



1.

Free Fish Heads

Thanks to Matt Watson's 'get stuck in and do it' approach the www.freefishheads.co.nz website was born. This marvelous initiative enables successful anglers to share unwanted fish heads and frames with people in their community and at the same time conserve our fishery.

There are thousands of people signed up online at www.freefishheads.co.nz eagerly awaiting a call from a returning fisherman keen to share their catch. If that's you, you can easily find people in your fishing area who would gladly accept the unwanted heads and frames.

This programme represents maximum respect for the fish we take, by reducing waste and bringing communities together. LegaSea encourages all fishers to make use of freefishheads.co.nz to help conserve fish for future generations.

How it works

If you have, or anticipate you will have fish heads and frames to give away all you need to do is:

- Go online to www.freefishheads.co.nz
- Select the place closest to where you'll have fish heads to give away
- Review the list of local recipients
- Call the contact
- Arrange a place and time to meet at the boat ramp, carpark or club.
- Keep the fish heads and frames in ice to maximise freshness.

Not everyone likes fish roe so if it's not your flavour don't waste it. Ask your recipient if they want the roe, chances are they will instantly say yes!

If you would like to receive heads and frames the process is just as simple:

- Go online to www.freefishheads.co.nz
- Register your name, contact number and preferred pick-up area
- Wait for a call from a successful fisher
- Maximise freshness by ensuring you have plenty of ice in your chilly bin when going to pick up the heads and frames.

LegaSea encourages you to watch Matt's video online at www.freefishheads.co.nz where he explains the process. It's simple and effective.

LegaSea's vision

LegaSea's vision is 'more fish in the water for future generations'. This Free Fish Heads initiative seeks to achieve that vision by encouraging maximum use of the fish we take. It enables more families to enjoy the bounty of one person's catch.

As our population grows we need to be more aware of how many fish we take and what we do with those fish. Leaving offensive, rotting carcasses on the beach or at sea is not a good look.

Whether you're at home or on holiday, Matt and LegaSea urge you to visit freefishheads.co.nz and see how simple it is to find someone nearby who will come and take away your chilled, unwanted fish heads and frames.

Check it out www.freefishheads.co.nz.

2.

Brighter prospects to rebuild snapper fishery

Big snapper and diving gannets off the northeast coast are both signs that spring is here and the fish are biting. It's also a reminder of what abundance could look and feel like if we conserved our fisheries.

Conservation and rebuilding our snapper and other fisheries off the northeast coast has been a focus for the recreational representatives in the Snapper 1 Strategy Group.

Recreational, customary and commercial representatives have met with chair, Sir Ian Barker, on 22 occasions. Sir Ian is now finalising a report for the Minister for Primary Industries, Nathan Guy.

LegaSea has been supporting three recreational representatives from the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council in the discussions over the past 20 months. Terms of Reference means only two of our representatives can attend at any one time, and discussions are confidential to the participants, to encourage a free and frank exchange of ideas.

Guiding our team's input has been the Snapper 1 and Fisheries Management Area 1 policies developed by the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council since 2012. www.sportfishing.org.nz - Fisheries – Management policies.

These policies set out the goals, objectives and strategies to achieve both meaningful rebuilds in our inshore fisheries and to improve the productivity of our marine environment. Some of the most critical habitat for juvenile snapper in their first weeks of life is in harbours and estuaries. Subtidal seagrass beds are particularly

important, yet these habitats are some of the most vulnerable to sedimentation and bottom contact fishing methods.

Commercial fishers also need to avoid catching small fish which are often discarded dead. However, commercial fishing methods and practices are not the only aspects under the microscope. Recreational fishing practices have also attracted attention, especially around what can be done to address fishing induced mortality of small fish and selectivity.

Selectivity is the ability to catch the size of fish or species of choice, by modifying a method or behaviour.

With the 2014 increase in minimum legal size for snapper, from 27 to 30cm, in Area 1, from North Cape to the eastern Bay of Plenty, selectivity has become a bigger issue in near shore waters.

Recently our New Zealand Sport Fishing Council team has been looking at three questions:

1. Can recreational fishers change their selectivity to reduce the catch of small fish?
2. Can selectivity be changed so that recreational fishers catch larger fish?
3. Are there other measures that would reduce the catch of small fish?

Initial investigations suggest that boat based fishers could change their selectivity to reduce the catch of small fish and increase the catch of larger fish, by using soft baits and jigs.

Using modern lures instead of cut baits would mean fewer small fish would be caught and the average size of the fish would increase.

In addition to changing methods, amateur fishers could reduce their catch of small fish or undersized fish by:

1. Firstly understanding that avoiding catching small fish was important.
2. By avoiding locations and months where there are high densities of these snapper. This is difficult for the large number of summer fishers in the Hauraki Gulf and landbased fishers who have limited options.
3. Encouraging fishers to move to another spot or change target species to kahawai or trevally, to reduce the catch of small snapper.

There is a clear increase in overall snapper productivity if commercial and recreational fishers can reduce the handling and waste of small fish. Some snapper die quickly, but a large proportion swim away with damage to their swim bladder or internal organs. These injuries may not be obvious at the time of release but can affect their health and growth rate for a long time.

It is our responsibility to act as guardians of the marine environment for future generations, part of that is looking after the fisheries resource and fishing smarter to avoid waste.

As we learn more through the snapper discussions and other processes LegaSea will keep people informed of what they can do to reduce waste, catch bigger fish and conserve our fisheries for the next generations. www.legasea.co.nz/faqs-management.

3. What's Fishing Worth campaign

There has been steady support for the New Zealand Marine Research Foundation's project to measure the value of recreational fishing in New Zealand.

In support of this project LegaSea managed a crowdfunding campaign via Givealittle during August and September. Feedback from that campaign was positive.

People have been pleasantly surprised to discover they can, even now, donate to the New Zealand Marine Research Foundation and claim a 33% tax rebate at the end of the year.

Other fundraising channels include support from Trusts and funding organisations, as well as the recreational fishing industry itself.

Overseas studies conducted by the same research provider have delivered staggering results. In one example, of Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, the economic activity associated with sportfishing was valued at approximately USD\$1.125 billion!

When Mexican politicians realised that sportfishing was attracting around 345,000 visitors per annum and generating over \$245 million in new taxes they threw out their plans to allow commercial fishing into the existing conservation zone.

Changing views on fisheries management and conservation is never easy, especially when money is a major factor. However, the New Zealand Marine Research Foundation is encouraged by previous offshore studies that have led to changes in attitudes and management priorities. Those changes have had positive outcomes for recreational fishing, marine resource management and business interests. New Zealand Inc. could do with some positive changes and it all starts with you. Please donate at www.whatsfishingworth.co.nz.



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.