



A boost to rebuild important fisheries and habitats

1.

Strategies to rebuild marine ecosystems and local fisheries around the northeast coast, Gisborne and Hawkes Bay were confirmed during a recent meeting held at the Gisborne Tapatouri Sports Fishing Club.

Delegates to this year's New Zealand Sport Fishing Council Annual General Meeting endorsed three policies. Each policy outlines a range of measures designed to rebuild depleted fisheries and enhance degraded ecosystems.

Healthier ecosystems mean more fish in our coastal waters, bigger fish, and brighter prospects for future generations to enjoy a meaningful fishing experience.

These policies are invaluable for LegaSea, the public outreach brand of the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council. They enable our team to advocate for our collective interests knowing they have the backing of the Council's 56 member clubs and 31,600 affiliated members. And LegaSea supporters can clearly see where we stand on specific issues.

The policies ratified at the 2014 AGM were:

- Fisheries Management Area 1 policy
- Crayfish 3 policy
- Gurnard 2 policy.

LegaSea encourages other groups and individuals who seek abundance, diversity and productivity gains in our marine system to become familiar with these policies. LegaSea welcomes your support, questions, feedback and/or adoption of these policies.

Improving management practices

Historically, fisheries management has focused on single stocks such as snapper or kahawai, in specific areas.

Little consideration has been given to associated and dependent species, the ecosystem in which those fish live, and our environmental impacts.

Existing legislation and international best practice demands consideration of these factors to ensure sufficient abundance so people can provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeings.

Fisheries Management Area 1 policy

There are several processes underway that need to consider the broader management of Fisheries Management Area 1 (FMA1), between North Cape and the eastern Bay of Plenty.

It makes little sense to consider in isolation a strategic management plan for the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park and individual fish stocks, including snapper.

The FMA1 policy explains the need to apply a more integrated and precautionary management approach, one that considers the entire ecosystem, including humans.

Ultimately, we must better manage our marine environment to ensure we provide future generations the opportunities and resources we so gratefully inherited.

nzsportfishing.org.nz – Fisheries – Management Policies – FMA-1-Policy

Crayfish 3 policy

Crayfish 3 (CRA3) extends south from East Cape to the Wairoa River. Management of this fishery has been highly controversial since the Minister granted a “temporary” concession to commercial fishers in 1993, enabling them to take crayfish smaller than the recreational minimum legal size.

After 21 years the concession still exists, despite the serious concerns about the depleted state of the fishery.

A lack of crayfish near Gisborne means locals are denied reasonable access to the fishery and Ministry surveys show CRA3 produces the lowest average weight, at 580g, per crayfish caught recreationally.

Our CRA3 policy seeks management changes to increase the size and abundance of crayfish, and ensure the community’s needs are met.

nzsportfishing.org.nz – Fisheries – Management Policies – Crayfish 3 policy

Gurnard 2 policy

In Gurnard 2 (GUR2), between East Cape and Wellington, gurnard used to be a staple catch for recreational fishers. Declining abundance has meant public catch has plummeted.

Many Hawkes Bay fishers despair at the decline of gurnard and other species.

The GUR2 policy seeks to rebuild the gurnard stock to 40% of its unfished size, at least double what it is now. This can be achieved by applying a range of simple strategies to reduce the mortality of small fish.

An immediate and effective response would be regulations making 125mm mesh cod ends and approved escapement panels mandatory for trawlers operating in Area 2.
nzsportfishing.org.nz – Fisheries – Management Policies – Gurnard 2 Policy

2.

Building LegaSea

LegaSea relies on commercial organisations and industries to lend support to the effort being made to rebuild our fisheries to healthy levels.

LegaSea has a well-established Partner programme that is supported by a range of companies who have a vested interest in the health of our fisheries.

Many of the most recognised brands in New Zealand's recreational tackle and service industry are now sponsoring LegaSea.

Building LegaSea is an innovative programme launched in June this year to encourage the construction industry of New Zealand to show their support to the public outreach work that LegaSea is committed to.

If you build anything then you can probably contribute to the effort going into rebuilding our fisheries.

Through LegaSea's Partner and Building LegaSea programmes we have established a growing list of organisations, now in excess of 90 companies, who are investing in LegaSea's commitment to see future generations of New Zealanders enjoying a meaningful recreational fishing experience.

If you are a business owner and keen to help LegaSea then feel free to call and have a chat. Between us we can work out how you can add strength to the team effort of protecting our fisheries for future generations. Send an email to info@legasea.co.nz or call us on 0800 LEGASEA.

3.

The LegaSea Volunteer programme

LegaSea has engaged a number of volunteers to assist with a range of activities, from attending Boat Shows, distributing flyers, participating in talkback radio, writing letters to the editor and manning the ramps encouraging the public to subscribe to the LegaSea updates.

Coordinating and training volunteers has always been a challenge with a stop-start relationship. Recognising effort and contribution has not been our strength.

LegaSea's Tip the Scales pre-election campaign provided an excellent opportunity for LegaSea to engage with its volunteer network. We had more than 50 people distributing flyers at boat ramps around New Zealand.

Pieter Battaerd and Matthew Taylor are coordinating the Volunteer Programme. This involves reconnecting with our earlier team of volunteers. We have been asking for feedback from our volunteers on their strengths and availability and entering this information into a customer relationship management application. Using Salesforce we can now deploy our volunteers based on location, availability and tasks.

The tasks LegaSea requires assistance with are attendance at events, attending the launching ramps and marinas, data entry and some phone work.

Streamlining how we engage with people is a major development for LegaSea and enables the efficient use of our volunteers' time and resources.

Thank you to everyone who has volunteered in the past, you are our strength and we will need you even more in the near future.

If you would like to become a valued part of the LegaSea volunteer team please sign-up at www.legasea.co.nz/volunteer.

ENDS

P: 0800 LEGASEA (534 273)

E: info@legasea.co.nz

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BREAK OUT BOX



LegaSea is the public face 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 provides public-friendly information about a variety of processes that are important to the sustainable management of fisheries for future generations.