

LegaSea Update 12
The Adventurer

September 2015



Researching to find the truth

By Trish Rea, LegaSea Liaison

It's just over a month since LegaSea launched the What's Fishing Worth? fundraising campaign on behalf of the New Zealand Marine Research Foundation. Thanks a lot to everyone who has contributed to this important project.

So far we've raised over \$37,000 to discover the value of recreational fishing to our economy.

Now we thought it was about time we started talking about what has happened when this kind of research has been done overseas.

The researchers, Southwick Associates, have seen their research change the way people view the ocean, creating a more positive attitude towards conservation.

For example, management priorities changed after a study of one area in Mexico, Cabo San Lucas, found sportfishing generated over \$245 million in new local and federal taxes.

And, the total economic activity associated with 345,000 visiting anglers was estimated to be approximately USD\$1.125 BILLION!

Prior to the research in Costa Rica, fisheries were only managed for commercial harvest. Recreational fishing was not formally recognised as an industry. The 2009 Southwick study confirmed that sportfishing contributes more to the economy than commercial fishing. Sportfishing contributes approximately US\$599 million and 63,000 jobs per annum.

Since the study a National Sportfishing Commission has been established to advise and monitor all issues related to sportfishing in Costa Rica.

Here in NZ, after 30 years of the quota management system we still have our precious kahawai being exported for \$1.45 per kilo, and 25-29cm snapper being sold to Australia for \$9.00 per kilo.

It's time to smarten up. We can do so much better with our current marine resources.

Like Mexico, the potential for job growth, wealth generation and tax revenues all depend on having fish available. That's why the New Zealand Marine Research

Foundation has engaged Southwicks to conduct this important research.

Preliminary research results are expected by December and a full blown peer-reviewed report by mid 2016.

What's the cost?

Overall this research project will cost \$400,000, with \$100,000 being sought from public donations. 100% of your donation goes towards the project and is tax deductible because the New Zealand Marine Research Foundation is a registered charity.

What can you do?

We need all your family, friends and work colleagues to know what's going on, and only you can reach them by sharing www.whatsfishingworth.co.nz.

Please stress to them that management changes will only come about through widespread understanding of both the benefits of having more fish in local waters, and the potential earnings for the country.

Please share this campaign far and wide. And, if you have any promotional ideas to help us spread the word, we'd love to know - just fire them through to matthew@legasea.co.nz.

ENDS

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LegaSea Works: www.legasea.co.nz/works



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.