

LegaSea Accountability Report

SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER 2025



Image: Hitarth Asrani

Farewell

This year we farewell Peter Campbell as he retires from his role as a LegaSea Director. For the past 13 years, Peter has been a steady and thoughtful presence at the heart of our organisation, always guided by what will best protect our marine resources and advance our long-term goal of *more fish in the water*. His wisdom has shaped our strategy, supported our people, and championed the vision required to safeguard our fisheries for generations to come.



As Peter steps into a well-earned retirement, we acknowledge his outstanding contribution and the enduring legacy he leaves with us.

Ngā mihi nui, Peter. Thank you for everything.

Introduction

In October, government officials released proposals that would open the door to the commercialisation of highly valued non commercial species, including marlin and 19 vulnerable reef fish species such as red moki and boarfish. The proposed regulatory amendments would allow commercial fishers to keep and sell dead marlin and other at-risk species, which could have serious implications for sustainability, public access and the health of our marine ecosystem.

LegaSea moved quickly to inform and engage the public about the risks associated with these alarming proposals using a coordinated campaign across multiple communication channels. Our team sent multiple newsletters out to our subscriber base, published content in local media outlets and participated in interviews with news reporters.

As part of our public awareness campaign LegaSea created an easy online submission form, enabling the public to make their voices heard and oppose the proposed regulatory changes.

Momentum built rapidly, gaining significant traction on social media. By the end of November we received more than 22,000 submissions from concerned Kiwis and families opposing the commercialisation of our marlin and reef fish species.

What is becoming increasingly clear is that the public are fed up with the government's ongoing attempts to exploit our fish for the benefit of a dozen quota owners. LegaSea will continue to raise public awareness about issues impacting our coastal fisheries and advocate for more fish in the water for current and future generations to enjoy.

LEGASEA AT THE 69TH ANNUAL NZ SPORT FISHING COUNCIL AGM – KAIKŌURA

In late September, members of the LegaSea team travelled to Kaikōura for the 69th Annual New Zealand Sport Fishing Council (NZSFC) AGM, joining clubs and delegates from across the motu for an information-packed few days focused on the future of recreational fishing in New Zealand.

The AGM provided a valuable opportunity to share updates, discuss national fisheries management issues, and contribute to robust conversations about sustainability, advocacy, and the collective vision for our coastal communities. Sessions were rich with insight, from fisheries science and policy developments to club initiatives and regional challenges. It was an energising reminder of the strength and unity within our wider NZSFC community.

We were also incredibly grateful for the warm hospitality of the Kaikōura region. The local hosts showcased everything that makes this community special, from their stunning coastal environment to their genuine manaakitanga. The camaraderie, shared meals, and generous welcome created the perfect backdrop for productive discussion and connection.

A huge thank you to NZSFC and the Kaikōura team for putting on such a well-run and memorable AGM. We're looking forward to continuing the mahi together over the year ahead.



NZSFC AGM Kaikōura 2025

The Kai Ika Project & Cans for Kai

AUCKLAND

Coffee Cart

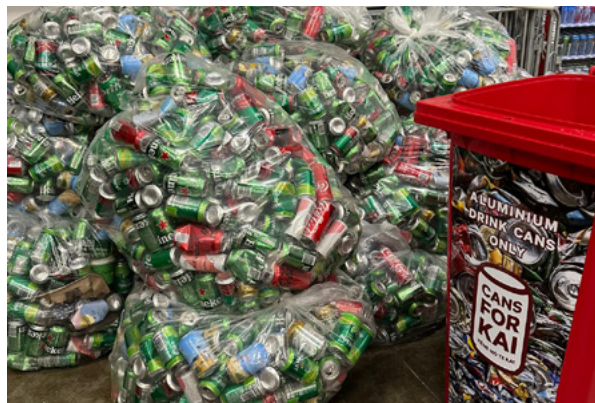
The team rolled out the Kai Ika coffee cart at Iron Māori, hosted by Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei, in December. With support from Yamaha, Akarana Eatery and Papatūānuku Kōkiri Marae, we served 200 drinks to keep triathletes and supporters fuelled before and after the event. The coffee cart gives us a simple way to cover event costs and the confidence to do more Kai Ika and LegaSea activations. We'll have the cart available for events again in 2026.



The coffee cart in action

Metallica concert

We had a solid crew of 15 volunteers join us at Eden Park for the Metallica concert, putting in 75 volunteer hours of volunteer effort and pulling out around 650kg of aluminium cans. Big thanks to Eden Park and Total Property Services for the opportunity and support on the night. The team covered multiple levels and then hit the field after the show for the final push. It was a huge effort in tough conditions, and we've taken away some good learnings to make future events even smoother.



