

# LegaSea Accountability Report

MAY – SEPTEMBER 2025



Image: Haylee Tehuia-Claxton



# Introduction

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## Standing Up for Abundance

Over the past year, New Zealanders have shown once again that they care deeply about the health of our oceans. More than 500 people – fishers, divers, and everyday Kiwis – made submissions on the future management of crayfish along the upper east coast of the North Island.

This groundswell of public input reflects a shared belief: that our marine environment deserves better, and that abundance should be restored for the benefit of all.

LegaSea and the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council stood alongside the public in this process, presenting a strong, evidence-based case for rebuilding crayfish stocks and improving the way our fisheries are managed. Together, we called for decisions that prioritise ecosystem health, community wellbeing, and long-term sustainability over short-term gain.

But while we await the Minister’s decision on crayfish, it has become clear that the challenge is much larger. The way we manage our coastal fisheries and who those decisions ultimately serve, is at a crossroads.

### REFORM WITH PURPOSE

The Minister for Oceans and Fisheries, Shane Jones, is advancing reforms that could reshape the future of New Zealand’s fisheries. Around 70 percent of New Zealanders also want reform, yet their reasons could not be more different.

Most Kiwis want fisheries reform fit for the 21st century, one that rebuilds depleted stocks, restores marine habitats, and ensures abundance for generations to come. Healthy oceans underpin our wellbeing, our food security, and our coastal way of life.

However, the reforms currently proposed by the Minister risk moving us in the opposite direction. Framed as removing “unnecessary restrictions” on commercial utilisation, the changes would weaken environmental safeguards, increase commercial catch limits, and reduce opportunities for public input.

Behind these proposals lies a deeper question: who truly benefits from New Zealand's fisheries system? Because the fish in our waters belong to everyone they are a public resource, not a private asset.

And as discussions about licensing recreational fishers emerge, it is clear that the right of ordinary New Zealanders to catch and share kai moana could soon be at risk.

This moment calls for courage, collaboration, and transparency. LegaSea will continue to advocate for reform that restores abundance, protects biodiversity, and ensures fair access for all New Zealanders.

In the pages that follow, this Accountability Report outlines what we have achieved together through public engagement, education, partnerships, and advocacy. It also highlights where more work is needed, and how collective action can deliver the change our oceans so urgently need.

Our mission remains clear: to rebuild fish populations, restore marine ecosystems, and secure a future where every Kiwi can enjoy the benefits of a healthy, thriving ocean.

Because abundance isn't just an aspiration, it's our shared responsibility.

## Public Awareness

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### HUTCHWILCO BOAT SHOW

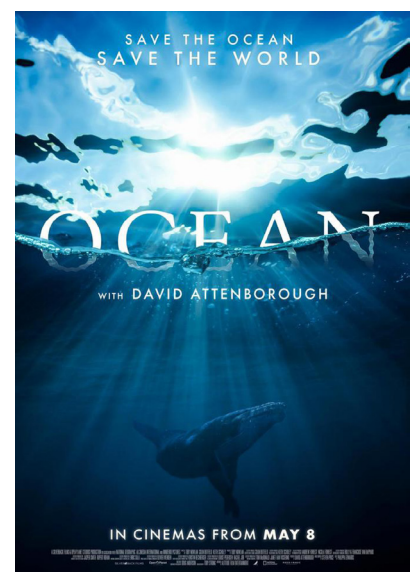
Thanks to XPO and their support we engaged over 4,400 visitors at the show with 3,400 new subscribers joining our community. Our interactive display, "The Fisheries Reform Scam", invited visitors to place fish on a wall to show their opposition to changes proposed by the Minister for Oceans and Fisheries. The activation proved popular and demonstrated strong public support for restoring coastal fish abundance.

Thanks to in-kind support from PMA Leisure and our dedicated team of LegaSea Contractors and volunteers, we kept costs low while maintaining a strong presence.

