

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*

26 July 2018

Submission on sustainability measures for east coast Tarakihi

We recognise the difficulties facing the fishery now that it is considered to be a single stock and subject to regionally different fishing operations. We agree the stock level should be increased, but there are real challenges in deciding how to do that.

With the complexities of managing the stock over numerous QMAs, including it often featuring as a “by-catch” species, having poorly defined juvenile/nursery areas, a general lack of science, and the potential for undermining the Treaty Settlement, simply slashing TACCs according to some sort of generic formula may well result in worse outcomes than doing nothing.

While a ‘one size fits all’ approach may be the easiest for Fisheries NZ, we question the outcome. This blunt measure will likely lead to increases in poor fishing practice, wholesale slaughter of sub-legal sized fish, increased dumping and probable trucking. Fisheries NZ needs to accept that a finer scale management solution is preferable to a blunt approach and find ways to make that work under the Fisheries Act. It is simply unacceptable to hide behind the Act and claim the only response available to the Minister is a blunt TACC instrument in this instance.

We note Commercial interests (including iwi) have developed a comprehensive alternative management plan, including additional and much needed science. If it can be refined to ensure we all understand the measures that will be implemented, given teeth, and there are clearly understood implications if not adhered to, then we believe the fishery will benefit.

While we have some reservations about industry “voluntary” measures, if these are backed up with formal and workable commitments, we would prefer to see the industry proposals given an opportunity.

This should occur in the full knowledge that if the industry fails to deliver, tougher measures and more appropriate measures than those presently proposed by Fisheries NZ will be implemented in the future.

Catches have to fall and it is most likely to happen if better behaviour is encouraged.

Given recreational catch is estimated to be such a small proportion of the Tarakihi take we submit there should be no change to our allowance or bag limit at this time. However as a stock rebuild takes place we would encourage a conversation about allowances and bag limits across the wider fishery.



Geoff Rowling
President
Our Fishing Future