

LegaSea Accountability Report

JANUARY – APRIL 2026



Image: Alex Muir

Introduction

Over the past several months, LegaSea has been actively engaged in responding to mounting pressures on New Zealand's inshore fisheries. This period has been marked by sustained advocacy to address declining fish stocks, challenge inadequate management settings, and push for more precautionary, transparent decision-making.

Work has focused on making fisheries issues visible and understandable to the public, while also holding decision-makers to account. This has included responding to government consultations, advocating for stronger rebuild measures for key species, and highlighting the long-term risks of continued over-extraction. At the same time, efforts have been made to grow public awareness and participation, ensuring more New Zealanders are informed, engaged, and able to support change.

Alongside policy engagement, LegaSea has continued to strengthen its role as a trusted voice for marine abundance, connecting communities, partners, and stakeholders around a shared vision of healthier fisheries and a more resilient coastal environment.

LegaSea Summer Photo Competition

The LegaSea Photo Competition has wrapped for another year and once again, the entries delivered.

Across seven categories, with the support of seven incredible partners, we saw an outstanding range of submissions from all around Aotearoa. From unforgettable underwater moments to breathtaking coastal scenes, and plates of kaimoana shared with friends and whānau, this year's photos captured everything we love about our ocean and why it matters.

A huge congratulations to our overall winner, Finn Stevenson, for an exceptional, moody shot of a snapper caught up close and personal.

We'd also like to give a big shoutout to all of our category winners and runners-up. The quality this year was outstanding, and narrowing it down was no easy task.



Photo: Finn Stevenson



Photo: Chris Maraj



Photo: Kathryn McLachlan



Photo: Michaela Insley

Public Awareness

AUCKLAND BOAT SHOW



LegaSea was invited to participate in the Auckland Boat Show, hosted by NZ Marine at the Viaduct from 5-8 March. Our presence was generously supported with a donated stand, providing a valuable opportunity to connect with the public and industry.

Across four days, we promoted key campaign messages including the Fisheries Amendment Bill, our *I Fish. I Care. I Vote.* initiative, and the launch of our Works Partnership programme. We also engaged with industry partners and political representatives to reinforce the importance of abundant fisheries for the future of the sector.

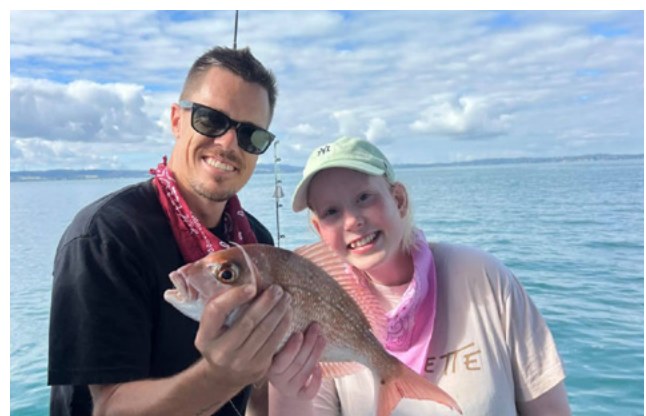
While overall visitor engagement was lower than expected, we still connected with a broad audience, distributed campaign materials, and strengthened relationships with key stakeholders. The event remains an important platform to raise awareness and advocate for stronger protections for our coastal fisheries.

The Kai Ika Project & Cans for Kai

AUCKLAND

The **Kai Ika** filleting station at Westhaven saw inconsistent activity over the period, which is typical for this time of year, with Christmas and the return to school diverting attention, along with traditionally slower snapper fishing.

It was a busy event season, with the team supporting a number of fishing competitions including the Tauranga Fish n Chicks, the JA Russell's Reel Oarsome, Chester's Finatical Fishos, and Canteen's annual CanFish event. CanFish sees young cancer patients from around the country taken out on boats on the Gulf for a day of fishing, before returning to the club in V8 cars for the very fun prizegiving. These events provided strong opportunities to engage with fishers, promote better use of catch, and raise awareness of Kai Ika and LegaSea.



