

Fisheries Management

Annual Report 2025-26



NZSFC Directory

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Patron – Pete Saul

President – Scott Macindoe

Vice Presidents – Heyden Johnston & Andrew Johnson

ADMINISTRATION

Admin Officer – Helen Pastor

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Records Officer – Pete Saul

Communications and Operations Lead – Mike Plant

BOARD MEMBERS:

Jennifer Troup – Zone 1

Stephen Harper – Zone 2

Warren Maher – Zone 3

Vance Fulton – Zone 4

Brett Rigby – Zone 5

Doug Taucher – Zone 6

Mark Connor – Zone 7

Heyden Johnston – Zone 8

Mark Hemingway – IGFA and Life Member Representative

Ci  Robinson-Bates – Co-opted Board Member

BY THE NUMBERS

Member clubs – 54

Affiliated members – 35,500

Life members – 12

Zone Board representatives – 8

IGFA NZSFC Board representatives – 1

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this report complete with hyperlinks to
in-depth information

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The epic team who attended the NZSFC AGM hosted by Kaikōura Boating and Recreational Fishing Club, September 2025



President's Report

NEW ZEALAND SPORT FISHING COUNCIL



Scott Macindoe,
NZSFC President

A REMARKABLE YEAR

The past year was remarkable for the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council. It reminded us of the importance of the work we do. We faced some of the most serious attempts yet to end recreational fishing as we know it. Once again we refused to look away and not act.

Thanks to the support of our affiliated clubs and their members, our many Partners, Sponsors and contributors through the LegaSea Legends programme, we have been able to offer straight feedback to officials and their Minister as they seek to further privatise our fisheries.

Many thousands of Kiwis have stood up for themselves and future generations to oppose attempts to [commercialise marlin and 19 reef fish species](#), as well as the dreadful [Fisheries Act Amendment Bill](#). Thank you to those who supported our public outreach, LegaSea's campaigning efforts, read updates, made the effort to protest, make submissions or put pressure on their MP.

Subsequently Shane Jones, the Minister for Oceans and Fisheries, has ditched the commercialisation proposals and put the Amendment Bill on hold. This is a testament to the relentless pressure and campaigning on your behalf by the Council and LegaSea.

The Council has a rare ability to unite and generate interest from the public, clubs, politicians and influential figures across the sector. That ability rests on our reputation to deliver factual information, meticulous record-keeping, active participation in various groups and engagement with policy and decision-makers. All of this is underpinned by our kaupapa and our commitment to the future through initiatives such as [Youth Nationals](#), [LegaSea](#), [FishCare](#), [Kai Ika](#) and [Rescue Fish](#).



Scan here to read a digital copy of this report complete with hyperlinks to in-depth information

70 YEARS ON

This year marks another milestone – 70 years of engagement on behalf of our members, developing countless submissions, spearheading legal challenges, and often serving as the last line of defence for non-commercial fishers.

None of this is possible without the dedicated volunteers who make up the Fisheries Management Standing Committee (FMSC) supporting our contractor team. This team advocates relentlessly on your behalf.

We are determined to hold our seat at the table before Ministers, officials, and many science and fisheries working groups. When we do so, we stand safely on the solid ground of our Council's comprehensive [Fisheries Management Policy](#) platform that embodies so many years of experience and hard-won lessons. Every one of these policies is the result of Notices of Motion that have made it through the rigour of club, Zone, Board and AGM processes.

LOOKING FORWARD

This year also marked the 40th anniversary of the so-called "world-leading" Quota Management System (QMS). Forty years on, it's more obvious than ever that the QMS is no longer fit for purpose. Our people and our marine environment deserve a system that prioritises abundance, not private property rights.

Since 2018, your Council has invested in the development of an alternative fisheries management regime, [Rescue Fish – Ika Rauora](#). Every year it becomes more obvious and compelling that Rescue Fish has to be implemented.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

I am honoured to have served as President for the last two years. I leave you in good hands and I have confidence that the NZSFC and the FMSC will continue to deliver outstanding work and keep holding decision-makers accountable.

I thank **Paul Ratapu, Rongomaiwahine**, for these final words:

"As a Kiwi, my recreational bag limit is an intrinsic link to my cultural identity. Being able to share my carefully processed catch with friends and family is a primary source of self-esteem and mana."

