



## **N Z RECREATIONAL FISHING COUNCIL**

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6 August 2012

# **NEW ZEALAND RECREATIONAL FISHING COUNCIL**

## **Submission on**

### **Review of Inshore Fish Stock Sustainability Measures for the 2012/13 Fishing Years**

### **Including Bluenose**

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**1:** The national organisations represented by this body are N.Z. Angling & Casting Association, N.Z. Trailer Boat Federation, N.Z. Marine Transport Association, N.Z. Sports Industry Association and N.Z. Underwater Association. We also support the Ministry led and funded recreational forums of which many of these regional members are now members as individuals.

**2:** The Council maintains close contact with a number of Iwi representatives. While every effort has been made to consult we do not suggest that this submission is representative of their views.

**3:** This Council represents over 76,000 recreational and sustenance amateur fishers. In addition by default we represent the public interest in the fishery and those amateur fishers who are non-members. We say by default because we are the only constituted representative body that has been recognised by Government and the Courts of doing so.

**4:** Over one million people or by recent Ministry of Fisheries figures 20% of New Zealanders fish for sport or sustenance. This does not include those elderly or infirmed amateur fishers who can no longer actively participate in catching seafood for the table. The 1996 research to provide estimates of Recreational and Sustenance Harvest Estimates found that there are approx 1.35 million and increasing recreational and sustenance amateur fishers in New Zealand and therefore we effectively, through our associated member groups, and lack of any other democratically elected or statutory recognised group represent this number also.

**5:** The Council has been recognised in three court cases as representing the recreational and amateur fishers of New Zealand. The Council was attached to two of these cases without its prior knowledge and the court papers show it was ordered, “to represent the recreational fishing public of New Zealand”. The first of these was the order of attachment to the High Court Action on the Manukau, Taiapure application. The second relates to the SNA1 challenge of the Minister’s decision that was heard by the High Court. The Council also holds “Approved Party Status” for consultations with the Ministry of Fisheries and is recognised by them and the Minister of Fisheries as a stakeholder group. In the third case this Council along with the NZ Big Game Fishing Council were the applicants in the recent Kahawai case.

**6:** The Council has a Board of democratically elected officers and members. The Council consults with its members and the public using various means. These include newsletters, both written and electronic, its web site and various press releases. In addition it consults through the various fishing media and meetings it holds and receives input through those forums.

**7:** This submission has been prepared and presented after consultation via email and our web site to our members and board members.

**8:** As previously stated, we are aware that many of our National Affiliates and Regional Members are submitting their own submissions and in most cases we have seen and support these submissions where they are not in direct conflict with this submissions intent or requested outcome.

**9:** In the submission we talk of both recreational and amateur fishers as these two descriptions are so intertwined. For sake of some clarity recreational fishers referred to are generally those who have an interest in supporting recreational fishing interests while amateur refers to all fishers who exercise their rights to fish under the amateur fishing regulations.

#### **10: Introduction**

Members of the NZRFC have participated in the fish planning process through all the regional forums and not only have they not had any of their concerns heard, stocks they requested have management intervention did not even get into the program and if they have it is not the requested downward movement as wished always in favor of the commercial sector. It is certainly time for the government to realize the value of an abundant fishery to recreational fishers. If recreational regional forums are to have any creditability with the recreational fishing public some credence must be given to their thoughts. Several of these fisheries are of significance to recreational fishers. As already requested in significant shared fisheries recreational fishers required them to be run well above Bmsy. Due to significant lack of resources the NZRFC is unable to take part fully in this review. The total lack of anyone within MPI who has responsibility for working on the impacts of MPI decisions on the public fishing sector is lamentable and smacks of a Ministry who denies the value of recreational fishing to the New Zealand economy.

**11:** At the request of industry TAC/TACC reviews can happen with the support of Ministry acting on behalf of a government trying to earn every last dollar irrespective of the impacts this may have on sustainability given that these fisheries are mostly not the targeted species.

**12:** One wonders if MPI has read their own IPP before coming to the conclusions to support increase for GUR, JDO and POR these are not sustainable, jeopardizing access for the recreational sector.

**13:** The high staff turnover at MPI who knows how many analysts and managers would have passed through the MPI system. The huge loss of intellectual property from the Ministry is now been seen in the standard of the IPP's that are hitting the ground.

