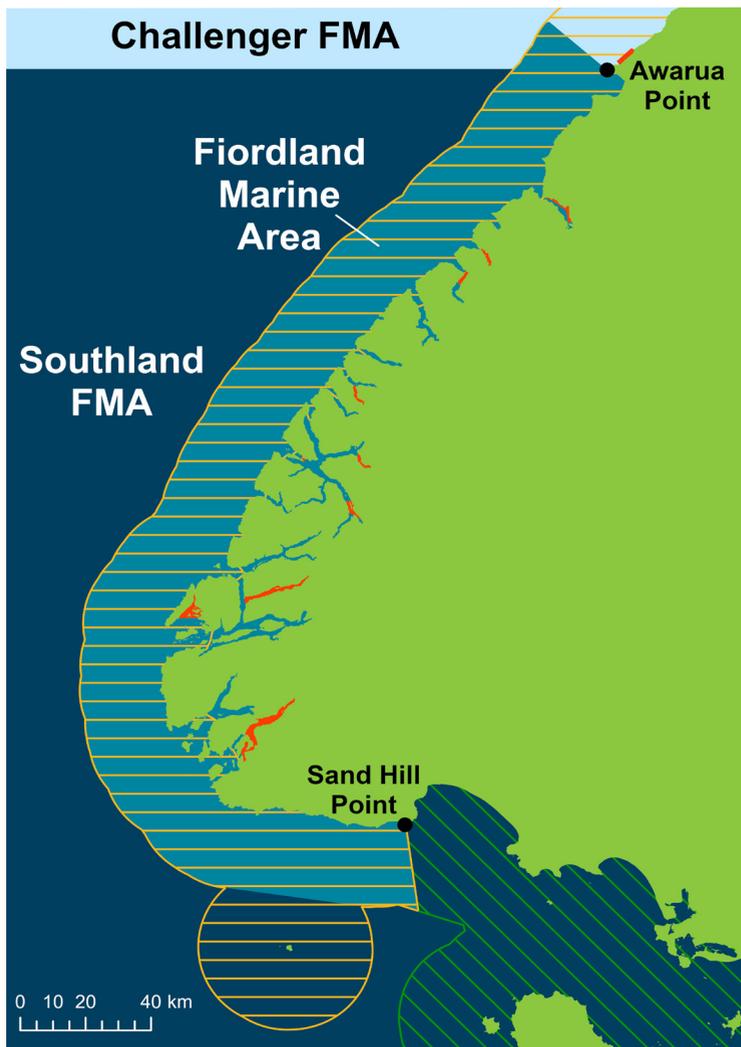


# Recreational Fishing Rules FIORDLAND

Effective from: November 2022 (subject to change without notice).



## Fiordland (Te Moana o Atawhenua) Marine Area

### Background

This brochure summarises the main recreational fishing rules for the Fiordland (Te Moana o Atawhenua) Marine Area (Fiordland Marine Area), which lies within the Southland Fishery Management Area. In June 2005 modified recreational and commercial fishing rules and protection measures were introduced for the Fiordland Marine Area on the recommendations of the Fiordland Marine Guardians.

Over the preceding decade the original Guardians, representing recreational and commercial fishers, charter operators, Ngai Tahu Iwi and environmentalists worked together to address and mitigate the impact of growing fisher numbers, escalating access and harvest levels on finite fish stocks and vulnerable species within the fiords. The resulting conservation strategy and the package of tailored regulations is the result of a negotiated “gifts and gains” process between the user groups. In 2005 the Guardians received statutory recognition through the enactment of the Fiordland (Te Moana o Atawhenua) Marine Management Act 2005 to advocate and advise the Government agencies on managing the fisheries, marine biosecurity and fiord environment.

### Why Recreational Fishing Rules matter

Fishing is one of New Zealand’s most popular outdoor activities and as a result recreational fishers and commercial fishers retaining amateur catch can collectively take large numbers of finfish and shellfish every year. To keep Fiordland’s fisheries sustainable the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) on advice from the Fiordland Marine Guardians sets and monitors recreational fishing rules. By sticking to the rules and fishing responsibly, fishers can help make sure that there will be fish today, tomorrow and for generations to come.