Co-chair's Report



FISHERIES MANAGEMENT STANDING COMMITTEE



Mark Connor,
NZSFC FMSC
Co-chair



Jim Yeoman,
NZSFC FMSC
Co-chair

INTRODUCTION

As the health of our coastal fisheries continues to decline, our workload increases. It's been a demanding past 12 months for the Fisheries Management Standing Committee (FMSC) volunteers and contractor team.

We continue to stand up for public interests, responding to proposals to change catch limits, reduce bag limits, and engaging in Resource Management Act (RMA) processes that shape the future of our fisheries and our ability to gather kaimoana.

Over the past year we completed 38 submissions on a wide range of fisheries and RMA issues. While the detail of each submission differed depending on the issue, the underlying message remained consistent - depletion is a symptom of a failing Quota Management System (QMS).

There is the ongoing challenge of inadequate consultation timeframes. This limits our ability to respond to every proposal. In July 2025, we had 21 working days to submit responses for 35 fish stocks. Faced with this constraint, we had to prioritise the most important fish stocks and ultimately only responded to 15 of the 35 proposals.

ADVOCACY TEAM

Our dedicated team continues to bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the table. This year we farewelled Wayne Bicknell and welcomed Jim Yeoman as co-chair, joining FMSC veteran Mark Connor. Jim brings more than a decade of experience on the Committee and a strong grounding in fisheries matters. He is co-opted onto the FMSC as an advocate for the New Zealand Angling & Casting Association.

We farewelled long-standing Committee member Peter Campbell, who served on the Committee for more than 10 years. Thank you for your dedication, Peter - we wish you all the best in your well-earned retirement.

Our Committee members continue to offer invaluable commitment, attending quarterly meetings and contributing to discussions on fisheries management matters nationwide. The Committee includes NZSFC Board members Andrew Johnson (Vice President) and Vance Fulton, alongside co-opted members Richard Baker, Josh Barclay (representing NZ Underwater Association) and Mike Plant, NZSFC's Communications and Operations lead.

We extend thanks to our specialist contractors whose expertise supports the NZSFC in many areas: Rowan Ashton, Stuart Ryan and Christian Colenbrander for their legal guidance; John Holdsworth, Trish Rea, Barry Torkington, Sydney Curtis, Sam Woolford and Katie Goodwin for their ongoing contributions.

SEAT AT THE TABLE

It's more important than ever that we maintain our seat at the table. We've seen first-hand what officials can get away with when we're not present. The [2026 Fisheries Act Amendment Bill](#) was developed behind closed doors between the Minister, officials and quota holders. Recreational interests were not invited to participate. Had we been present during these initial discussions, the Bill may never have surfaced in its current form.

We are proud to have actively participated in 115 Ministry-led meetings of science working groups, fisheries planning, and multistakeholder groups this past year. The NZSFC invested more than \$62,000 in attending and engaging in these processes. Thank you to FMSC members and contractors who regularly attend these meetings.

We continue to draw on the knowledge and lived experience of our affiliated clubs and their members, whose local perspective helps ground our advocacy. These insights strengthen our submissions and ensure they reflect what's being seen out, on or under the water.

WHAT WE CATCH

The Minister has publicly claimed on multiple occasions that the amount of fish we take home to feed our families is “unknown”, and that recreational fishers ought to be reporting their catches.

The [National Panel Survey](#) produces scientifically defensible estimates of recreational harvest. It is the best available science for management purposes. The most [recent results in 2022-23](#) estimate that Kiwis take home less than 10% of the total harvest from New Zealand’s marine waters.

The NZSFC supports independent, peer-reviewed surveys, principally the National Panel Survey, using methodologies that have been refined and validated over the past 20 years.

COMPULSORY REPORTING

Evidence from New Zealand and internationally is consistent. Self-reporting systems cannot reliably estimate absolute recreational harvest.

The push to introduce compulsory recreational reporting isn’t driven by a genuine interest in generating better data. It’s driven by an agenda to bring recreational fishing

into the QMS by giving us a fixed allocation, removing the Minister’s discretion to set aside an allowance, thereby making us minor shareholders in the QMS.

The work we do on behalf of the NZSFC remains grounded in facts and science. That’s why we developed a [comprehensive paper](#) addressing the misinformation about mandatory recreational reporting.

The NZSFC stands by our agreed [Fisheries Management Policy](#) in not supporting the use of self-reporting systems as a primary method for estimating recreational harvest.

WHAT’S NEXT?

With a new government expected at the end of 2026, we’re hopeful the new Minister will focus on upholding the purpose and principles of the Fisheries Act, and maintaining the productivity of the marine environment for the benefit of present and future generations.