**14:** Finer scale management and harvest of TACC needs to occur to better reflect the varying geographical nature and to avoid spatial conflict and localized depletion.

**15:** Many of our inshore areas in are important breeding grounds and as the current voluntary agreements do not work the bulk harvesting method of bottom trawling, dredging and any other bottom scraping methods are to be kept away from any hard or soft ground (including coral and sponge beds)

#### **16: Elephant Fish 5 (ELE 5)**

The NZRFC cannot support any increases in the TACC until such time as the available information on ELE 5 is sufficient to enable an estimation of B Current and Bmsy. To simply increase TACC at the whim of over catch by commercial fishers is not good enough. Especially when it appears that the targeted species of which Elephant fish are a by-catch are in some much trouble. This problem highlights the need for an eco system approach to the setting of catch levels. Those fish that are caught in conjunction must also be taken into account i.e. Flatfish, Giant Stargazer and Rig etc.

**17:** The low fecundity of this species makes it prone to over fishing. Juvenile fish appear to spend their time in shallow water and are vulnerable to capture by commercial fishers and because they are of little commercial value are generally not retained.

**18:** This statement from the IPP is shameful. More so is Para 55 that states discarding of ELE 5 has been identified as an issue that needs to be addressed by fishers. A review of discarding is ongoing and will seek solutions to the various negative incentives that encourage fishers to high grade and dump. Does the ministry need to be reminded that the dumping of fish is illegal and needs to be treated as such? Wet dish clothes just don't cut the mustard.

**19:** Has any investigation been done to bring Elephant Fish into the 6th schedule? If work has been done what were the results. We note with interest that most shark species are suitable for the 6<sup>th</sup> schedule.

**20:** The NZRFC support Option 1 (Status Quo)

Option	TAC	TACC	Customary	Recreational	Other Sources
Option 1	157	140	5	5	7

**21: Dark Ghost Shark 2 (GSH 2)**

Once again commercial fishers are using the over catch scenario to justify an increase in TACC of a by-catch species of which there is no published information on age or growth rate. Neither has there been any stock assessment on any stocks of this species. There are no estimates of fishery parameters for this species. We wish that staff putting together these IPP's would read the plenary documents that just don't support any increase.

**22:** This means this fishery is wholly reliant on commercial CPUE data, which is not peer reviewed. However we do agree to the option 2 increase of the quota. It is our suggestion to proceed with caution and ensure that commercial fishers are constrained to their TACC. Dumping and high grading needs to be addressed, as it is illegal. Also consideration needs to be given to allowing this species to enter into the 6<sup>th</sup> schedule.

**23:** Consideration should be made to giving a one-ton allowance to recreational fishers who are now targeting the deeper water species with electric reels and are catching Ghost Shark on occasion.

**24:** The NZRFC supports Option 2

Option	TAC	TACC	Customary	Recreational	Other Sources
Option 2	100	89	0	1	10

**25: Dark Ghost Shark 8 (GSH 8)**

Please consider our reasoning above to be the same for this quota management area.

**26:** The NZRFC supports Option 2

Option	TAC	TACC	Customary	Recreational	Other Sources
Option 2	39	34	0	1	4

**27: Red Gurnard 3 (GUR 3)**

There is no new data for this fishery except CPUE data from commercial fisherman. This is the only driver that supports the notion that this fishery is above Bmsy. There are only 1 or 2 relatively strong year classes that support this fishery. It is dangerous to increase the TACC without a good series of strong year classes. With the above information taken from the plenary document it is very important that caution is taken in this fishery. So until the suggested quantitative stock assessment for GUR 3, to allow the estimation of Bmsy and other reference points the NZRFC cannot support any increase in TACC.

**28:** Recreational fishers from the area comment, that the fishery is fragile and although they are enjoying a slight increase in abundance, they do not want to see the crashes experienced in 91/92 and 99/00 years, which are not that long ago.

**29:** The NZRFC supports Option 2

Option	TAC	TACC	Customary	Recreational	Other Sources
Option 1	953	90	3	5	45

**30: Red Gurnard 7 (GUR 7)**

These options have been developed in response to a request for an increase in the TACC from the commercial stakeholder organisation for FMA 7, Challenger Fin Fisheries Management Company. This is amazing as the present TACC has not been caught since 2006-07. Stock projections or prognosis is without corroborating information on recruitment from a trawl survey. It is not possible to predict how the stock is going to respond in the next few years. So how can the ministry be recommending any increase in this fishery?