### Important to remember

- only those actively taking finfish, rock lobster, or shellfish can claim a catch within the daily limit;
- all fish taken and consumed during any trip must be counted within the daily limit entitlement;
- spread your fishing effort inside the fiords to avoid localised depletion;
- unlawful catch in excess of your daily limit, undersize, or unlawful state fish must be immediately returned to the water, dead or alive;
- it is illegal to sell or trade your recreational catch;
- breaking the rules risks infringement penalties, or prosecution fines and property forfeiture.

### Where is the Fiordland Marine Area?

The Fiordland (Te Moana o Atawhenua) Marine Area encompasses the Fiordland coastal marine area waters, commencing from Awarua Point on the West Coast of the South Island and extending 12 nautical miles seaward from the mean high-water springs mark along the Fiordland coast to its South-Eastern boundary point at Sand Hill Point, but excluding the coastal marine area around the Solander Islands.

### Internal waters of Fiordland

The internal waters of Fiordland are defined inner fiord areas as described in schedule 18 of the Fisheries (Amateur Fishing) Regulations 2013. All commercial fishing is prohibited within the internal waters of Fiordland creating a 46 000 hectare non-commercial fishing area for recreational fishers. Special restrictions apply to the internal waters, where the inner fiord habitat is less productive and fish stocks less abundant.

For example:

- Blue cod daily limit of three with no accumulation\* (except Doubtful (Patea)/ Thompson and Bradshaw Sounds internal waters, which have a daily limit of one blue cod with no accumulation;\*
- Groper (hapuku)/bass daily limit of three with no accumulation.\*

### Fiord entrances and outer coast

- Blue cod daily limit of 10 with no accumulation \* (including the three blue cod limit from within the internal waters and the one blue cod limit from Doubtful (Patea)/ Thompson and Bradshaw Sounds);
- Groper (hapuku)/bass daily limit of five with no accumulation\* (includes the three groper limit from within the internal waters);
- Rock lobster daily limit of six, with a 3-day accumulation limit of 15 with special provisions applying. (Refer to rock lobster provisions).



Map 1: Fiordland Marine Area and South West blue cod management area.

### Entire Fiordland (Te Moana o Atawhenua) Marine Area

- total combined finfish bag limit of 30 with no accumulation;\*
- Groper (hapuku)/bass are included inside the combined finfish bag limit;
- Jock Stewart (sea perch) daily limit of 10 with no accumulation included inside the combined finfish bag limit;\*
- Scallop and paua daily limit of 10 with no accumulation.\*

\*Note: Accumulation refers to the aggregation and possession of daily fish catch in excess of more than one day’s legal possession entitlement, which is unlawful for finfish, pāua and scallops. In the case of rock lobster, there is a 3-day accumulation limit of 15 rock lobsters with special provisions applying. (Refer rock lobster provisions)

# Finfish

## Daily limits and size restrictions

In the Fiordland (Te Moana o Atawhenua) Marine Area there is a **combined maximum daily bag limit of 30 for finfish\*** (excluding specified baitfish and freshwater eels). Individual species limits within this combined daily bag limit must also not be exceeded. Accumulation/possession of finfish beyond the daily limit is prohibited.

Remember there are local restrictions or area closures, check the 'Closed and Restricted Areas' section.

\*Finfish includes all species of finfish of the classes Agnatha, Chondrichthyes, and Osteichthyes, at any stage of their life history, whether living or dead

## Individual species daily limits within the combined daily limit

Finfish Species	Max daily limit per active fisher	Min fish length (cm)
Blue cod – South West Area including Fiordland Mairne Area – outer fiord waters†	10	33
Blue cod – Fiordland (Te Moana o Atawhenua) Marine Area internal waters (excluding Milford Sound (Piopiotahi), Doubtful Sound (Patea), Thompson, and Bradshaw Sounds)	3	33
Blue cod – Doubtful (Patea), Thompson, and Bradshaw Sounds internal waters	1	33
Blue moki	15	40
Bluenose	5	–
Blue shark	1	–
Bronze shark	1	–
Butterfish/Greenbone	15	35
Elephant fish	5	–
Hammerhead shark	1	–
Groper (Hapuku)/Bass – internal waters	3	–
Groper (Hapuku)/Bass – outer fiord waters†	5	–
Kahawai	15	–
Kingfish	3	75
Mako shark	1	–
Marlin	1	–
Porbeagle shark	1	–
Quinnat salmon	2	–
Red cod	10	25
Red moki	15	40
Rig	5	–
School shark	5	–
Sea perch/Jock Stewart	10	–
Seven gilled shark	1	–
Skate/Ray	5	–

