



Technical fisheries management changes

Fact sheet and FAQs

What? We're proposing technical changes to the Fisheries Act 1996 (the Act), including better estimating other sources of fishing related mortality and technical changes to ensure the legislation is up to date. We also want to take the opportunity to remove some redundant provisions from the Fisheries Act 1983.

Why? The technical changes proposed are important to improve the functionality of the Act, and ensure it is fit for purpose in light of other proposed changes. For example, potential changes to the landings and return-to-sea rules. It's also an opportunity to tidy up the Fisheries Act 1983.

| Proposals | Detail |
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| Better estimating fish deaths caused by commercial fishing | Changes are proposed to allow for better catch information from commercial fishers to inform, when possible, the level of other sources of fishing related mortality. Fisheries New Zealand proposes to explicitly attribute the other sources of fishing related mortality to the commercial sector when there is sufficient data. This will encourage the commercial sector to reduce unseen and unreported fish deaths through improved fishing practices (gear improvements, handling of fish when on board). |
| Technical changes to ensure the legislation is up to date | We have identified some areas where the law is uncertain, or there is a gap in how the law is worded. We're proposing some technical changes to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• allow for Maori customary, non-commercial fishing interests to be considered when the Minister is considering South Island closures.• amendment of powers relating to the installation and maintenance of equipment to observe fishing, and• removing some redundant provisions from the Fisheries Act 1983. |

FAQs

What are other sources of fish mortality?

These unseen fish deaths includes illegal take, under-reporting, death of fish required to be returned to the sea, "ghost fishing" by lost gear and burst nets.

Why do we need to better estimate unintentional fish deaths?

The setting of the total allowable catch (TAC) limit for a fishery includes an assessment of all catch that is: landed and reported commercially, taken through customary and recreational practices, and all other deaths attributed to fishing. Currently, these other deaths are often not attributed to a particular fishing sector, but instead attributed across all sectors in one amount.

How will this proposal help?

The introduction of electronic catch and position reporting, alongside changes to how and what has to be reported, provides an opportunity to better estimate unreported fish deaths through commercial fishing and attribute them to the fishing sector responsible. This will help create an incentive for the commercial fishing industry to reduce these unseen and unreported fish deaths through improved fishing practices.

What are the redundant provisions in the Fisheries Act 1983 you propose removing?

These are provisions on marine farming and spat catching permits, which are in sections 1-3, 67R, 67S, 88B, 101A, 101B, 105AA, 105AB, 107DA of the Fisheries Act 1983. These provisions are now dealt with under Part 9A of the Fisheries Act 1996 and the Resource Management Act 1991.