Aluminium cans from the Metallica concert

Mairangi Bay

We teamed up with the Mairangi Bay Fishing Club for their annual Fishing Classic in late November, providing fish filleting alongside the weigh-in. Tough fishing on the day resulted in a modest number of fish returned. The Kai Ika crew processed 165 fish in a couple of hours. All fish heads and frames were recovered and redistributed through our kai pathways. It was a great chance to talk with anglers about utilising the whole fish and the Free Fish Heads App. If you are interested in having the Kai Ika team filleting at your event, reach out to matt@leagasea.co.nz

Cans for Kai programme

Over the past 12 months, we collected more than 36,000kg of aluminium cans across Auckland, Wellington and Northland. This growth shows increasing public support and a growing network of supply partners. Every one of those cans has been recycled through the incredible support of Phoenix Recycling, demonstrating real value in this often overlooked resource. This partnership is now helping us fund even more kaimoana recovery and distribution, a simple system making a big difference in our communities.



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

WELLINGTON

The past few months have been an exciting period for Kai Ika Wellington as the kaupapa continues to grow and embed itself in the community.

We're thrilled to share that Gerald has now joined the team full-time, bringing his energy and experience to support the mahi on the ground. His leadership is already making a meaningful difference as we scale our operations and strengthen our relationships across the region.

A huge ngā mihi to Pharazyn Trust and Toyota Rutherford & Bond for their generous support of contributing to Gerald's hours, which has played a key role in enabling this next phase of development. Their backing helps ensure that more kaimoana is rescued, shared, and valued feeding whānau while reducing waste.

We also continue to run our Cans for Kai initiative in Wellington, which has become a reliable source of support for our work. Every can donated helps us keep the wheels turning and the kai flowing to those who need it most.

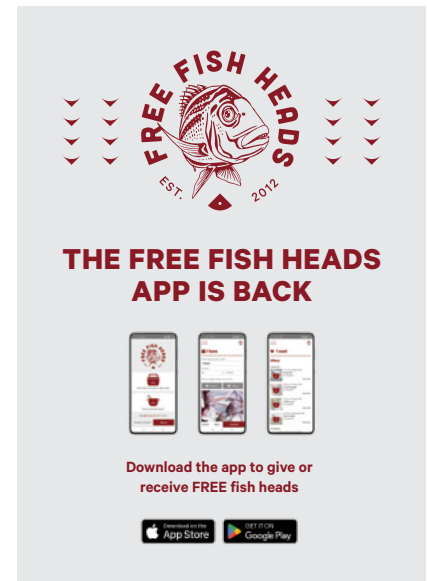
THE FREE FISH HEADS APP IS BACK!

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

Over the last three months we've gone from steady baseline advocacy into some of the biggest digital pushes LegaSea has ever had. We started with crayfish, scallops and the early Hauraki Gulf / trawl ban work, and even on the "quieter" weeks the right posts still blew up when the story was clear and grounded in people's lived experience. Crayfish consultation, the scallop restoration plan and the Pania Reef rāhui all proved the same point – if we explain what is happening in plain language and show people where they can lean in, they will turn up, comment, share and click through to submissions.

From mid-October through to the end of November everything really centred on Hauraki Gulf protection, Highly Protected Areas, and then the marlin and reef fish QMS proposal. The "we're not anti-commercial fishing" post and the marlin explainer reels became anchors for the whole reform conversation and pushed multiple weeks into six-figure reach on Facebook and Instagram. TikTok finally started to wake up too, with marlin and Kai Ika clips regularly landing tens of thousands of views. The Social Media Army and influencers did a lot of the heavy lifting here, keeping the bigger threads on track and helping us turn that momentum into more than 22,000 marlin submissions and a noticeable lift in followers across all platforms.

The last couple of weeks have been a deliberate gear shift. After two massive months of advocacy we have eased back into thank-you messages, partner content, gifting and Works Partner posts, while quietly sorting out the Facebook ads hiccup and planning summer. Engagement has dropped from the campaign highs, which is exactly what you would expect, but the audience is still showing up for the wrap-up content and follower growth is holding. We are now lining up a softer summer run built around FishCare, Free Fish Heads, the photo competition and low-risk educational pieces, so we can keep the pages warm while everyone catches their breath before the fisheries reform fight ramps back up in 2026.

LegaSea Fundraising

Successful Grants

Auckland Lotteries Community – for Kai Ika operational costs – \$50,000

Porirua Waste Minimisation Fund – for Kai Ika Wellington hub set up – \$16,000

New Zealand Marine Research Foundation – (funding over 3 years) to support Kai Ika Dataset collection at the Kai Ika Filleting station for the health of the Hauraki Gulf – \$22,500

Fisheries Management

HANDS OFF OUR MARLIN

The government has handed Oceans and Fisheries Minister Shane Jones a free pass to “remove redundant regulations” at the request of the commercial industry. Public interests and the health of the marine environment are on the backburner.