Finfish Species	Max daily limit per active fisher	Min fish length (cm)
Spiny dogfish	15	–
Southern bluefin tuna	1	–
Tarakihi	15	25
Thresher shark	1	–
Trumpeter	15	35
Warehou	15	–

† For the avoidance of doubt the respective daily limits for blue cod and groper (hapuku)/bass taken from within the internal waters of Fiordland is part of the respective maximum species limit for both species. No accumulation applies.

## Further size limits for finfish within the combined daily limit

Finfish Species	Min fish length (cm)
Flatfish (except Sand flounder)	25
Grey mullet	–
Red gurnard	25
Sand flounder	23
Snapper	25
Trevally	25
All other finfish	–

## In addition, you may also take the following:

Baitfish Species	Max daily limit per active fisher
Anchovy	Daily limit of 50 for any combination of these species
Jack/Horse/Chilean mackerel	
Koheru/Scad	
Pilchard	
Piper/Garfish	
Slender/Stout sprat	
Yellow-eyed mullet	

## And

Finfish Species	Max daily limit per active fisher	Min mesh size (mm)
Freshwater shortfin and longfin eels	6	12

## Finfish Restrictions

### Measuring finfish

Measure from the tip of the nose to the middle ray or "V" in the tail.



### Blue cod measurable state

Within in the South West blue cod management area, all blue cod catch in New Zealand fisheries waters on a vessel must be retained and landed either whole, gutted (minimum length 33cm). Measure and return undersize blue cod immediately.

While it is unlawful to possess or land unmeasurable state blue cod, fishers on board a fishing vessel, may possess blue cod in a processed state, if it is to be immediately eaten on board the fishing vessel from which it was taken. Any fish eaten form part of the daily limit.

### Blue cod accumulation

Within the Fiordland Marine Area, which lies within the South West Blue cod management area, no accumulation applies to blue cod possession beyond one days limit.

### Blue cod closed area

It is prohibited to take or possess blue cod taken from within the internal waters of Milford Sound (Piopiotahi) due to low abundance and habitat productivity.

### Blue cod limit for Doubtful (Patea), Thompson and Bradshaw Sounds internal waters

Within the internal waters of Doubtful Sound (Patea), Thompson Sound and Bradshaw Sound the maximum daily take and possession limit is one blue cod per person with no accumulation.

### Lowest blue cod daily limit applies

When transiting from one blue cod management area to another, e.g. from the Southern area to the South West area and vice versa, or transiting from outside the 12 nautical mile Territorial Sea, fishers must observe and not exceed the lowest blue cod daily possession limit and applicable accumulation limit. Within the Fiordland Marine Area, fishers can lawfully possess the legal South West area limit (taken from outside the internal fiord waters) to transit inside the internal waters, where lower take and possession limits apply.

### Blue cod pots prohibited

It is prohibited to use or set any blue cod pot within the internal waters of Fiordland.

### Blue cod pot minimum mesh size

Blue cod pots must use rigid square mesh with minimum inside dimension of 54mm for undersize fish escapement.

### Blue cod hook recommendations

When fishing for blue cod, size 6/0 or larger size wide gap or circle fish hooks with no offset are recommended to avoid damage and promote survival of undersize blue cod.

### White Pointer shark prohibition

It is unlawful to take or possess any white pointer shark.

### Set line restrictions

Set line fishing includes the use of any setline, longline and dahn (drop) line but does not include rod and reel or hand lines. Within the Fiordland Marine Area the following line fishing restrictions apply:

- surface floats attached to any line must be legibly and permanently marked with the fisher's initials and surname. A boat name is also useful;
- no person may use or possess a line with more than five hooks;
- no person may use or be in possession of more than one line (other than a rod and reel line or handline);
- where more than one person is using a line from a vessel (other than a rod and reel line or handline), no more than two lines (other than a rod and reel line or handline) may be used or set from, or possessed on-board that vessel.