**31:** We suggest that as this fishery is a by catch fishery the ministry need to recommend to fisherman that they carry a balanced portfolio of ACE to cover any by-catch. In these fisheries where the by catch stocks are the species being asked to increase, the ministry needs to seriously look at what the real target species is.

**32:** The TACC for GUR7 was increased in 2009 to 715t and has not been utilised by industry for the past 4 years. In the 2010/11 fishing year landings were 545t; this is 76% of the TACC.

**33:** The NZRFC does not support any increase in TAC/TACC while spatial issues in FMA7 have not been addressed by MPI, furthermore option 3 is not sustainable past the short term (2-4 years) as indicated in the consultation document, and any such increase by the Minister will be irresponsible as the likelihood of this fishery being reviewed again within 2-4 years is

unlikely thus causing this fishery to possibly over fished. Any change to a TAC that is not sustainable beyond 2 years cannot be supported by the NZRFC and while MPI recommends the biennial WCSI trawl survey continues and a TAC review be undertaken when information is updated in 2 years time TAC reviews are not guaranteed given the staff situation with MPI.

**34:** While we accept abundance has increased slightly in some areas of FMA 7, the best available information that MPI currently has on GUR7 is insufficient to enable reliable estimates of BCURRENT and BMSY. When our aim is to manage the significantly shared stocks above BMSY it is simply irresponsible to increase the TAC/TACC. Commercial catches have decreased and we do not know where the stock sits in relation to BMSY.

**35:** When abundance does decline and this decline is not halted the recreational sector will be denied access to the fishery. This does sit with the Fisheries Act of providing for the economic and social welling being of recreational fishers.

**36:** MPI claims in their consultation document that there are conflicting trends in CPUE data for Tasman and Golden Bays and the West Coast and therefore considers the WCSI trawl survey to be a more robust index for abundance.

**37:** History shows us time and time again that the only reason commercial fisherman have not landed the maximum catch they are entitled to is because the fish are not there and abundance has declined. MPI analysts have displayed their naivety in buying the commercial spin that catch trends are influenced by market preference for larger fish.

**38:** We are sure market preferences are for larger fish, and we submit that these “smaller fish” the new recruits to the fishery should be left in the water to grow through, surely then the economic value to industry from this fishery will be enhanced beyond the \$160,000, which is the difference between Option 1 and Option 3.

**39:** When commercial catches exceeded levels being promoted in option 3 of this IPP in 1992/3 (761) subsequent years catch levels plummeted to 400t or below to reach an all time low in 1997/98 of 309t. Then again after landings of 793t in 2002/03 we see that landings again significantly reduced to at or below 600t.

**40:** The catch history trends show that this fishery cannot sustain commercial harvest levels of the current TAC and the CPUE data supports this.

**41:** While WCSI survey and anecdotal evidence and catches from recreational fishers show an increase in abundance additional anecdotal evidence supports the claim of high numbers of smaller fish and not so many bigger fish. This adds even more weight to the argument that these fish should left in the water to grow through to meet “market preferences for larger fish.”

**42:** For recreational fishers to have access to the gurnard fishery abundance has to be at a level higher than it has been in the past 20 years. Gurnard has represented a low percentage of recreational catch until the last 2-4 years and this increase in catch by the recreational sector

can not be jeopardised through increase TAC/TACC's, particularly those that are not sustainable.

**43:** Methods employed by the commercial sector make it an unfair competition for recreational fishers to harvest their allocation of the TAC. Towing a large trawl net scooping up what ever is in the way versus a bit of monofilament with a hook on the end of it just does not compare; this is why abundance must be kept at above Bmsy.

**44:** The justification used for a TAC increase in 2009 was from the WCSI trawl survey and the survey used for this IPP may provide an accepted index of relative abundance for GUR 7 backed up by recreational catch levels even if it isn't support by either CPUE or commercial catch levels.

**45:** We understand this government has a focus on economic growth but the Minister is bound to take a precautionary approach and provide access for the recreational sector and reversing the current trend line of increasing biomass does meet his obligations.

