



Recreational fishing is worth billions

Thanks to the generosity of people like you and the foresight of the New Zealand Marine Research Foundation, the project measuring recreational fishing's contribution to the New Zealand economy has been completed.

Collectively, Kiwis and international visitors spend a billion dollars a year on saltwater fishing. This expenditure ripples through the economy generating 1.7 billion dollars in economic activity, supporting over 8,100 jobs and contributing at least \$638 million to the New Zealand economy.

In terms of paying its way, the recreational fishing industry contributes 190 million dollars in taxes to the national economy.

Good news

It is good to know that our recreational fishing is enhancing the wellbeing of all New Zealanders.

The bad news is that the low abundance of fish inshore, fewer participants, and degradation of inshore habitats threaten the ongoing success of recreational fishing industry.

Implementing policies that demand better protection of our inshore marine environment and increased abundance can mitigate these factors, but that takes political will.

This is where we all can make a difference.

It is up to us to convince our decision makers of the benefits of having a strong recreational fishing industry. The \$1.7 billion economic return on catching a fish for the family's dinner, or a tourist's catch and release experience has to be worthwhile when compared to the low rent, bulk harvesting fishing practices being prosecuted inshore.

Tourism is the fastest growing sector in the New Zealand economy. More people are arriving, they are staying longer and spending more. We need to be making the most of our opportunities to offer low impact marine recreation experiences for domestic and international visitors.

What's the hold-up?

The biggest handbrake is current fisheries management policy that tries to maximise catch and largely ignores environmental factors to maintain bulk exports of our fish.

Having information on the size of the recreational fishing industry and the jobs this sector supports will help to refocus the compass onto the best use of our marine resources.

We are all winners

Ultimately, recreational fishing is a winner on a personal, regional and national level. Adding a fishing experience to a tourist's enjoyment of New Zealand's other natural wonders, and hobbits, would be an easy sell.

What we need now is a government committed to restoring abundance and diversity so we can maximise the value of our precious marine resources.

A copy of the research report can be downloaded here.

<http://nzmrf.org.nz/value-of-recreational-fishing.php>

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.