LegaSea alongside the New Zealand Sport Council, New Zealand Angling & Casting and NZ Underwater submitted a joint submission highlighting the social, cultural and economic importance of marlin to New Zealand. The submission strongly opposed any attempt to commercialise this iconic species and reinforced its value as a public resource. You can read our submission [here](#).

The marlin proposal was a part of a wider package of 18 other amendments to commercial fishing regulations, with submissions due by 28 November. In a separate submission, we LegaSea raised serious concerns and opposed a number of these proposals including:

1. Allowing the sale of 19 reef fish species taken from the east and west coast of the upper North Island.
2. Permitting commercial set nets to exceed 3,000 metres in open waters, extending up to 4,500m.
3. Reducing protections in the South Island to allow trawling and Danish seining gear closer to shore.

We now await a decision from the Minister for Oceans and Fisheries on whether the government will proceed with these amendments, or instead heed the strong public response and prioritise the interests of Kiwis and the health of our marine environment.

SIGNIFICANT WIN FOR TRAWLING

The Waikato Regional Council (WRC) has updated its Coastal Plan to ban mobile bottom contact fishing bottom contact fishing methods including bottom trawling, Danish seine and scallop dredging in all areas of its east coast coastal management area - excluding 3 designated areas marked as ‘Benthic access areas’ in [this map](#). Advocacy by LegaSea, [NZSFC and club representatives](#) gave the WRC confidence to make this bold decision. The Plan has been sent to the Minister of Conservation, Tama Potaka for approval.

Commercial fishing interests have lodged an appeal, opposing the WRC decision and stalling the implementation of any restrictions on destructive fishing methods. LegaSea and NZSFC will continue to hold the line supporting the position of the Waikato Regional Council.

THE FIGHT FOR ABUNDANCE CONTINUES

LegaSea alongside the NZSFC continues to respond and raise public awareness about matters impacting our coastal fisheries. Between September and December 2025, we prepared and submitted eight detailed submissions covering a wide range of issues from crayfish management and invasive caulerpa, to the future management of some of our favourite coastal regions.

Our team consistently brings evidence, expertise and a long-term perspective to the table, advocating for management approaches that restore abundance, biodiversity so Kiwis can access a healthy fishery. See some of our submissions below.

1. LegaSea and the NZSFC submission in support of a 2-year temporary closure to the harvest of all invertebrate and seaweed within the intertidal zone of beaches within the upper Hauraki Gulf. [Read here.](#)
2. LegaSea and the NZSFC submission on the future management of the Kaikoura marine area. [Read here.](#)
3. LegaSea and the NZSFC submission in response to the future management of crayfish in Northland (CRA 1) and from Te Arai Point to East Cape (CRA 2). [Read here.](#)

LegaSea Hawkes Bay

Kai Ika Hawkes Bay

Thanks go to local sponsors including Napier Port and Napier ITM, whose support helps cover essentials like collection, storage, and distribution logistics. Through this collaboration, Kai Ika Hawkes Bay is feeding hundreds of whānau each week and becoming an important source of nourishment and connection throughout the region.

Despite these strong foundations, the project still faces a funding gap of around \$15,000 for long-term sustainability. Support from local businesses and community partners will be key to securing the future of the service and expanding its reach.

Kai Ika Hawkes Bay exemplifies how community-driven action can turn unused resources into meaningful outcomes, strengthening local food systems, reducing waste, and fostering aroha for both people and place.

Partnerships

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	Waipukurau Construction
Our Projects Renovations + New Builds	Mixes Ltd	Warwick Fabrics
Hayes Builders	Vantage Windows	Wilco Precast
Martin & Riggall Engineering	North Shore	Orange Door Music Video Ltd
	Easy Energy 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	Height 4 Hire	BBS Timbers Ltd
Laser Electrical	Coast residential – Tim Scott	Decoro Fishing Supplies
Speedy Signs Manukau	Blueprint Consulting	Davey Painters Ltd
Kawau Bay Asset Management	Engineers	Ecoefficient Solutions
Tideschart	GT Marine	NZ Limited
Mangawhai Natives	Kerry & Carol Martin	Fishing Boats NZ Ltd
Endemic World	Exit Films	Golden Mile Fruitpackers Ltd
Auto Super Shoppe Albany	Acquire	Lambly Builders Whangarei
Waipa Bricklayers	Pay Sauce	Martin & Riggall Engineering
Whangarei Drycleaning Company Ltd	SBA Hibiscus Coast	Parkit Management
Rogers Boat shop	Growth Strategies	The Boat Shed & Autos
Liquorland Snells Beach	Consulting Ltd	Mineral Wines
LCP Management Services	Browne Engineering Ltd	Canoe and Kayak
Kitchen inspirations	Fiordland Charters	Electrical Solutions
Kahu Ridge	Okiwi Bay Holiday Park & Lodge	Design Steel
	Peter Campbell	Crows Nest Apartments
	A2Z Translate	