### Set nets and drift nets prohibited

It is unlawful to use, set or possess any set net within the Fiordland Marine Area. It is also prohibited to use a drift net for fishing in any New Zealand fisheries waters.

# Shellfish

## Daily bag limits and size restrictions

Shellfish are taken when they cannot freely return to the water e.g. placed into a catch bag or similar. At no time while gathering may you be in possession of more than your daily limit.

Shellfish Species	Daily limit per fisher	Minimum size (mm)
Cockles	150	None
Kina (sea eggs)	50	None
Mussels	25	None
Oysters – Dredge†	50	58
Pāua – Ordinary black foot*	10	125
– Yellow foot*	10	80
Pipi	150	None
Scallops*†	10	100
Tuatua	150	None
All others (combined) •	50	None

\* Pāua or scallop daily limits may not be accumulated within the Fiordland Marine Area.

† A diver or divers on a vessel may gather an additional bag limit of oysters or scallops for up to two people acting in a dive safety capacity on the vessel. NB: This only applies to taking oysters and scallops.

• This is a combined, mixed-species bag limit. It applies to all shellfish species not specifically named above and includes all crabs, catseyes, cook's turban, limpets, starfish, periwinkles and freshwater crayfish (koura).

## Shellfish to be landed in a measurable state

All shellfish to which a minimum size restriction applies (including pāua, scallops and dredge oysters) must be landed in the shell and cannot be shucked or shelled seaward of the mean high-water mark. This includes transporting on the water.

Dredge oysters and scallops may be opened for immediate consumption onboard the vessel. Any scallops and dredge oysters eaten form part of your daily limit. Any scallops and dredge oysters not eaten must be landed in the shell.

## Measuring shellfish

**Pāua:** measure the greatest length of the shell in a straight line parallel to the underside pāua foot. Do not measure over the curve of the shell.



**Scallops:** measure the greatest diameter of the shell.



**Dredge Oysters:** must not pass through a rigid circular metal ring with an inside diameter of 58mm.

## Shellfish Restrictions

### Underwater breathing apparatus (UBA)

- No person may take pāua using UBA. This does not include snorkels.
- It is unlawful for any person to be in possession of pāua while in possession of UBA. This includes possession in or on any vessel or vehicle.

### Open seasons

- Dredge Oysters:** Open season is 1 March to 31 August inclusive.

**Note:** No rock or pacific oysters are known to exist in the Southland FMA (including Fiordland Marine Area). All oysters taken within the Southland FMA are subject to season, daily limit and size restrictions.

- Scallops:** Open season is 1 October to 15 March inclusive.

## Dredges prohibited

It is unlawful to use or possess any dredge within the Fiordland Marine Area.

## Protection of coral

No person may take or possess any black coral or red coral.

# Rock Lobster

## Daily bag limit

No person may take or possess more than six rock lobsters (both spiny and packhorse rock lobster species combined) on any one day within the Fiordland (Te Moana o Atawhenua) Marine Area.

No person may take or possess more than three rock lobsters on any one-day that are taken from within the Milford Sound (Piopiotahi) internal waters of Fiordland. No accumulation applies.

## Limits on accumulation

Within the Fiordland (Te Moana o Atawhenua) Marine Area, a limited defence provision exists to allow possession of accumulated rock lobster taken over three or more days in excess of the daily possession limit if:

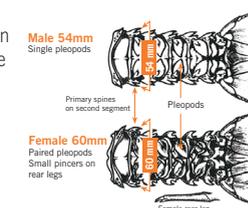
- not more than 15 rock lobster are possessed; and
- the daily take limit of six rock lobster was not exceeded on any day; and
- not more than three rock lobster were taken from the Milford Sound internal waters of Fiordland; and
- in the case of rock lobster held on board or landed from a vessel, including rock lobster removed from any holding pot, the rock lobster are held in labelled containers or bags that:
  - contain only rock lobster taken on a single day; and
  - are clearly labelled to record:
    - the individual fisher's full name; and
    - the date on which the rock lobster was taken by the fisher; and
    - the number of rock lobster held in the container or bag; and

