



What's Fishing Worth? Update

A big thanks to everyone who has donated to the New Zealand Marine Research Foundation's latest project to measure the contribution that recreational fishing makes to the New Zealand economy.

For others, you can still donate directly through the www.whatsfishingworth.co.nz site or the Foundation's website www.nzmrnf.org.nz

Foundation Chairman Jeff Romeril said recently, "For too long recreational fishers have been the poor cousins in the continuing lobby for better management and utilisation of our fisheries resources. We need to empower our advocates for many years to come".

"Having some hard-hitting, simple and persuasive facts will provide the necessary tools to achieve more fish in the water."

Hawke's Bay fisheries

LegaSea Hawkes Bay is a group working to improve the recreational fishing experience around Napier and the wider southeast coastal region, called Area 2.

Recreational fishing success has collapsed and these locals are determined to have meaningful measures put in place to rebuild the fisheries.

Abundant fisheries are essential to enable current and future generations to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeings.

Concerns about the lack of fish are not new. Colin Murray and members of the local Hawke's Bay Sports Fishing Club have spent thousands of hours over nine years conducting interviews and counting fish being landed by recreational anglers at the main boat ramp.

Their catch graphs show a dramatic, steady decline in numbers of snapper, gurnard, trevally, tarakihi and groper/hapuku. It now takes more than two days of fishing to catch a snapper, one gurnard per person per angler day is being landed and it takes, on average, more than three days fishing to catch one tarakihi.

It's no wonder locals are complaining. Interest and participation in recreational fishing is diminishing and this is a major concern. At a recent meeting parents were complaining their kids wouldn't go fishing with them any more because there are no fish to catch!

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council and the NZ Angling and Casting Association are pitching in to help LegaSea Hawkes Bay achieve a successful outcome from meetings with industry and Ministry for Primary Industries officials.

This issue is not unique to Hawkes Bay, there are many coastal communities suffering from the impacts of depleted fisheries.

Let's hope that a resolution is soon found to rebuild Area 2 fisheries because it is unthinkable that our next generation of Kiwi kids don't go fishing because there are no fish to catch.

ENDS

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LegaSea is a public outreach initiative of the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council. The Council has an experienced fisheries management, science, policy and legal team. On behalf of the Council LegaSea raises funds and provides public-friendly information about a variety of processes that are important to restoring abundance in our fisheries for future generations.