**46:** The NZRFC support Option 1 status Quo

Option	TAC	TACC	Customary	Recreational	Other Sources
Option 1	759	715	10	20	14

**47: John Dory 7 (JDO 7)**

The proposed options have been developed in response to a request for an increase in the TACC from the commercial stakeholder organisation for FMA 7, Challenger Fin Fisheries Management Company.

**48:** The NZRFC does not support any increase in TAC/TACC while spatial issues in FMA7 are not addressed by MPI, furthermore option 3 is not sustainable past the short term (2-4 years) as indicated in the consultation document, and any such increase by the Minister will be irresponsible.

**49:** While we accept abundance has increased in some areas of FMA 7, the best available information that MPI currently has on JDO7 is insufficient to enable reliable estimates of BCURRENT and BMSY.

**50:** When our aim is to manage the stock above BMSY it is simply irresponsible to increase the TAC/TACC because abundance has increased, commercial catches have decreased and we do not where the stock sits in relation to BMSY.

**51:** We are alarmed that the high level of TAC/TACC increases proposed are not sustainable and that the TAC will not be reviewed in a timely fashion when abundance declines and any decline in abundance will deny access for the recreational sector.

**52:** Any change to a TAC that is not sustainable beyond 2 years cannot be supported by the NZRFC and while MPI recommends the biennial WCSI trawl survey continues and a TAC

review be undertaken when information is updated in 2 years time TAC reviews are not guaranteed.

**53:** Furthermore with the high staff turnover at MPI who knows how many analysts and managers would have passed through the MPI system and is able to remember the recommendation when it is necessary to review?

**54:** When abundance does decline and this decline is not halted the recreational sector will be denied access to the fishery.

**55:** The TACC for JDO7 was increased in 2009 from 114t to 125t and has not been utilised by industry for the past 2 years. In both the 2009/10 and 2010/11 fishing year landings were below the previous TACC of 114t.

**56:** The WCSI survey estimates that biomass has fluctuated above the long term mean since 2000 and while the biomass estimate is the highest in the series there is no information on where abundance is relation to BMSY.

**57:** History shows us time and time again that the only reason commercial fisherman have not landed the maximum catch they are entitled to is because the fish are not there and abundance has declined.

**58:** It is our submission that the new recruits into the fishery should be left in the water to grow through, surely then the economic value to industry from this fishery will be enhanced beyond the \$140,000, which is the difference between Option 1 and Option 3.

**59:** In recent times we have finally seen recreational fishers featured in fishing publications with their John Dory catch – something that was unthinkable before abundance started to improve. To have access to the John Dory fishery abundance has to be at a level higher than it has been in the past 30 years.

**60:** John Dory has represented a very low percentage of recreational catch and it is apparent that the increase in abundance is now providing access to the fishery, access that has been declined due to over fishing by industry.

**61:** The improved access and increase catch levels by the recreational sector cannot be jeopardised through increase TAC/TACC's, particularly those that are not sustainable beyond 2 years!

**62:** The two methods employed by the commercial and non-commercial sectors make it an unfair competition for recreational fishers to harvest their allocation of the TAC. Towing a large trawl net scooping up what ever is in the way versus a bit of monofilament with a hook on the end of it just does not compare; this is why abundance must be kept at a level at or above where it is now.

**63:** We understand this government has a focus on economic growth but the Minister is bound to take a precautionary approach and provide access for the recreational sector and reversing the current trend line of increasing biomass does meet his obligations.

**64:** The NZRFC support Option 1 (Status Quo)

Option	TAC	TACC	Customary	Recreational	Other Sources
Option 1	131	125	1	2	3

### **65: Local Area Management**

FMA7 is a complex and varied fishery, which covers the West Coast of the South Island, Tasman and Golden Bays, the Marlborough Sounds and the upper East Coast of the South Island.

**66:** The recreational sector fish under the amateur regulations for FMA7 as well as the two sub area regulations; those for the Challenger East Area and those for the Marlborough Sounds Area. These sub areas of FMA7 have additional stricter regulations that better reflect the varying geographical nature and varying abundance of stocks within FMA7.

**67:** While there are various gear restrictions on the commercial sector the harvest of the TACC can be achieved from anywhere within FMA7.

**68:** In the case of both gurnard and John Dory it is known that in some areas of FMA 7 recreational fishers have experienced increased catches, there are however a number of other popular areas, in particular adjacent to intensively commercial bottom trawled areas, where no increase has been detected and low catches remain the norm (e.g. the western shores of Tasman Bay). Any increase in the TACC will only allow increased commercial effort, which will continue to deny access to the fishery in these areas.