In the case of rock lobster held temporarily in a holding pot at sea, the fisher maintains and is able to immediately produce upon the request of a Fishery Officer, a legible written record containing the following information:

- the individual fisher's full name; and
- the date on which the fisher took the rock lobster; and
- the number of rock lobster held in each rock lobster holding pot, including the number of rock lobster taken from within the Milford Sound internal waters of Fiordland; and
- the Global Positioning System (GPS) co-ordinates or physical location of each holding pot; and
- The date on which the fisher removed rock lobster from each holding pot; and
- The number of rock lobster removed from each holding pot.

## How to measure spiny rock lobster

Measure the tail width in a straight line between the tips of the two large (primary) spines on the second segment of the tail.



If you are unsure of the sex, use the 60mm measurement.

## Minimum sizes

No person may take or possess:

- Male spiny rock lobster with a tail width less than 54 mm.
- Female spiny rock lobster with a tail width less than 60 mm.
- Packhorse rock lobster (either sex) with a tail length shorter than 216 mm.

## How to measure packhorse rock lobster

Measure the tail length along the underside in a straight line from the rear of the calcified bar on the first segment to the tip of the middle fan or the tail.



## Rock lobster restrictions

### Protected rock lobster

The following types of rock lobster are protected by law and must be returned immediately to the water:

- undersized rock lobster;
- female rock lobsters carrying external eggs (in berry) – these are carried between the pleopods on the underside of the tail;
- any soft-shell stage rock lobster (following moulting where the exoskeleton has not reached full hardness);
- rock lobster that cannot be measured (e.g. because of damage to the tail preventing accurate measurement).

### General restrictions

It is unlawful to:

- remove external eggs or the egg bearing appendages from any rock lobster;
- possess any rock lobster seaward of the mean high-water mark in an unmeasurable state or to land from a vessel any rock lobster in such a state that the tail cannot be measured;
- use a spear or device which could puncture the shell when taking rock lobster or possess any rock lobster that have been speared;
- use a spring loaded loop or lasso, which is prohibited. Only hand operated loops or lassoes may be used;
- use or set a baited net for taking rock lobster, or possess any rock lobster with a baited net.

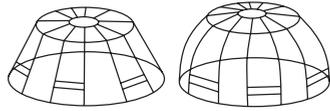
### Rock lobster pot restrictions

Rock lobster pot means any pot, whether baited or not, that is capable of catching or holding rock lobster; and includes any other device capable of catching, holding, or storing rock lobster except a loop, bob or ring pot.

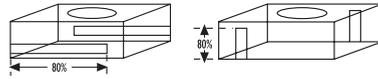
### Escape gaps for rock lobster pots

It is unlawful for any person to set or possess a rock lobster pot unless it has escape gaps.

- Escape gaps or apertures are designed to allow undersized rock lobster to escape.
- No escape gap or aperture shall be incorporated in either the top or the bottom of any pot.



- **Round or beehive pots** must have at least three escape gaps/or apertures (other than the mouth). Each aperture must have an inside dimension of not less than 54mm x 200mm.



- **Square or rectangular pots** must have at least two escape gaps/or apertures (other than the mouth) in opposite faces of the pot. Each aperture shall not be less than 80 percent of the height or length of the face of the pot in which the apertures are contained. Each aperture shall have an inside dimension of not less than 54mm x 200mm.
- **Mesh pots** constructed entirely of unaltered spot welded mesh with inside dimensions of 54mm x 140mm do not have to have escape gaps/or apertures. Mesh pots may be used with covers or liners provided they leave unencumbered at least 80 percent of the surface area of each of two opposite sides.

### Rock lobster pot limits

No person may on any day within the Fiordland Marine Area:

- possess, use or set more than three rock lobster pots;
- possess on any vessel, or use or set more than three rock lobster pots from any vessel.