### OCEAN MOVIE SCREENING

In July, LegaSea hosted a successful series of six *Ocean* movie screening nights at the Silky Otter cinema in Ōrākei, Auckland, showcasing the stunning David Attenborough documentary *Ocean*. These events were designed to engage and inspire our supporters and wider community around the importance of ocean conservation. Two of the nights were generously hosted and funded by our partners Daiwa and Wettle, while Turkish Bread contributed \$2,000 to support the entire event series. Attendance across the screenings was strong, with a total of 220 people engaged. The events also generated \$22,500 in income, including donations, partner support, and the onboarding of two new Gold Partners.

These nights not only fostered meaningful conversations, but also raised significant awareness of our mission.



# The Kai Ika Project & Cans for Kai



KAI IKA

## AUCKLAND

Over the past few months, **The Kai Ika Project** has navigated a busy and at times challenging winter season. With the Z Pier filleting station closed for much of the period due to weather and seasonal fishing slowdowns, we leaned heavily on alternative arrangements. Dave Ahoia secured temporary winter work with the North Harbour Fish Market, which provided continuity, and he has now returned to Kai Ika. The closure of the filleting trailer highlighted the importance of diversifying income streams, with Cans for Kai Auckland, Wellington, and Northland playing an increasingly vital role in maintaining community support.

1. Engagement and visibility also grew through media coverage and partnerships. Kai Ika featured nationally on TVNZ's *Te Karere*, *Breakfast*, and *6pm News*, as well as *Seven Sharp*. We also deepened relationships with Eden Park, Auckland City Toyota, Lion Breweries, and Everybody Eats, with exciting opportunities for co-branded activations around major events such as the All Blacks test and the upcoming Metallica concert. Distributions remained steady across Centre Park and Orakei, with new bulk distribution days in development.

Check out all our wonderful new pieces in the media [here](#).

2. Financially, the project has continued to operate under deficit conditions, with weekly reports showing expenditure consistently exceeding income. While grant and partner income helped cover specific contracts and pilot initiatives, the ongoing challenge remains building sustainable revenue streams that can support project growth without relying so heavily on short-term contracts.
3. Looking ahead we are preparing for the upcoming fishing season, if you are interested in enquiring if Kai Ika filleting could be a good fit for your fishing event. Please reach out to Matt – [matt@legasea.co.nz](mailto:matt@legasea.co.nz)

**Cans for Kai** programme expanded significantly during this time. We established new partnerships with organisations such as Steam Brewing, Neck of the Woods, and PepsiCo's Bluebird factory, while piloting a collection initiative at the Horizon Hotel in partnership with Sky City. Wellington saw particularly strong can returns, especially during the All Blacks test at Sky Stadium.



This steady growth shows increasing public support and a growing network of supply partners. Thanks to the incredible support of Phoenix Recycling we are turning waste into real value. This partnership is allowing us to fund more kaimoana recovery and distributions.

Click [here](#) to see a map of all the can locations.

## WELLINGTON

Demand continues to grow. In an attempt to keep up we have added several new kaimoana distributions including Orongomai Marae, Koraunui Marae and Kokiri Marae Pataka Kai.

1. We're also now collaborating with food-rescue giants, Kaibosh and we've enjoyed the support of committed volunteers who are redistributing large volumes. As a result, our weekly kaimoana distribution is now just shy of 700 kilos.
2. We offered a filleting service at the much anticipated Tuna Bonanza (Wellington's premiere fishing competition). We processed the majority of the fish and fishers even donated whole tuna. In the end, we diverted 430 kilos of tuna onto community dinner tables. Thanks to everyone for being so generous. We sold over \$1,200 worth of raffle tickets and were surprised by a \$4,500 donation at prize giving. It was a great time!