While our combined efforts have successfully pressured the current Minister to pause progress of the Fisheries Amendment Bill, it is likely to resurface in the next Parliamentary term, if the Coalition returns.

The NZSFC and LegaSea will continue to actively engage with political parties to develop fisheries policies that prioritise greater abundance and marine biodiversity.



Key Highlights

It's been a year of proactive activity and reacting to nonsense proposals from officials. If there was an upside to these proposals, it was watching the recreational fishing community come together and push back.

Under the guidance of the NZSFC's LegaSea Governance and Fisheries Management Standing Committees, our working team has strived to ensure the voices of ordinary New Zealanders and club fishers are heard.

These highlights reflect some of the key successes we have encountered over this past year. Ka pai to all involved, from club members to our LegaSea sponsors, you all play a significant role in our efforts.

- 1. We lodged 38 submissions** in response to proposals impacting our coastal fisheries, area closures and management issues, usually working to unreasonably tight deadlines set by officials.
- 2. Marlin not for Sale.** In November, NZSFC collaborated with a range of influential voices to oppose regulatory changes that sought to commercialise marlin. You can read our submission [here](#). Thanks to sustained campaigning by NZSFC, LegaSea, Matt Watson and others, in January 2026 the Minister abandoned the proposals to allow [marlin](#) to be kept and sold commercially.

3. NZSFC invested more than \$58,000 in fighting the Fisheries Amendment Bill. In March 2026 the Minister, Shane Jones, released the Fisheries Act Amendment Bill. The FMSC devoted significant resources to dismantling and rejecting the Bill. Our comprehensive [68-page submission](#) distilled more than 100 years of combined experience into one document. An executive summary of our submission is [here](#).

4. Bill on Ice. Extensive public campaigning by LegaSea, paid off. In June 2026, the [Minister confirmed](#) that the Fisheries Amendment Bill would not progress during the current electoral term, due to a lack of Parliamentary support. Thanks to everyone who helped raise public awareness, contacted their local MP or made a submission. This is a significant win for our collective interests and our fisheries.

5. Four Quarterly meetings. The Fisheries Management Standing Committee hosted four in-person meetings, hosting tackle industry representatives and Sponsors. Together, we debated and settled on responses to issues of relevance to clubs and public fishing interests.

6. Actively participated in 115 science, management and advisory group processes. The NZSFC invested more than \$62,000 in attending and engaging in these processes.



Committee Report

NZSFC FISHERIES MANAGEMENT STANDING COMMITTEE

INTRODUCTION

This report reflects an intense year of work by the Committee. It also includes commentary on the recent July 2026 submissions because they are relevant to our objective of restoring abundance in our coastal marine environment so we can enjoy reasonable access to fish and fishing.

MARLIN & REEF SPECIES

In late 2025 we collaborated with a range of influential voices and organisations to [oppose regulatory changes](#) that sought to commercialise marlin, 19 vulnerable reef species, and claw back restrictions on trawling and Danish seining in inshore South Island waters.

Thanks to sustained campaigning by NZSFC, LegaSea, Matt Watson and others, the Minister abandoned the proposals to allow [marlin](#) and [reef fish](#) to be kept and sold commercially. This is a significant win for the NZSFC and clubs. Thank you to those who made a submission and helped raise public awareness. The fate of the seventeen other proposals remain undecided.

SOUTH ISLAND

Blue cod is a taonga (treasured) species, prized by recreational fishers. It's been disheartening to witness the decline of South Island blue cod populations, particularly across the Marlborough Sounds, Otago and Southland. This depletion has left non-commercial fishers paying the price for a mismanaged fishery where excessive commercial catches were permitted over decades.

In July 2025, NZSFC submitted in support of a reduced blue cod daily bag limit in [South Otago](#) and [Southland waters](#) on the basis that the commercial catch limit would also be reduced, and our bag limit would be reviewed when the stock rebuilds.

We reiterated our concerns about the [blue cod Traffic Light System](#). It places an unfair and illegitimate burden on families simply wanting to bring home blue cod to share.

Alongside the short three-month pāua winter season, Kaikōura fishers now face a seasonal closure to crayfish harvest from 1 July to 30 September 2026. After working with local fishing clubs and partner organisations to develop a submission, [we supported the closure](#) but noted that this measure is only a temporary solution to addressing wider depletion.

CRAYFISH

Northland's east coast crayfish population is so depleted the Minister [closed the east coast CRA 1 fishery](#) to commercial and recreational harvest from April 2026. A closure signals a failure of inadequate management.

