

## NATIONAL ROCK LOBSTER MANAGEMENT GROUP



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Hon Phil Heatley  
Minister of Fisheries  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington

Dear Minister

### **Final Advice on Rock Lobster Fisheries for the 2010-11 fishing year**

The National Rock Lobster Management Group (NRLMG) is the primary source of advice to the Minister of Fisheries on the management of, and issues relating to, New Zealand rock lobster fisheries. In December 2009 we provided you with an Annual Report that included two initial position papers (IPPs).

The Ministry of Fisheries (MFish) consulted on our initial advice on your behalf between 17 December 2009 and 5 February 2010. We have analysed the submissions received from a range of organisations, groups, companies and individuals and have now prepared our final advice.

### **Final Advice on Management Interventions for the 2010-11 Fishing Year**

Please find enclosed our final advice on CRA 3 (Gisborne), CRA 4 (Wellington/Hawkes Bay) and CRA 7 (Otago) rock lobster fisheries. Our final advice includes:

1. A proposal to adopt a management procedure for CRA 3; and
2. Catch limit reviews for CRA 3, CRA 4 and CRA 7.

#### ***CRA 3***

There is no agreement among submitters or the NRLMG on a recommended option for CRA 3.

Two alternative CRA 3 Management Procedure options are proposed to guide CRA 3 Total Allowable Catch (TAC) setting, called “Rule 2a” and “Rule 5”, from 1 April 2010. The

NRLMG is confident the CRA 3 Management Procedures meet your statutory obligations whilst also meeting stakeholder utilisation objectives.

Application of the “Rule 2a” Management Procedure would result in no change to the current CRA 3 TAC, whereas application of the “Rule 5” Management would result in a TAC decrease of 20 tonnes for CRA 3. Under the “Rule 5” option, only the Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC) would be reduced by 20 tonnes.

#### ***CRA 4***

There is no agreement among submitters or the NRLMG on a recommended option for CRA 4.

In March 2009, you adopted the CRA 4 Management Procedure to guide TAC setting in CRA 4 for the 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12 fishing years. Application of the CRA 4 Management Procedure for 1 April 2010 TAC setting would result in a TAC increase for CRA 4 from 461 tonnes to 660.5 tonnes.

Based on information provided in submissions we agreed to include an additional option for CRA 4, which is within the range of options consulted on, for your consideration. Some submitters prefer a more cautious approach to CRA 4 TAC setting than the TAC resulting from the operation of the CRA 4 Management Procedure. This option would result in a TAC increase for CRA 4 from 461 tonnes to 610.625 tonnes.

Some submitters also support retention of the current CRA 4 TAC and allowances because they have doubts that the CRA 4 stock size has increased as much as suggested by the 2009 catch-per-unit-effort (or CPUE) estimate, and therefore recommend a precautionary management approach.

In respect of the three options presented for CRA 4, we advise that all options are consistent with your statutory obligations. We note that it is not proposed to alter non-commercial allowances under either TAC increase option.

#### ***CRA 7***

In March 2008, the previous Minister of Fisheries adopted the CRA 7 Management Procedure to guide TAC setting in CRA 7.

We recommend that you decrease the TAC for CRA 7 from 209 tonnes to 104.5 tonnes from 1 April 2010. To achieve the decrease in TAC, we recommend that you only decrease the TACC from 189 tonnes to 84.5 tonnes. We consider these decreases to be consistent with your statutory obligations.

#### **Operation of the CRA 8 Management Procedure**

A management procedure was also adopted by the previous Minister of Fisheries for CRA 8 (Southern) in March 2008. The operation of the CRA 8 Management Procedure in 2009 results in no change to the CRA 8 TAC for 1 April 2010.

We look forward to meeting with you on Wednesday, 24 February to discuss and explore aspects of our final advice and support you in making decisions. We also understand that you would like to discuss telson clipping further.

However, if you would like to discuss the details of the NRLMG's final advice ahead of Wednesday's meeting, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S Halley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "S" and a long, sweeping underline.

Steve Halley  
Team Leader– Inshore Fisheries  
Ministry of Fisheries

On behalf of the National Rock Lobster Management Group