**69:** It is obvious that spreading commercial effort and catch within FMA7 could achieve increased TACC while also allowing better access to these fisheries for the recreational sector. It is our submission that finer scale management on a more local basis of commercial effort and their catch entitlements within FMA7 needs to be implemented to allow for increased utilisation and thereby creating greater equity and higher value.

**70:** It is a nonsense that tighter restrictions apply to only one sector whose overall catch allocation and catch is a fraction as that provided for the commercial sector.

**71:** The TACC should be broken down to be management by statistical reporting areas that better reflect the varying geographical nature and varying abundance levels within FMA7 and to avoid localised depletion and provide for all sectors equally.

### **72: Bottom Trawling**

Bottom trawling is the primary form of harvesting employed by industry throughout the inshore areas. This bulk harvesting method is claimed and promoted as the only economical method available to industry to harvest fish stocks.

**73:** Bottom trawling in is the single most destructive force in the coastal marine environment. The destructive effects of bottom trawling is accepted by commercial fishers (declared deepwater no trawl areas SEAFIC 4 April 2007) The voluntary no trawl lines for some

commercial fishers have repeatedly ignored in many areas. There are no repercussions for the commercial fishers who breeched these agreements as they are voluntary. It is apparent voluntary agreements do not work.

**74:** Many fish species are non-specific predators that will eat most anything they can catch. As such, juvenile survival is often limited by the amount of cover that small fish have to allow them to escape from larger fish (often of their own or other species). It seems clear that

the productivity of many regions has been seriously degraded by the practice known within Industry of “clearing soft foul” where chains and steel rollers were dragged through areas of harder corals and other reef forming organisms (oysters and reef forming polychaetes etc). Without the cover to hide behind, juveniles of many species (including Snapper and Blue Cod) are vulnerable to predation by their elders. We contend that in many areas, the lack of cover is now the rate-limiting step in the productivity of many fisheries.

**75:** Tasman and Golden Bays and the Marlborough Sounds are important breeding grounds for many key recreational stocks and the altered benthic habitat and bottom structure severely deprives finfish from safe habitat. The ability of juvenile finfish to seek protection from predators in this altered environment through destructive fishing practices cannot be underestimated.

**76:** Key to increased fish stock abundance is the recovery of the coastal marine area and the removal of bottom trawling will allow the benthic habitat the opportunity to recover. The link between a healthy benthic habitat and the whole marine eco-system is irrefutable.

**77:** While there is no historic baseline information to measure the degree of destruction from commercial bottom trawling methods there is significant anecdotal evidence that commercial fishing interests have over several decades knowingly altered and in some cases destroyed the seabed from what was once its natural state.

**78:** There are also numerous scientific studies conducted in other fisheries and marine environments that conclude trawl fishing has caused the destruction and alteration of the habitat that further conclude the marine environment will not recover until the practice of bottom trawling ceases.

**79:** Bottom trawling and the use of other powered bottom fishing gear have effects on the seabed that resemble clear felling forests, a terrestrial disturbance recognised as a major threat to biological diversity and economic sustainability. Structures in marine benthic communities are generally much smaller than those in forests, but structural complexity is no less important to their bio diversity.

**80:** Berman and Hup (1992) demonstrated 10-65% reductions in echinoderm, polychaete, and mollusk densities after trawling. This result suggests that removal of habitat structure in relatively low-structure soft-sediment systems such as Tasman and Golden Bays and the Marlborough Sounds will significantly decrease their biodiversity, and consequently that of the wider marine ecosystem.

**81:** Stopping trawling significantly increases the density of large epifauna and by removing this activity we would see evidence of broad scale changes in benthic communities that can be directly related to the removal of bottom trawl fishing.

**82:** It is essential to recognise that the risks of trawling include many factors in addition to the direct effects on target species. By catch is perhaps the most serious general environmental impact of modern fisheries. Given Trawling gear is dragged on or near the bottom to recover benthic or near benthic species in the water column or on the soft bottom, the effects of trawling are extensive and potentially severely damaging to the ecosystem.

**83:** Epifaunal species are especially vulnerable, and there are overseas reports of trawlers destroying sea pens and beds of the reef building polychaete Sabellaria, the oyster *Ostrea edulis*, and sea grass *Zostera marina*.