NZSFC has repeatedly raised concerns about the decline. This closure is too little too late, particularly given that most commercial effort has shifted west due to depletion.

In January 2026, the Minister reviewed crayfish management in the Gisborne and Hawkes Bay area (CRA 3) due to concerns of declining crayfish numbers. It was disappointing that the Minister did not adopt [our recommendation](#) to apply the strongest reduction to commercial catch limits, to enable a faster rebuild.

Our submissions again urged officials to review concessions that allow commercial fishers to take crayfish smaller than the minimum legal size. These concessions undermine protections meant to let smaller crays contribute to the fishery before they're caught.

Our expert contractors John Holdsworth and Sydney Curtis continue to represent our interests in the National Rock Lobster Advisory and Working Groups.

AREA CLOSURES

Over the past year we responded to numerous proposals for temporary closures, rāhui and mātaimai reserves nationwide. Our submissions were guided by [NZSFC policy](#) recognising customary fisheries management tools as responses to address depletion and highlighted that closures remain a symptom of wider mismanagement.

NZSFC supported 2-year temporary closures at [Ahipara](#), [Northland](#), [Mair and Marsden Banks](#), [Whangarei](#) and a re-application at [Tutukaka](#). Following feedback from local clubs, we opposed the proposed large mātaimai reserve at [Guards Bay](#), [Marlborough](#). We were pleased with the Minister's decision to approve a [two-year closure](#) addressing excessive harvesting of intertidal creatures along Auckland's north-east coast beaches.

Further to this, we responded to Fisheries NZ's June 2026 proposals reviewing intertidal shellfish and invertebrate management on Auckland's east and west coasts, Waiheke Island and the Coromandel. [NZSFC supported](#) a ban on harvesting the most vulnerable rocky-shore species while maintaining reasonable public access to species capable of sustaining themselves. A Ministerial decision is expected soon.

BAG LIMITS TAKE A HIT

Time and time again, the public has shown that when required we're willing to contribute to healthier fisheries. In July 2026, in the interests of conservation and genuine concern, we supported a reduced daily bag limit for [tarakihi nationwide](#) and for [butterfish](#) at the top of the South Island, on the condition that meaningful cuts were applied to commercial fishing.

But it's a thin line we walk. Once our bag limits are reduced, they are rarely restored, even after stocks are reviewed and commercial catch limits are increased. That's because under the Quota Management System (QMS), decision-making priority defaults to protecting commercial catches from necessary reductions. As long as the QMS remains in place, the protection of private interests will continue.

HAURAKI GULF

The [Hauraki Gulf/Tikapa Moana Marine Protection Bill](#) passed into law in October 2025, establishing 19 protected areas within the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park. The protected areas do little to tackle overfishing, over-allocation of depleted fish stocks and land-based runoff.

On behalf of NZSFC, Katie Goodwin continues to participate in the Hauraki Gulf Fisheries Plan Advisory Group and discussions on the future management of the Coromandel scallop fishery.

TIME'S OUT FOR TARAKIHI

East coast tarakihi is the latest stock to collapse under the outdated QMS. In July 2026, Fisheries NZ proposed significant commercial catch reductions alongside cuts to the daily bag limit nationwide.

We [jointly submitted](#) in support of an east coast closure or, at a minimum, reducing east coast commercial catches to bycatch-only levels. This would help rebuild the stock within a reasonable timeframe. [We also supported](#) a nationwide daily bag limit of 5 tarakihi per person, but only if the maximum commercial catch reductions were made. The Minister's decision is pending, with any changes to apply from 1 October 2026.

PROPORTIONAL ALLOCATION

Once again, we batted away several attempts by officials to pursue proportional allocation of the Total Allowable Catch. Proportional allocation was a feature of the [Fisheries Amendment Bill 2026](#) and included in recent proposals to reallocate pāua around Otago (PAU 5D).

Fisheries NZ proposed that if commercial pāua catches were cut by 25%, then the recreational allowance should also be cut by 25%. To meet the proposed reduction, daily bag limits for pāua would have to be reduced. Fisheries NZ indicated this would be consulted on next year.

[We strongly rejected](#) this proportional approach for pāua and other prized fish stocks. All our submissions reaffirm the Minister's statutory obligation to set a reasonable allowance for non-commercial interests before setting any commercial catch limit.