### Pot limits

- All pots and surface buoy or floats must be legibly and permanently marked with the person's initials and surname. This includes possession on any vessel.
- While prohibited to use blue cod pots within internal waters of Fiordland they can be used outside the fiord internal waters.
- Individuals may use, set or possess up to three pots in any one day.
- If two or more persons are on a vessel the maximum vessel pot limit is six pots; being any lawful combination of species specific pots and including up to two rock lobster holding pots.

### Rock lobster holding pots

A rock lobster holding pot is a pot that is used, or can be used, for holding or storing rock lobster but does not include any pot that is capable of catching rock lobster. Within the Fiordland Marine Area, specific provision allows the use of rock lobster holding pots in addition to rock lobster catching pots. Holding pots are excluded from other rock lobster pot limits and escape gap requirements. The following restrictions apply:

- a limit of one holding pot per person or a maximum of two holding pots per vessel if there are two or more persons on board;
- Holding pots and attached surface floats used from or transported on a vessel must be clearly and permanently marked with the vessel name and the characters **HP1** for the first holding pot and (if applicable) **HP2** for the second holding pot.
- Holding pots and attached surface floats used other than from a vessel must be clearly and permanently marked with the fishers surname, initials and the characters **HP**.

## Closed and Restricted Areas

### Closed Areas

Closed areas are areas where no fishing is allowed. These may be closed by MPI as prohibited areas or by the Department of Conservation (DOC) as marine reserves. For full details on marine reserves contact DOC [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz).

### Marine Reserves

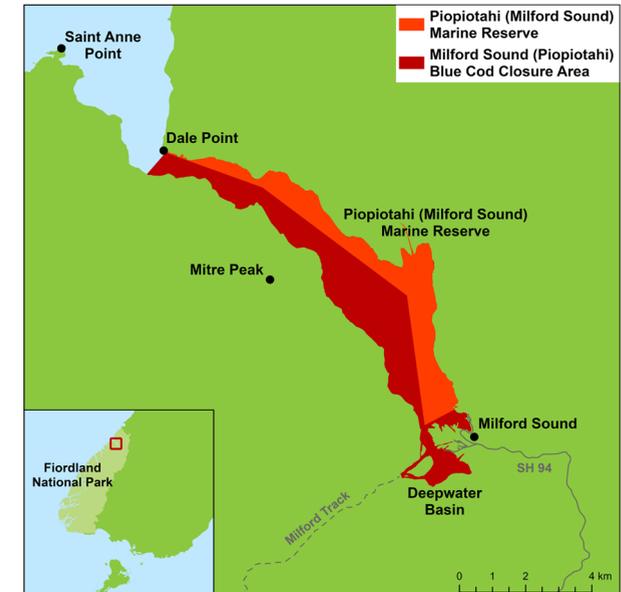
In the Fiordland Marine Area there are 10 marine reserves administered by the Department of Conservation, closed to all fishing (shown in orange on the map below). Within the marine reserves, all marine life is fully protected, with all fishing both non-commercial and commercial totally prohibited.



Map 2: Fiordland Marine Area DOC Marine Reserves

### Milford Sound (Piopiotahi) internal waters blue cod closed area

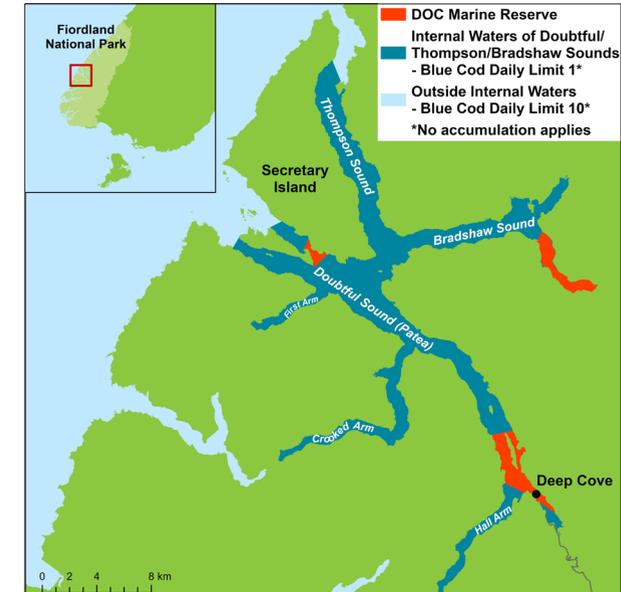
It is prohibited to take or possess blue cod taken from within the internal waters of Milford Sound (Piopiotahi) being all those waters outside the Piopiotahi Marine Reserve, lying inside a line extending from Dale Point at 44°35.99'S and 167°49.12'E across to a point at 44°36.33'S and 167°48.71'E.