**84:** In New Zealand, Bradstock and Gordon (1983) also reported the loss of large beds of bryozoans as a result of trawling. In each of the above cases the habitats that were destroyed by trawling probably represent very important nursery areas for many species, often including some of the target species of fisheries.

**85:** Extensive areas of benthic habitat in the Tasman Coastal Marine Area have been lost or their physical integrity compromised as a result of trawl fishing. Mobile fishing gears are a major cause for concern because of the size of the affected fishing grounds, the associated modification of the substrate, disturbance of benthic communities, and removal of non-target species.

**86:** Random research surveys may underestimate the actual environmental impact of the commercial bottom fishing activities. Another problem is that research surveys are often much more reduced in time and space than the actual fishing effort.

**87:** They report long lists of benthic species destroyed, and that most good areas are trawled over many times a year even 25% mortality is extremely serious for long lived species that recruit episodically and live in areas exposed to trawling several times a year.

**88:** In addition to direct impacts, there are many indirect impacts caused by trawling resulting from increased turbidity likely to reduce or eliminate *sea grass habitats*. In most cases these are important habitats that become dominated by small deposit feeding polychaetes. Such shifts have serious implications because deposit-feeding communities may resist recovery of suspension feeding species. Epifauna play key roles in influencing the structure and stability of benthic communities.

**89:** Trawl fishing exerts a profound effect on almost all components of associated communities and ecosystems. The most sensitive components are rare habitats that serve as nurseries and the species with low reproductive rates. It is accepted that Tasman and Golden Bays and the Marlborough Sounds areas are nursery grounds for many species including our favoured Snapper. Blue Cod were even once abundant in Tasman and Golden Bays but they now have nowhere to hide from predators.

**90:** Fisheries managers attempt to address the sustainability of fish-stocks through the Quota Management System a system that fails to minimise the direct and indirect impacts of fishing on other components of the ecosystem. A number of recent international fisheries agreements have specifically identified the need to provide for habitat protection and restoration to ensure long-term sustainability of fisheries.

**91:** We submit that if we are to improve habitat and ultimately improve fish stock abundance that bottom trawling must be removed from key breeding areas such as Golden and Tasman Bays and the Marlborough Sounds.

**92:** The NZRFC can not support any increases in TACC’s until inter sector spatial separation is achieved through the removal of bottom impacting fishing methods and the creation of no trawl areas 3 miles from mean low water springs (MLWS). Trawling, seining, dredging and other bottom crushing methods need to be banned across significant areas of what was once reef covered bottom – particularly in the Nelson – Golden Bay area and also in may other areas around the country, if we expect fisheries to return to the levels of productively that were once experienced.

**93:** As scientific hypotheses are never proven, only disproven, conservative management is very difficult because exploiters can always point out uncertainties about the casual relationships between exploitation and environmental degradation. **The NZRFC submit that the burden of proof lies with the exploiter.**

**94: Porae 2 (POR 2)**

So little is known on this species accept to say that it is a by-catch fishery of some species that are of importance to recreational fishers. i.e. Snapper, Tarakihi and Trevally. We note that this fishery does need some alteration of commercial catch limits but cannot see how MPI can justify the increase suggested when the greatest recent commercial landing in POR 2 was 11 tonnes in the 2009-10 fishing year and not matched in any other years.

**95:** The NZRFC does not support any suggested option, so has created a new one.

Option	TAC	TACC	Customary	Recreational	Other Sources
NZRFC option		12	1	1	2

**96: School Shark (SCH) to Sixth Schedule**

We support all stocks of School Shark going into the sixth schedule. This is conditional on the fish being alive and well on return. This situation needs to be monitored in the initial stages to unsure compliance.

**97: The NZRFC supports**

Option 2 School Shark can be returned to the sea if in a survivable state. Returned fish under this provision is reported by does not count against ACE.

**98: Review of Deemed Value Rates for Inshore Stocks**

The IPP makes several mentions of meetings and discussions with commercial interests on the impact of altering Deemed values. The NZRFC asks when and where were the same discussions held with recreational interests? It is unacceptable that MPI claim to view recreational fishers as a “sector” in the fisheries framework but then deny them any resources or, in this case, opportunity for input.