MIXED TRAWL FISHERIES

In July 2025, [we opposed proposals](#) to increase commercial catch limits for snapper and rig on the South Island's east coast. An increase would mean more bottom trawling, putting sensitive species and important habitats at greater risk. The Minister disregarded our submission and increased both limits, adding further pressure to our marine environment.

In June 2026, Fisheries NZ proposed raising commercial catch limits for snapper and trevally in the North Island's southeast coast trawl fishery. A major concern because increased trawling effort would pose a serious risk to already-depleted john dory and tarakihi stocks. [Our recent submission](#) supported retaining current catch limits for snapper and trevally. A Ministerial decision is expected in September.

115

science and advisory working group processes attended and engaged in

38

submissions to fisheries and RMA processes

2700

contractor hours engaging and participating in processes

Committee Report

FISHERIES AMENDMENT BILL

INTRODUCTION

Despite overwhelming public opposition in 2025, the Coalition government decided to proceed with fisheries reform. Oceans and Fisheries Minister Shane Jones announced the Fisheries Act Amendment Bill on 18 March 2026. Submissions were initially due by 29 April. An inadequate timeframe given the complexity of the proposals.

The FMSC and team devoted significant resources to dismantling and rejecting the Bill. Because, if passed it would eventually mean fewer fish in the water. Our kids would never enjoy a day's fishing like we and our parents did.

The Bill undermines the core [purpose and principles of the Fisheries Act](#) to ensure sustainability. Buried beneath legal jargon are proposals to hand sweeping new powers to quota owners and weaken environmental protections, while limiting public consultation. The Bill includes new proposals that weren't consulted on in 2025.

OUR SUBMISSIONS

To our disappointment, the Bill passed its first reading and now sits with the Primary Production Select Committee.

With a tight 27 working-day deadline, the NZSFC, LegaSea, NZ Angling & Casting and NZ Underwater Associations developed a [comprehensive 68-page joint response](#). Our 6 May submission distilled more than 100 years of combined experience into one document.

We rejected the Bill in its entirety, exposing its deep flaws and advocating for meaningful reforms based on our [Rescue Fish](#) policy.

Later in May, [NZSFC President Scott Macindoe](#), [legal representative Rowan Ashton](#), and contractors [Katie Goodwin and Trish Rea](#) spoke on behalf of our joint interests at Select Committee hearings.

WIDESPREAD CONCERNS

One proposal would [lower penalties for deepwater trawlers](#) exceeding their catch limits for inshore bycatch species such as snapper and kingfish. We discovered later that an independent economist had advised officials against implementing this proposal.

During oral submissions, [the Ombudsman opposed](#) exempting onboard camera footage from release under the Official Information Act, describing the exemption as “unnecessary” and “unjustified”.

Officials also disagreed with the Minister's proposal to

limit the public's window to legally challenge a fisheries decision to just 20 working days. This is a direct response to recent Court rulings confirming the Minister must take genuine, precautionary steps to protect fish stocks and marine ecosystems from overfishing.

Rather than respond by strengthening fisheries management, the Minister appears intent on changing the law to avoid further judicial oversight, and fast-track exploitation of our fish.

FISHERIES ACT

The current Fisheries Act is intended to hold decision-makers to account for managing fish stocks in the interests of future generations. They must take into account the interconnected nature of our marine ecosystem and give effect to the statutory requirement that sustainability must come first.

Recent court rulings on Ministerial decisions for crayfish, tarakihi, and kahawai show the law is consistent. Yet the Minister has convinced the Coalition government that the current Act needs widespread change to boost “productivity” of the commercial fishing industry.

The real reason behind the Amendment Bill is to shift control over how many fish remain in the water to quota owners. Behind closed doors. It shifts power away from the Minister and strips back public accountability.

THE BILL IS ON ICE

In June 2026, the [Minister confirmed](#) that the Fisheries Amendment Bill won't pass this electoral term due to a lack of Parliamentary support. A significant win for public interests and our fisheries.

The Bill is not dead. The Select Committee must report back to Parliament by 1 October with any recommendations or changes to the Bill. The Minister has stated that if re-elected, he will pass the Bill in the first 100 days of the next term.

All parties except NZ First have confirmed they will not support the Bill in its current form. After the election, NZSFC and LegaSea will continue to hold political parties to their commitments to not proceed with the current Bill.

\$58,000

invested into fighting against the Fisheries Amendment Bill

Gamefish Report

Sydney Curtis of Marinus has worked alongside John Holdsworth, Blue Water Marine Research, since 2023. Sydney has taken over the New Zealand Gamefish Tagging Programme and Billfish Logbook Programme. This enables a seamless transition between contractors and ensures the NZSFC remains involved in the science and management of New Zealand's gamefish.