Success at the CanFish event

Fish distribution in Auckland, delivered in collaboration with Papatūānuku Kōkiri Marae, paused over the Christmas period before resuming in February to strong demand. This highlighted the ongoing need for the programme and the importance of maintaining a consistent supply. During the quarter, Kai Ika also hosted the Tātaki Auckland Unlimited team, who support the project through the collection of aluminium cans from venues such as the Aotea Centre and Town Hall.



Fish distribution at Papatūānuku Kōkiri Marae

Cans for Kai

Multiple summer events contributed large volumes of cans over the break through recovery partners, Closed Loop and Non Stop Events. This included collections from events such as LAB and Stan Walker shows in Tauranga and Auckland, UB40 in Pukekohe and Homegrown now in Hamilton.



In January, we also reached a milestone with 50,000 kg of cans recycled nationally since inception!

Cans for Kai is a community-driven initiative that collects and recycles aluminium cans to generate funding for redistributing harvested fish to communities in need.

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

WELLINGTON

In February we were invited to present at the regional waste forum, hosted by Porirua city Council with 120 representatives from local council and waste management community. Our presentation was very well received and the circularity of the project was particularly valued. There were multiple new connections and collaborations that came out of this including EnviroNZ who have stepped up to help Collect cans on our behalf, both Porirua and Hutt City councils want to help us roll out for cans for kai further, plus a number of new sites and third party contributors stepped up. Alongside this there are great volumes of cans coming in, in particular from summer events and third-party contributors.

We had a full schedule of club fishing competitions lined up including every club from Wellington to Kāpiti. Unfortunately, the weather has been dismal and a number were cancelled. However, the ones we attended went down very well and approximately \$8000 has been raised. This was once again lead and delivered primarily through volunteer energy.

Kaimoana distributions kicked off again mid January and we continue to see increased demand in a couple of the key locations. One of the key things being highlighted in response to recent fuel cost in particular is the need to build resilience into our program, including building a stock pile of frozen fish heads that can be held and dispersed across the region to buffer supply and be utilised in case of significant food security disruptions across the region. This is something we are now actively exploring.

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!

COFFEE CART

LegaSea launched and tested its coffee cart as a new way to fundraise and engage the public in conversations about marine protection. We hope to connect with the public over coffee while discussing LegaSea's work and the importance of sustainable fisheries. Across the quarter, we operated at a range of events, including the Sail GP, Auckland Boat Show, Wooden Boat Festival as well as the OBCs annual fishing comp and the Manukau SFCs Westcoaster. Event sponsored site rental and partnerships with Havana Coffee Works and Boring Oat Milk, meant we have had the opportunity to trial the model with upfront costs and minimal risk. Early results show strong potential for the coffee cart to become both a meaningful revenue stream and a powerful outreach tool.



The LegaSea Coffee Cart in action

If you are interested in having the LegaSea coffee cart at your event, reach out to benmansfield@leagasea.co.nz

Social Media

The last few months have been a big step up across LegaSea's digital channels.

January laid the groundwork, February picked up momentum, and March really took off off the back of the Fisheries Amendment Bill. We pushed hard on clear, timely content and the audience responded in a big way.

We're now consistently hitting well over a million views a month, with March delivering 1.5M on Facebook and 1.3M on Instagram. Engagement jumped across the board, particularly on Instagram where growth accelerated quickly, and more importantly, we saw that attention turn into action. A large number of people were driven to contact MPs and start engaging with the process.

The pattern is pretty clear. When we land simple, well-written posts tied to what's happening right now, people pick them up and run with them. Shares, comments and wider conversation do a lot of the heavy lifting for us.

Support from the wider community has also stepped up, with more people not just sharing content but creating their own around the issues, which is where things really start to move.

TikTok is still building but showing signs it can work, and EDM continues to be a reliable channel for reaching our core audience and driving deeper engagement.

