



Snapper round up

Warm weather means more fishing, but in the Bay of Plenty there's still concerns to be addressed for snapper. Stocks are classified as "collapsed" and so LegaSea will be calling for specific action to be taken in the Bay.

This is one of a few focus areas for LegaSea as a result of Nathan Guys decisions on the future of the snapper 1 fishery.

We've reviewed the hundreds of pages of documents released after the snapper decision and have a clear view of how we can best serve to push for more positive outcomes in the snapper 1 fishery.

We will not be taking the Minister to court for this decision.

In essence, the majority aspects of the decision made will lead to positive outcomes for the fishery, and four out of five aspects of this decision were favourable for the people of New Zealand.

While the merits of his decision to reduce our bag limits and increase minimum size limits may be unfair, (and we do disagree with this aspect of the decision) this does not lead to an automatic ability for judicial review. Having considered a review, we believe a greater impact can be made by focusing on other activities and action. Such as:

- Push for the interim 40% biomass target for snapper 1 to confirmed and adopted (the commercial sector will seek to reduce this).
- Active participation with building the strategy to manage the snapper 1 fishery into the future, through the new Snapper Strategy Stakeholder group. Our aim is to ensure the stock is capable of meeting the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations.
- Monitor and report on the implementation and results of the announced measures to reduce commercial waste. Intent is one thing, effective implementation is another.
- Launch a new education initiative to assist the fishing public to reduce release mortality – a LegaSea "Fish Smarter" guide.
- Call for specific Ministry action to be taken to address the collapsed snapper stock in the Bay of Plenty, including trawl exclusion zones.
- Call for review of the commercial minimum legal size for snapper. Given the introduction of new smarter trawl technology, there is no good reason the commercial sector should continue to keep fish under 30cm.

Given the political nature of fisheries and especially the election next year, LegaSea will seize this opportunity to effect change. The team is available to work with all political parties, to develop strong fisheries policy to ensure that decision makers have clear frameworks that balance cause and effect of fisheries decision, on the people of New Zealand and on our marine resources, and not just economic outcomes.

For a full report on the decision and outcomes, and to share your feedback please visit www.legasea.co.nz/sos or www.facebook.com/legasea