THE BILLFISH ACCORD

The NZSFC has long defended the non-commercial status of marlin. In 2013, we rejected officials' attempt to allow longliners to keep marlin that were "dead" on the line. In October 2025, we had to do the same again.

Following a November meeting with the Minister for Oceans and Fisheries at the Bay of Islands Swordfish Club, work began on a Billfish Accord - a formal agreement between officials and the NZSFC detailing the long-term management of the recreational billfish fishery. The Accord includes sector commitments on tag-and-release, data and research. After six meetings with Fisheries NZ, the final draft is with the Minister awaiting a decision.

GAMEFISH SEASON

It was another quiet season on the east coast. Most of the striped marlin weighed by clubs from Northland to Gisborne between December and March weighed 80-100 kg. West coast fishing was better. Good numbers of

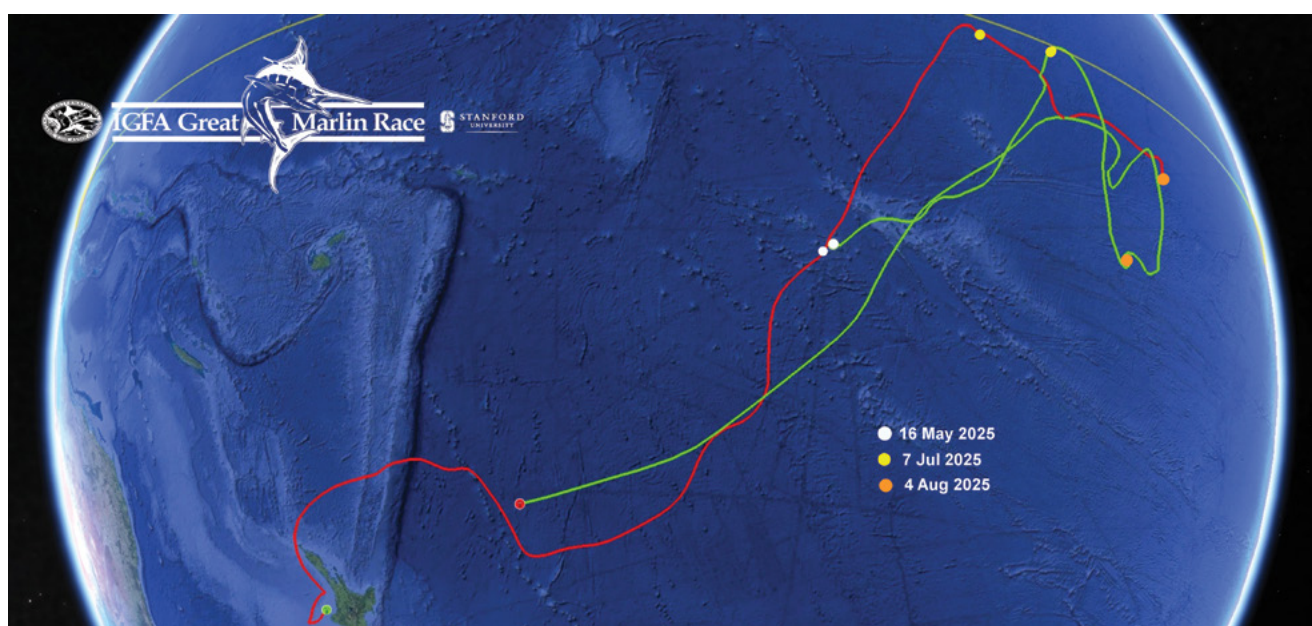
striped marlin were tagged and released off the Waikato coast, most between 65 and 100 kg. Seasons like this are just as informative as the good ones. A marlin tagged off Port Waikato in February 2026 was recaptured off Ahipara just 18 days later, 144 nautical miles to the north.

Tuna made up for the quiet marlin fishing. Yellowfin have been the standout, caught widely from Northland to the East Cape from November into March 2026 and peaking over December and January; most were 15-30 kg, the largest a 70 kg fish landed at Marsden Cove, Whangarei. Southern bluefin tuna catch was good in the right weather windows with a notable increase in jigging. Large Pacific bluefin tuna continue to appear in our waters, including a 167 kg fish landed at Waihou Bay.