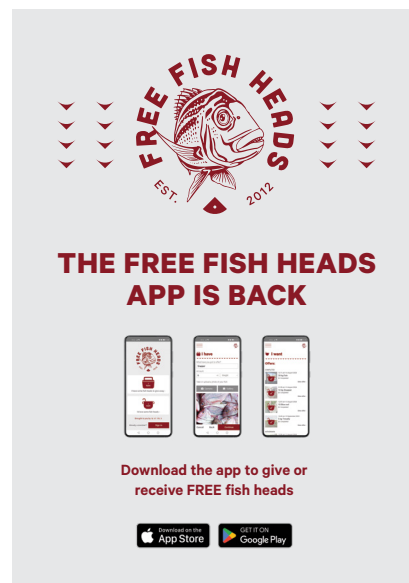
### THE FREE FISH HEADS APP IS BACK!

Described as a dating app for fish head lovers, this app connects people who have fish heads and want to share them with those of us who love to cook and eat them.

Launched by Matt Watson in 2016, we have combined forces to rebuild and improve the app. The new version is now live on both the Google Play Store and the Apple App Store (Fish Heads App on IOS).

We need everyone's support for this, whether you have fish heads ready to go or are keenly waiting for them to become available. Please share Free Fish Heads posts on social media, tell your friends, tell your neighbours, etc! If you fish, give generously and if you're using the app to receive fish heads please be patient, there are more people looking for fish heads than those giving them away.

Sign up and explore its features. Thank you for your support, and happy cooking. Click the links to download it today >



## Supporter Engagement

### Volunteering

#### LEGASEA

Are you passionate about protecting our oceans and marine life? LegaSea is looking for dedicated volunteers to help make a difference. Whether you're passionate about conservation, community outreach, or simply want to be part of a cause that matters, we'd love to have you on board. By volunteering with us, you'll play a key role in supporting our mission to safeguard marine ecosystems and create a lasting positive impact. [Sign up](#) today and become a part of the LegaSea family – together, we can help ensure a healthier, more sustainable future for our oceans!

## KAI IKA

Interested in Volunteering with The Kai Ika Project? The Kai Ika Project relies on volunteers to help our small team recover and share enough kaimoana to feed our growing community.

Our volunteers help with kaimoana collections, community distributions, fish handling and processing, assisting with POS transactions, community engagement, gardening at the Papatūānuku Kōkiri Marae, assisting at special events and in a number of behind the scene roles. We have a range of opportunities available for individuals or groups of any size. [Sign up](#) today!

## Social Media

After the intensity of the Fisheries Reform Scam campaign of February to April, our communications and social media returned to a more business-as-usual phase. This time has been spent on notifying people of the October Sustainability Round consultations, keeping the Minister for Oceans and Fisheries honest and publishing content that is keeping the Scam campaign alive as we prepare for the next phase when the Amendment Bill is presented before the Select Committee.

1. May and June were back to normal business and reviewing the Scam campaign. We managed to reach around 130,000 people on Facebook and 55,000 on Instagram each month.
2. July peaked as we engaged with the public on the October Sustainability Rounds. Our reach on Facebook increased to 190,000 despite a drop on Instagram.
3. In August when Shane Jones dropped details of the fisheries amendments to go to Parliament, engagement soared. We reached over 270,000 people.
4. Shane Jones continues to deliver content people love to engage with and these have been some of our most popular posts.

Looking ahead, we are preparing to make a lot of noise about the new Fisheries Amendment Bill when it hits parliament in the next couple of months. It's going to be a big one!

# LegaSea Fundraising

## Grants

Auckland Kai Ika – **Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei Total Support:** \$69,590.24

Whangarei Waste Minimisation Fund – \$10,753 (future expansion into Northland Cans for Kai)

Wellington Kai Ika Mauri Ora Fund – \$20,000

Wellington Kai Ika Community Fund – \$10,000

LegaSea Hawkes Bay – Kai Ika – Hastings Community Fund – \$5,000



# Fisheries Management

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## OCTOBER 'SUSTAINABILITY' REVIEWS

Twice a year, Fisheries New Zealand's "Sustainability Rounds" provide a critical opportunity to adjust catch limits, assess fisheries management, and ensure the long-term health of our marine environment. As part of these reviews the Minister for Oceans and Fisheries is obliged to consult with the public who can provide input on any proposed changes before making the final decision.