Map 3: Milford Sound (Piopiotahi) Internal fiord waters and Marine Reserve

### Doubtful Sound (Patea) fiord complex blue cod restricted area

Within the internal waters of Doubtful, Thompson and Bradshaw Sounds the daily take and possession limit is one blue cod per person with no accumulation.



Map 4: Doubtful (Patea)/Thompson and Bradshaw Sounds Internal fiord waters and DOC and Marine Reserves

### Rock lobster pots prohibited in Pendulo Reach, Doubtful Sound (Patea)

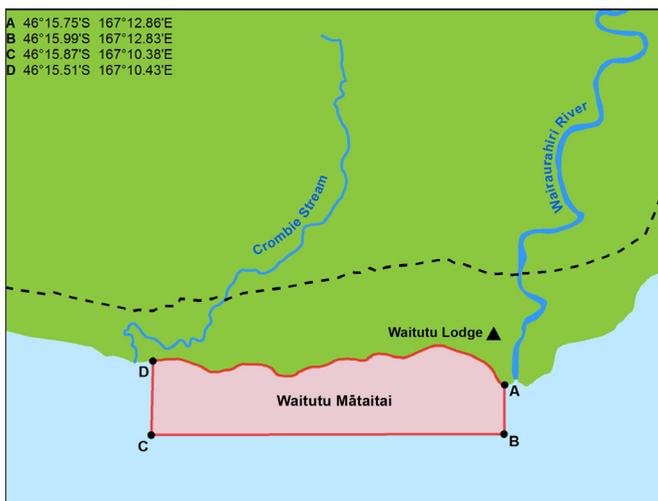
It is unlawful to use or set any rock lobster pot or rock lobster holding pot within the Doubtful Sound internal waters known as Pendulo Reach (as shown on the map). This is to protect fragile seabed species and sensitive bottom sill habitat.



Map 5: Pendulo Reach, Doubtful Sound rock lobster pot prohibited area

### Waitutu Mātaitai Reserve – Pāua Prohibition

It is prohibited to take any ordinary pāua and yellow-foot pāua from within the Waitutu Mātaitai Reserve, South Fiordland. The Mātaitai Reserve encompasses approximately 2.08 sq km bounded between the western side of the Wairaurahiri River mouth and the eastern side of the Crombie Stream mouth and extending seaward 450 metres (0.24 of a nautical mile) from the mean high-water mark.



Map 6: Waitutu Mātaitai Reserve – Pāua Prohibition

## Poacher Prevention

MPI's Fisheries Compliance Team is responsible for protecting local fisheries and stopping illegal activities such as poaching.

If you see people acting illegally, taking more than their daily limit or undersized fish or selling or trading their catch, please report it. Any information provided stays completely confidential.

**Report poaching, suspicious or illegal activity – call 0800 4 POACHER (800 476 224).**

## New Zealand's Fishing Rules at your Fingertips

This brochure is a summary of the recreational fishing rules for the Fiordland Fishery Management Area (FMA). It is a guide only and may not include all local restrictions and rules or any changes made since it was printed. To keep up to date, check the rules each time you fish. It is illegal to sell or trade your catch.

## Check the rules

### Check the rules using our FREE app:

Download our free NZ fishing rules app by scanning the QR code or visiting the app store. The app works even when you have no coverage.



### Other services

- Free text the name of the species you are fishing for (e.g snapper) to **9889** and receive a text with the legal size and bag limit.
- Visit [www.fisheries.govt.nz/rules](http://www.fisheries.govt.nz/rules)
- Email [recfishingteam@mpi.govt.nz](mailto:recfishingteam@mpi.govt.nz) to subscribe to fishing related updates in your area.
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