SATELLITE TAGGING

Four pop-off satellite tags were deployed on striped marlin in the 2025 IGFA Great Marlin Race. A 120 kg marlin tagged off New Zealand in February, passed close to Tahiti on 16 May, the same day a second marlin was tagged. Both marlin travelled northeast, almost to the equator in early July before heading southeast in August where the first tagged popped-off 179 days later and 3,863 nautical miles away from the tag location. The second fish headed southwest toward New Zealand when its tag popped up and transmitted on 11 November - new evidence of the connections between New Zealand and the wider Pacific.

Striped marlin tracks from satellite tags deployed in February 2025, New Zealand (red) and in May 2025, Tahiti (green).



Resource Management Act

1 JULY 2025 - 30 JUNE 2026

INTRODUCTION

As the health of our coastal fisheries declines, conflict grows. Tensions continue to build over whether the Resource Management Act (RMA) is the appropriate tool to implement controls on fishing.

Where the Minister for Oceans and Fisheries has failed to deliver meaningful protection for fish stocks and marine habitat under the Fisheries Act, other tools such as the RMA are being used instead.

Guided by legal representatives Rowan Ashton and Stuart Ryan, NZSFC has found itself continuing to engage and participate in this unfamiliar territory.

WAIKATO REGIONAL COUNCIL COASTAL PLAN

Since 2022 NZSFC has been involved in the Waikato Regional Council (WRC) Coastal Plan process. Our consistency has paid dividends. After countless submissions and hearings, the WRC updated its Coastal Plan to ban mobile, bottom-contact fishing methods including bottom trawling, Danish seine and scallop dredging.

Once the Coastal Plan is approved, this means no bottom trawling in the majority of waters on the eastern side of the Coromandel Peninsula. Advocacy by NZSFC, club representatives and expert witness Sydney Curtis gave the WRC confidence to make this bold decision.

Our preference would be that fishing activity be regulated under the Fisheries Act. However, failure from central government to deliver meaningful restrictions meant WRC had to apply the RMA to protect the marine environment from destructive fishing methods.

Since this announcement, Seafood NZ and other commercial representatives have lodged appeals against the updated Coastal Plan, concerned about the restrictions on mobile bottom contact fishing methods.

NZSFC has joined this appeal alongside other interested parties supporting the WRC decision. It is uncertain how long the legal proceedings will continue.

RMA AMENDMENT BILL

In our submissions on the reform of the Resource Management Act, we have maintained that fisheries ought to be managed under the Fisheries Act, not the RMA.

On 13 February the NZSFC submitted in response to the government's proposal to replace the Resource Management Act with two new Bills: The Planning Bill 2025 and the Natural Environment Bill 2025.

Our submission outlined ongoing concerns about how both Bills propose to regulate fisheries that ought to be controlled under the Fisheries Act. Correct application of the purpose and principles of the Fisheries Act is required to directly respond to the effects of fishing on the marine environment. This point is highlighted by reference to kina barrens, bottom trawling, and other mobile bottom contact fishing methods.

RMA controls, including closures, were applied around Motiti and surrounding reef systems in the Bay of Plenty. These controls were a response to successful court proceedings that identified "undisputed evidence that overfishing of snapper and crayfish, in particular, has allowed kina to flourish and destroy kelp forests that nurture other species, leaving near-monocultures that are known as kina barrens".

After years of closure, the fishing prohibition around those reefs does little to address the root cause: excessive extraction of fish biomass due to fisheries decision-makers' failure to properly interpret and apply the Fisheries Act.

Rowan Ashton, and NZSFC representative Dirk Seiling presented an oral submission to the Environment Select Committee in March. They advocated that a clear line must be drawn to remove regulatory overlap between the RMA and Fisheries Act.

The Committee has reported back to Parliament recommending the Bills proceed with some amendments. We expect the Bills to be enacted before November.

LATE NEWS: In August the Minister announced [changes to both Bills](#), to clarify that fishing and marine resources already managed under the Fisheries Act will remain under that Act. This removes the overlap with the RMA, and confirms processes already underway can continue.

"Council fishing rules currently in place and proposed council fishing rules going through council planning processes will continue until all the new system plans are operative, expected to be in 2030."

Shane Jones. 19 August 2026

\$80,000

invested into participating in RMA processes since 2023

“The secret of change is to focus all your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new”

Socrates

INTRODUCTION

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Quota Management System (QMS). Despite its longevity, it still continues to fail New Zealand's inshore fisheries and the coastal communities that depend on them. As this failure becomes more obvious, our [Rescue Fish Ika Rauora](#) policy alternative to the QMS is gaining relevance with a wider audience.