In July, LegaSea supported submissions by the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council for 14 fish stocks around New Zealand including snapper, pāua and mackerel species. The final decisions made by Minister Shane Jones support his vocal position, exports first, sustainability last. The range of decisions include increases to commercial catch limits and maintaining the status quo for vulnerable baitfish species.

You can see a full list of decisions [here](#). View our submissions [here](#).

## BLUE COD

Blue cod, once an iconic species, is now facing significant depletion in many regions. In response, Fisheries NZ proposed catch limit reductions for two key blue cod stocks around the east coast (BCO 3) and the lower South Island (BCO 5).

The Minister approved decreases to both the commercial catch limit and recreational daily bag limit for both blue cod stocks BCO 5 & BCO 3.

Blue cod are also in trouble on the southwest coast of the North Island, between Wellington and Waikato (BCO 8). Together with NZSFC, LegaSea advocated for significant reductions to commercial catch limits and a lower daily bag limit to restore abundance.

## FISHERIES REFORMS

Reducing public say, more dead fish thrown overboard and handing more power to commercial interests are just a few of the so-called "reforms", Shane Jones Minister for Oceans and Fisheries wishes to make to the Fisheries Act.

A self-confessed apostle for the commercial fishing industry, Jones' "reforms" serve a handful of large companies by removing restrictions so more fish can be exported for their benefit. Kiwis and the marine environment will lose out.

In April, more than 25,000 people made a submission through LegaSea's online submission form, opposing these 'reforms'. LegaSea and the NZSFC also made a comprehensive submission that you can read [here](#).

Yet, despite widespread public opposition, the government has agreed to proceed with the changes and a Bill will be introduced by the end of 2025. When it does, we'll be ready.

The Minister has also slipped in additional proposals that weren't consulted on earlier this year.

Our team is working to develop a public awareness campaign and will continue to keep Kiwis informed about the peril associated with the proposed changes.

## A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY FOR SCALLOPS

Decades of mismanagement, overallocation, and the destructive use of Victorian box dredges contributed to the collapse of the Coromandel scallop fishery. It was only after sustained pressure from the local community, led by Ngāti Hei, that then Minister David Parker moved to close the fishery in 2022.

Now, NZSFC and LegaSea together with a coalition of iwi, environmental groups, local associations, and industry experts are promoting a bold restorative management plan for the future of the Coromandel scallop fishery. This approach aims to:

1. Restore scallop populations; and
2. End dredging and only allow for selective harvest methods such as hand-gathering.
3. Create new opportunities for sustainable aquaculture and regional communities.

The draft plan is a working document and is designed to evolve as we receive more input from stakeholders.

To read more about the draft plan view our LegaSea press release [here](#).

## CRAYFISH

Crayfish on the North Island's upper east coast are in crisis. Depletion of these spiny critters in east Northland and areas in the Hauraki Gulf has led to exploding numbers of kina which are decimating kelp forests and leaving behind barren seascapes.

The delay in effective management has meant that we now face drastic management measures to bring our crayfish back from the brink.

In August, Fisheries NZ proposed a package of management measures to restore two crayfish fisheries, in Northland (CRA 1) and from Te Arai Point to East Cape (CRA 2). Options included closures to both commercial and recreational crayfish harvesting in east Northland and reductions to the recreational daily bag limit for red rock lobsters in areas overrun by kina barrens.

LegaSea and the NZSFC submitted in support of the closures, and a review of both commercial and recreational catch limits. That's because the Minister for Oceans and Fisheries cannot lawfully allow harvest to continue knowing there are areas of significant depletion. You can read our submission [here](#).

# **LegaSea Hawkes Bay**

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On Wednesday 6 August, LegaSea Hawke's Bay hosted a sold-out screening of Ocean at Focal Point Cinema in Havelock North, with 78 attendees. The event raised around \$950, plus cash donations, and was supported by Machina Boats and Armada Marine, who donated 30 tickets. The film was impactful and well-received, followed by presentations on The Kai Ika Project HB, LegaSea HB's current work. The event successfully raised awareness, engaged the local community, and generated meaningful discussion around marine protection.