All up, strong growth, strong engagement, and a clear shift from people just seeing content to actually getting involved.

Fisheries Management

KILL THE BILL

The coalition government is pushing ahead with the most anti-social changes to fisheries legislation in the past 30 years, despite public opposition. It is so important for the future of our fisheries that this Bill does not become law.

The [Fisheries Amendment Bill](#) passed its first reading and is before the Select Committee, one step closer to becoming legislation. The government only gave the public 16 working days to provide feedback ahead on more than 50 amendments to the Fisheries Act. The short consultation period proves there is no goodwill.

In response, LegaSea has initiated an extensive public awareness campaign '[Kill the Bill](#)', informing and educating the public to make a submission opposing this absurd piece of legislation. As part of the campaign, LegaSea created an online submission template to assist the public in making their voice heard.

Some of LegaSea's key concerns about the Fisheries Amendment Bill is that it will:

- 1. Prioritise short term export profits** over public interest, privatising our fish - a public resource. Feeding Kiwis must come first.
- 2. Reduce transparency.** No public access to camera footage. Limits public input into catch limits changes and restricts legal challenges. Unacceptable.
- 3. Lower environmental safeguards** so the Minister can legalise dumping of unwanted fish and the catch of undersized fish, while increasing commercial catch limits. This does nothing to reduce trawling along our coastline.



LegaSea alongside the New Zealand Sport Council, New Zealand Angling & Casting and NZ Underwater are developing a comprehensive submission in opposition against the Bill before 6th of May.

MARLIN AND REEF FISH ARE SAFE, FOR NOW

We don't get wins often, so when we do, it's important to celebrate them.

The Minister for Oceans and Fisheries advised that the proposal to allow commercial fishers to [keep and sell marlin](#) will not proceed. This was later followed by the announcement to also drop the proposal to allow the [sale of 19 reef fish species](#) including red moki and boarfish taken from the east and west coast of the upper Northland Island.

Thank you to those who made a submission and helped raise public awareness. We couldn't have achieved this outcome if it wasn't for your support.

We are still awaiting the Minister's decision regarding the [17 other proposals](#) seeking to amend commercial fishing regulations.

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

Leading up to the November election, fisheries is a hot commodity in the news and political campaigns. LegaSea, will continue to spearhead efforts to meet and engage with various political parties and MPs to discuss policies that will contribute to restoring abundance.

LegaSea is non-partisan and will continue to inform the public on what position political parties are taking on issues impacting our coastal fisheries.

LegaSea Hawkes Bay

After more than two years of environmental assessment and consultation with mana whenua and the wider community, resource consent has been granted to sink the Twofold Bay fishing trawler off the Napier coast. The project, led by The Twofold Bay Charitable Trust in partnership with LegaSea Hawkes Bay, will create a new artificial reef and dive site.

The proposed site is located approximately 3 nautical miles from the Napier Inner Harbour, at a depth of 17 metres, roughly 400 metres east of Pania Reef.

As part of the consent, up to 50 reef cones will also be placed around the vessel. These are solid, pyramid-shaped concrete structures designed to help stabilise the area in rough weather and create habitat for reef species, including crayfish.

A huge amount of groundwork has already gone into preparing the vessel, with more than 500 volunteer hours spent removing contaminants. The final steps include engine removal and hull ballasting, which are planned for the coming weeks, along with preparations for the sinking itself.

Timing isn't locked in just yet, but the hope is to have the vessel on the seafloor by late June.

With consent now in place, the Trust is working to raise the remaining funds needed to complete the project, including the sinking, reef cone installation, and ongoing monitoring. Support so far has been strong, but there's still a way to go.

You can find more information or make a contribution [here](#).

It's not often we get to add habitat back into the system. This is one of those rare chances to do something positive and lasting for the local marine environment.

Partnerships

A key focus over recent months has been the growth of the Works Partner programme, with particular emphasis on welcoming new businesses into the network.

