Hook limit – maximum of two hooks per rod and reel line or hand line when fishing for any species

Accumulation limit – personal accumulation limit of two blue cod (one daily bag limit)

Filleting rule – requirement for recreational fishers to possess blue cod in a whole or gutted state only, unless for immediate personal consumption

Transit rule – no transporting of blue cod through the Marlborough Sounds area that do not meet the rules applied to the area

Latest science shows that some blue cod populations are not much better off than when the fishery was closed in 2008 and there are too many blue cod being killed in Pelorus and Queen Charlotte Sounds.

Feedback received from recreational fishers also suggests that the current rules could be made more effective and easier to comply with.

How to contribute to the review

The Blue Cod Management Group want to work with the community to find the best outcomes for the blue cod fishery.

The intention is to get everyone involved in developing potential options for the fishery before an official consultation document is released for further feedback in the middle of this year. After consultation, final options will go to the Minister, who makes the decision about what rules will be going forward.

There are a number of ways that you can get involved. You can:

- Attend one of our drop in sessions to discuss information under-pinning the review (listed below).
- Email your ideas on potential solutions for the blue cod fishery through to MSbluecod@mpi.govt.nz
- Take part in formal consultation mid-way through 2015.

If you want to be notified of the formal consultation, email MSbluecod@mpi.govt.nz.

Public information drop-in session in the Marlborough area:

Nelson	Picton
Date: Wednesday, 18th March	Date: Thursday, 19th March
Drop-in between: 4pm – 9pm	Drop-in between: 4pm - 9pm
Venue: Rutherford Hotel, 27 Nile Street West, Nelson	Venue: Port Marlborough Pavilion, 181 Waikawa Road, Picton

Blue Cod Management Group members will be present at the public sessions to answer any questions.