**99:** The NZRFC finds it unacceptable that MPI would reduce deemed values because it knows that commercial fishers are dumping rather than landing catch. It begs the question, why doesn't MPI compliance do their job and prosecute any commercial fisher dumping fish. The NZRFC further submits that all fish caught as a result of commercial fishing, irrespective of species, should be landed. Then, and only then will we all be able to calculate the true cost of commercial catch.

**100:** The NZRFC is amazed that after all these years MPI still doesn't seem to be prepared to do anything about the deflated port prices paid to fishers to keep deemed values lower. Ever since the introduction of the QMS commercial interests have continually sought ways to ramp up catches and rot the system. Low port prices is just one of many. The NZRFC submits that TACC's are set to be adhered to and were first introduced to constrain commercial fishing. By making deeming profitable constraint is removed. We find it unacceptable that MPI appears to be compliant in trying to make over fishing profitable.

**101:** In addition to the rot around port prices we wonder how long it will take MPI to wake up to the fact that processors continue to profit from what is essentially illegally caught fish. With any deeming penalties being paid by the ACE holder the way is still clear for the processor to make profits from processing and selling the fish. Given the processors are the major quota owners these days the extent of the rot is even greater.

**102:** The function of deemed values ought to be to encourage fishers to alter their behavior and fishing methods to avoid over catch of any species where there is no ACE available. Unfortunately MPI seems to buy in to the old excuse that commercial couldn't avoid it so therefore we must allow for it. What rubbish. Put the deemed values up, confiscate a few boats and prosecute the offenders would be much more effective.

**103:** The NZRFC doesn't accept the necessity to reduce deemed values to cover by catch so long as the species in question is targeted as a pure catch at certain times of the year. An example is in SNA7 where pair's trawling for snapper in the spring results in an almost pure catch of snapper. Surely if commercial interests expect anyone to accept they cannot avoid taking snapper as a by catch then the first step would be to stop the targeted fishing. Furthermore it appears the deemed values don't kick in until the TACC has been exceeded by more than 10% in a number of fisheries. When this is taken into account it appears that TACC's can be exceeded by 20% before any real deemed value close to the real port price is paid. The NZRFC submits this is an incentive for commercial fishers to over catch and in effect is as good as giving them a TACC increase.

**104:** If MPI insists in implementing this then the NZRFC asks when will MPI be giving recreational fishers a 20% increase in bag limits in the same fisheries?

**105:** While the overall theme in the review is to increase the cost to fishers for the first portion of over catch the NZRFC remains unconvinced that TACC's would be adhered to any better. Surely this must be the real test, or is it MPI policy to provide commercial fishers with catch increases without going through the stock assessment process?

**106:** MPI will probably argue they cannot catch dumpers. The answer to this is simple. Real-time GPS reporting, as is done in the southern scallop fleet along with video surveillance on the fish deck. The cost of this is quite low and with a lot less boats operating in the inshore fleet these days it should be fairly easy to monitor. In this age most people are monitored when simply walking down the street so it would be a small price for fishers to pay for ongoing access to our public water spaces.

**107:** The NZRFC supports increases in Deemed values for all portions of over catch with this starting from the first kilo that exceeds the available ACE.

**108: Bluenose**

**(BNS 1, 2, 3, 7 & 8)**

Bluenose is a prime fish for recreational fishers when fishing the deep. This is usually a fair distance offshore. When making these journeys it is important for recreational fishers for there to be fish there for us to catch. More and more often we are finding that there are not.

**109:** We are surprised that MPI do not have quantitative estimates of other sources of fishing-related mortality. This fish is caught in relatively deep water and their survival rate when caught is zero.

**110:** The NZRFC supports a quick rebuild timeframe for this stock, a slower rebuild time means the stock spends longer in a more vulnerable state and a further decline in stock size may reduce the capacity of the stock to rebuild. While the stock is below the soft limit the stock is considered to be at an unacceptably low level. To ensure stock sustainability, we recommend the stock be moved to above 20% Bo as soon as possible.

**111:** We recommend that this stock is reduced in one step The rebuild under option three has the faster rebuild option and although it will impact on commercial fishers we consider the present availability to recreational fishers of Blue Nose to be unacceptable.

**112:** The NZRFC support Option 3

Option	TAC	TACC	Customary	Recreational	Other Sources
Option 3	704	620	9	63	12