Since the beginning of the year, [62 new Works Partners](#) have joined, reflecting a steady increase in alignment from the business community with LegaSea's vision for restoring marine abundance. This growth strengthens the campaign's reach and visibility, while also deepening its impact through broader representation and support.

We acknowledge and welcome all new partners who have come on board during this period. Their involvement reinforces a collective commitment to improving fisheries management and advancing long-term outcomes for our marine environment.

Partners

NEW PLATINUM PARTNERS

[Brittain Wynyard](#)

[Shimano](#) – Thank you both for stepping up from Gold to Platinum.

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





**BUILDING
LEGASEA**

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.

Cosy Place Ventures Ltd
Avoca Group
Robinson Asphalts
Sulis Hot Tubs
Ziggy's Glass
Waimea Orchard Ltd
Matakana Marine
Deejannie Ltd
Aqua designs
Busck Prestressed concrete
Blackdog cat
Our Projects Renovations + New Builds
Hayes Builders

Martin & Riggall Engineering
Apex Roof 'n' Clad Ltd
DB & JF Holdings Ltd
Gateway Investments
Econode
My Guy
Centroform Ltd
AJ Gidlow Engineering
Synthetic Technologies
Development Construction
Greenfingers Growing
Mixes Ltd
Vantage Windows North Shore
Easy Energy Ltd

Strait Construction Ltd
Sansom Construction
Arthurs Emporium
Bayleaf Organics Ltd
Cert Systems Ltd
Creative Landscaping & Design
Firstflex Cables
Hubands Whangarei
Northland Parkcare Ltd
Pan Pacific Auto Electronics
Waipukurau Construction
Warwick Fabrics
Wilco Precast
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.

Auckland Hydroseeding & Contracting
Eco Adventures
MPF Engineering
Master Craft Construction
Wilkinson Environmental
Ata Retreat Ruakaka
Fitz
Aqua Plumb Auckland Wide
Maverick Management NZ Ltd
Tairua Automotive Ltd
Hard Out Holdings Ltd
Peak Safety Training
H Group
JC Consult Limited
Atlantic Security (NZ) Ltd
Synapse Solutions
Mainland Fasteners Ltd
Kearna Trust
Waiheke Honey Company Ltd
Grouse Landscapes Ltd
Twin Coast Fishing & Diving Ltd
Stevenson Foundation
Magnolia Trust
Seagar & Partners
GSL
Waiheke Marine Solutions

My Washing Hub
Watts Group Investments Ltd
ENRA Holdings
Great Barrier Lodge
Bay of Islands Marina
MTF finance – Napier
Home & Decor Depot Ltd
Kelco Products Ltd
Screaming Reels
Seay Earthmovers Ltd
Southern Ventures
Roger Dickie NZ Ltd
Beyond Compliance
Speed Queen Laundry Systems
Chaytor Fences
Fluker Surveying
Aquatic Environmental
Dive Zone Whitianga
Provision Technologies
Prime Plumbing & Gas Fitting
Mineral Wines
Canoe and Kayak
Electrical Solutions
Design Steel
Crows Nest Apartments
Anglers Lodge
Laser Electrical
Speedy Signs Manukau

Kawau Bay Asset Management
Tideschart
Auto Super Shoppe Albany
Waipa Bricklayers
Rogers Boat shop
LCP Management Services
Kitchen inspirations
Kahu Ridge
Height 4 Hire
Blueprint Consulting Engineers
GT Marine
Exit Films
Acquire
Pay Sauce
SBA Hibiscus Coast
Browne Engineering Ltd
Fiordland Charters
Peter Campbell
BBS Timbers Ltd
Decoro Fishing Supplies
Davey Painters Ltd
Ecoefficient Solutions Nz Limited
Fishing Boats NZ Ltd
Golden Mile Fruitpackers Ltd
Lambly Builders Whangarei
Martin & Riggall Engineering
Parkit Management
The Boat Shed & Autos