

# Our Fishing FUTURE

- a healthy marine environment enjoyed by all
- taking pride in an abundant and healthy marine environment where our community extends manaakitanga over our fisheries and oceans
- unity and inclusion within the recreational fishing community
- equity of access through stakeholder engagement
- understanding and valuing our marine environment and its resources so we can all be responsible for a better future

11 December 2015

## Fisheries Management Review 2015

This feedback is provided by *Our Fishing Future Inc.* We are an incorporated society whose purpose is to promote and protect responsible recreational fishing in New Zealand. *Our Fishing Future* was formed following a workshop in 2013 in Nelson where interests from commercial, recreational, customary, environmental, science and government (MPI, DOC and MNZ) came together to consider how recreational fishing interests could be better integrated into the fisheries management framework and decision-making processes.

The workshop agreed on a number of areas of 'common ground' and *Our Fishing Future* has carried these forward into our vision:

- a healthy marine environment enjoyed by all
- taking pride in an abundant and healthy marine environment where our community extends manaakitanga over our fisheries and oceans
- unity and inclusion within the recreational fishing community
- equity of access through stakeholder engagement
- understanding and valuing our marine environment and its resources so we can all be responsible for a better future.

As an organisation *Our Fishing Future* is strongly committed to working with other sector interests to achieve our vision, and we endorse collaborative approaches to achieve enduring solutions for fishing in New Zealand.

Unfortunately we were not able to use the MPI online and PDF feedback forms for the Fisheries Management Review because they can only be viewed on one computer. This feedback follows the format of your questionnaire, and responds to questions on sustainability, benefits for all New Zealanders, decision-making processes, and future challenges.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide input at this early stage in the review.



Geoff Rowling  
President

# Fisheries Management Review 2015

## ***How can the fisheries management system best ensure sustainability?***

*What aspects of New Zealand's current fisheries management system work well to ensure sustainability?*

- Science driven research and advice
- Setting TACs
- Local management rules to protect special ecological areas such as spawning and nursery grounds
- Collection of commercial catch information and monitoring of data quality

*What aspects of New Zealand's current fisheries management system do not work well to ensure sustainability?*

- Absence of incentives for the commercial sector to increase selectivity (i.e. reduce bycatch, incidental take and benthic damage)
- Excessive headroom in TACCs and deemed values

## ***How can the fisheries management system best deliver benefits for all New Zealanders?***

*What benefits do you think the fisheries management system should deliver?*

- A healthy marine environment
- Equitable access to harvestable species
- Opportunity for different sector/interest groups to generate value in different ways

*What aspects of New Zealand's current fisheries management system work well to deliver benefits to all New Zealanders?*

- Setting TACs and other sustainability measures

*What aspects of New Zealand's current fisheries management system do not work well to deliver benefits to all New Zealanders?*

- Absence of a fair, long-term policy for allocation/allowances in key inshore fisheries. There is no way the present allowances within TACs in most inshore species could be described or accepted as reasonable. This is a prerequisite to shifting toward a management system with greater accountability for public fishing interests.
- Inability for public fishing interests to participate on a level playing field in decision-making processes.

*What changes (if any) are needed to better ensure the system delivers benefits for all New Zealanders?*

- A policy discussion focused on the desired outcome, and then work out the management process.
- Ensure public fishing interests have an effective and accountable voice in decision-making processes.
- Manage inshore stocks at higher abundance levels: we acknowledge that this will require better accountability/control of public fishing or the gains will be lost.

*How do you think those changes would affect the cost of fisheries management? Who should cover any additional costs, or benefit if costs are reduced?*

- Please see response to this question for next section (decision-making)

## ***How can we ensure decision-making processes are effective, efficient and timely?***

*What aspects of New Zealand's current fisheries management decision-making processes work well?*

- Setting TACs and other sustainability measures

*What aspects of New Zealand's current fisheries management decision-making processes do not work well?*

- Making equitable allowances for public fishing interests in key shared fisheries:
  - Public fishing interests participate in the various decision-making processes (policy, research, and management) on a volunteer basis and do not have access to trusted advice and analysis of the information provided by MPI.
  - Absence of a fair long term policy for allocation/allowances in key inshore fisheries means there is no guidance on appropriate considerations in particular fisheries.

*What changes (if any) are needed to better ensure fisheries decisions are effective, efficient and timely?*

- Existence of a representative and accountable professional organisation to give voice to public fishing interests. Such an organisation would not displace the local voice: instead it would integrate the views and align the public fishing voice with the overriding management framework delivered through the various legislative and regulatory processes.
- Empower stakeholder decision-making. Commit to a collaborative approach to fisheries management decision-making. This will foster consensus decision-making, allow for value-adding and creative trade-offs to be made between interest groups, and can establish flexible responses to particular outcomes ("decision rules").

*How do you think those changes would affect the cost of fisheries management? Who should cover any additional costs, or benefit if costs are reduced?*

- In the early stages (say 10 years) the cost of supporting a professional organisation that represents the public fishing interest should be borne by the taxpayer. Over this period such an organisation should become self-funding through membership, provision of services, sponsorship and grants.
- There is a risk that such an organisation could be seen as lobbying government, but this must be counterbalanced by the benefits of having an organisation that will work to raise awareness in the public fishing sector and support responsible management measures to achieve agreed outcomes.

***What challenges will New Zealand's fisheries management system need to respond to in future years?***

*What challenges do you think New Zealand's fisheries management system will face over the next 20 years?*

- Increasing pressure on inshore resources as population grows
- Environmental fragility due to the impacts of climate change, habitat loss and land-based contamination

*What changes (if any) are needed to better enable the fisheries management system to respond to new challenges?*

- Building trust with government and between stakeholder and interest groups
- Investment in education and awareness raising to promote responsible management practices within the public fishing sector
- Building fisheries resilience through managing for higher levels of abundance
- Create incentives for greater innovation and improved technology

*If the fisheries management system works well over the coming years, what will the fishery look like in the year 2050? How will your experience of it have changed?*

- For shared fisheries we will have achieved the vision of *Our Fishing Future*:
  - a healthy marine environment enjoyed by all
  - taking pride in an abundant and healthy marine environment where our community extends manaakitanga over our fisheries and oceans
  - unity and inclusion within the recreational fishing community
  - equity of access through stakeholder engagement
  - understanding and valuing our marine environment and its resources so we can all be responsible for a better future.

***If there are any other issues or opportunities you would like to raise, please add below***

*Our Fishing Future* believes that an accountable and representative organisation needs to be established to support participation of public fishing interests in fisheries management decision-making processes (both statutory processes and collaborative processes). So far, the public voice has been heard primarily through the efforts of volunteers. This means that knowledge is ephemeral and it is difficult to establish trusting relationships with government and other stakeholder groups. A professional organisation could provide analysis of information to ensure an informed voice for public fishing interests, provide capacity support to local management initiatives, engage along with other stakeholders in the government consultation processes, provide support to national or regional collaborative processes, engage in education and awareness raising to ensure that necessary management measures are put in place to implement decisions agreed to (e.g. changes in seasons or bag limits).

It has proved very difficult to secure funding for the establishment phase of such an organisation. We propose that government commit to a long-term (e.g. 10 years) initiative to build an independent, accountable, professional organisation to give voice to public fishing interests. Such an initiative could take the form of establishing a trust fund that can allocate \$2-3 million per year over 10 years. Other sources of funding could also contribute to the trust fund in this period. At the end of the establishment period, we believe such an organisation should be self-funding through membership, service provision, sponsorship and grants