



Recreational fishing is a billion dollar industry

LegaSea is confident the study confirming recreational fishing is a billion dollar industry provides a strong basis for rebuilding our inshore fisheries. The two-year research project found local and visiting anglers collectively spend \$946 million dollars each year on saltwater fishing, stimulating around \$1.7 billion dollars in annual economic activity.

Scott Macindoe, spokesperson for LegaSea, believes politicians will be particularly interested in the 8000 jobs created and \$136 million of GST revenues making its way into government coffers on the back of recreational fishing.

“We now have credible evidence that recreational fishing is a bona fide industry, one that deserves more respect and attention when it comes to deciding how our fisheries are managed. Currently some of our important fisheries are depleted to a level where local families cannot access a reasonable amount of fish to put on the table. This research supports a business case for restoring abundance.

“Recreational fishers generate over \$1.7 billion by taking just six percent of all landed catch, they then share that food with family and friends. In comparison, the commercial industry takes around 94 percent of the national catch earning \$1.2 billion per annum in export receipts.”

Jeff Romeril is Chairman of the New Zealand Marine Research Foundation who commissioned international researchers Southwick Associates to define the significant contribution that recreational fishing makes to the New Zealand economy.

“As recreational anglers we have always known that our fishing supports a whole industry of activity adding value to the New Zealand economy, but there was no easy way to describe that contribution. While we realise that not everyone has an interest in recreational fishing, most Kiwis want a strong economy and clean, healthy seas with an abundance of marine life.”

The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council has supported many of the Foundation’s earlier research projects and was very keen to see this project succeed. Council spokesman, Richard Baker, is pleased there is now some hard evidence to support recreational fishing, but acknowledges there is more work to be done.

“The results need to be shared with decision makers and the general public so they understand that trying to catch a fish for your family’s dinner is not only the fifth most popular recreational activity in the country, it also makes a positive difference to every New Zealander’s quality of life by contributing so much to the economy and job market.

“Overseas experience shows that fishing tourism can also bring substantial benefits to regional economies if fisheries are abundant.”

LegaSea and the Foundation have raised the money for this project without any government funding. They appreciate the donations from hundreds of people who supported the research through the ‘What’s Fishing Worth?’ campaign, between August 2015 and February 2016.

Scott Macindoe added, “Their generous support has given us the springboard we need to offer our politicians and fisheries managers the information they require to make more pragmatic and effective decisions, to both rebuild New Zealand’s fisheries to abundant levels and consider the future use and conservation of our taonga, our precious marine resources”.

Websites:

LegaSea www.legasea.co.nz

New Zealand Marine Research Foundation www.nzmrf.org.nz

New Zealand Sport Fishing Council www.nzsportfishing.org.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.