Meanwhile, the Hawke's Bay arm of The Kai Ika Project continues to grow. Since launching, we've now redistributed over 5 tonnes of beautiful kaimoana that would've otherwise gone to waste. We're regularly getting fish to whānau and communities in Camberley, Flaxmere, Mahia, and Wairoa – with the demand and impact growing every week.

As for the Twofold Bay project, transforming the old trawler into an artificial reef is still very much in motion. It's a long process, and we're working closely with local iwi and stakeholders to get the necessary approvals and support. The proposed site has shifted slightly – we're now looking at a spot off the other end of Pania Reef, near where the original artificial reef was created.

Lots more to come – watch this space.

## Partnerships

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### Partners

We are thrilled to enjoy the support of the following new Partners:

#### NEW GOLD PARTNERS

Total Access

Pak n Save Porirua (Kai Ika Wellington)

### Our Partners are our lifeblood

Our partners' support, through resources, expertise, and shared purpose, enables us to deliver real results for people and the marine environment. Together, we're restoring abundance and ensuring our ocean legacy endures for future generations.

Please [contact us](#) if you wish to join our growing list of outstanding Partners.

# PLATINUM



# GOLD





## LEGASEA SPONSOR/ BUILDING LEGASEA

The building industry of New Zealand have a common passion for fishing and if any group of businesses are going to help us rebuild our fisheries then the construction industry should be at the forefront. Subsequently, we developed a category of sponsorship ideally suited to them. Priced at \$2000 plus GST per annum it enables sponsors to help build up LegaSea and rebuild our fish stocks.

Avoca Group	Apex Roof 'n' Clad Ltd	Strait Construction Ltd
Robinson Asphalts	DB & JF Holdings Ltd	Sansom Construction
Sulis Hot Tubs	Gateway Investments	Arthurs Emporium
Ziggy's Glass	Econode	Bayleaf Organics Ltd
Waimea Orchard Ltd	My Guy	Cert Systems Ltd
Matakana Marine	Centroform Ltd	Creative Landscaping & Design
Deejannie Ltd	AJ Gidlow Engineering	Firstflex Cables
Aqua designs	Synthetic Technologies	Northland Parkcare Ltd
Busck Prestressed concrete	Development Construction	Pan Pacific Auto Electronics
Blackdog cat	Greenfingers Growing Mixes Ltd	Waipukurau Construction
Our Projects Renovations + New Builds	Vantage Windows North Shore	Warwick Fabrics
Hayes Builders	Easy Energy Ltd	Wilco Precast
Martin & Riggall Engineering		Orange Door Music Video Ltd



## LEGASEA WORKS

LegaSea Works is our entry level business sponsorship allowing any business large or small to show their support and receive recognition. LegaSea Works is priced at \$500 plus GST per annum with an automatic renewal, it is a simple way for a business to invest in the future health of New Zealand's fisheries for the benefit of their customers and community.

Anglers Lodge	Kitchen inspirations	Fiordland Charters
Laser Electrical	Kahu Ridge	Okiwi Bay Holiday Park & Lodge
Speedy Signs Manukau	Height 4 Hire	Peter Campbell
Kawau Bay Asset Management	Coast residential – Tim Scott	A2Z Translate
Tideschart	Blueprint Consulting Engineers	BBS Timbers Ltd
Mangawhai Natives	GT Marine	Decoro Fishing Supplies
Endemic World	Kerry & Carol Martin	Davey Painters Ltd
Auto Super Shoppe Albany	Exit Films	Ecoefficient Solutions Nz Limited
Waipa Bricklayers	Acquire	Fishing Boats NZ Ltd
Whangarei Drycleaning Company Ltd	Pay Sauce	Golden Mile Fruitpackers Ltd
Rogers Boat shop	SBA Hibiscus Coast	Lambly Builders Whangarei
Liquorland Snells Beach	Growth Strategies Consulting Ltd	Martin & Riggall Engineering
LCP Management Services	Browne Engineering Ltd	Parkit Management
		The Boat Shed & Autos