Every closure and catch reduction makes the case for Rescue Fish more urgent. Experience has taught us that it takes a crisis to force real change.

The collapse of governance means Māori have no opportunity to meaningfully contribute to ensuring abundance for current and future generations. Yet, Māori have significant commercial, customary and recreational interests in fisheries. Increasing awareness of the potential of local area management tools to address localised depletion means our clubs are now constantly responding to fisheries failure at a local and regional level.

The increasing number of temporary closure applications from mana whenua is meeting a growing resistance from the public, yet these are the only area controls available to local communities concerned about depletion. The NZSFC has been actively involved in many of these processes as relationship building is an important factor in the success of local area management.

Fisheries management has descended into endless discussions about how much fish we can have now while avoiding collapse. Fish populations are not being managed in the public interest and regulatory capture means there is little appetite from officials to change the status quo.

We've reached a crisis point, and there's never been a better time to adopt a more nuanced management system. A system based on abundance.

RESCUE FISH IKA RAUORA

Between 2018 and 2021 the NZSFC team worked with LegaSea to raise, and invest more than \$1,000,000 into developing a comprehensive alternative to the broken QMS. After researching overseas and local models, the resulting policy is called [Rescue Fish Ika Rauora](#).

Rescue Fish provides a pathway to fish abundance and marine ecosystem recovery. The policy describes how governance of our marine resources can be improved. That starts with taking a longer-term view so that future generations benefit from our actions now.

Since launching Rescue Fish in May 2020, we've learnt a lot from engaging with a range of interests and receiving their generous feedback. We must acknowledge that it's ambitious in the current economic climate to expect the government to pay out billions to retrieve a national resource that was given away for free at the outset of the QMS, in 1986.

RESCUE FISH VERSION 2

Rescue Fish version 2 is the next step. It must include an updated economic assessment that separates offshore from inshore interests, because it's the loss of abundance and diversity in the nearshore environment that is of concern to most New Zealanders.

The quota rights to harvest deepwater fish species can wait until we iron out the issues holding back productivity in the nearshore environment.

Transition costs will be a hurdle to overcome. Trawling has been commonplace on our coastline for more than a century, but we must move on. There are screeds of scientific literature demonstrating the impacts of trawling, the loss of productivity and biodiversity, and the resuspension of sediment that chokes any living organism left standing.

To succeed we need to better understand the mix and quantities of fish that are taken by inshore trawlers. Then we need to work out viable, lower-impact alternative capture methods, and compare the costs and benefits of transitioning. For example, we already know that line caught snapper yields better returns than trawl caught fish. For other species, that distinction is not so clear. This research is vital.

Right now the only ones benefiting from trawling are commercial quota owners. The costs of trawling continues to be externalised - the marine environment is degraded with each trawl, and the public suffers the loss of productivity and amenity value.

COROMANDEL SCALLOPS

Until recently, the Coromandel scallop fishery supported generations of Kiwi families. There was a thriving coastal economy dependent on scallops, and the annual scallop festival attracted thousands of visitors to the region. That all died with the demise of scallops and the eventual fisheries closure in 2023.

Now is the prime time to consider how management could improve to avoid the boom-bust cycles of the past.

The Coromandel scallop management area extends from Cape Rodney in the Hauraki Gulf down to Maketū, Bay of Plenty. Within that area, broodstock beds feed into wider areas, using currents and water column distribution. While it's easy to get excited about abundance in one area thinking the fishery may be ready for reopening, consideration must be given to the downstream effects of depleting these primary beds.

Under any new regime, regular monitoring of scallop beds will be required. Non-contact surveys using underwater rovers and cameras is a giant leap forward from the dredge surveys of the past.

The NZSFC is focused on rebuilding abundance. Our team is working with interested parties to develop an alternative management structure to apply when the scallop fishery does reopen.

Currently, the Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC) and the recreational allowance are set at zero. Applying the Rescue Fish principles, the new plan would only permit low-impact harvesting techniques. The plan would also allow for Māori customary non-commercial and recreational fishing interests, while including a permitted regime to closely manage commercial harvest.

Taking a more holistic, hands-on approach to managing Coromandel scallops offers an opportunity to measure the success of Rescue Fish in a defined fishery.

Over the next year we will be working with local stakeholders to use Coromandel scallops as a case study for Rescue Fish. The key objectives are to:

- 1. Remove scallops from the Quota Management System.**
- 2. Rebuild abundance of scallops across the whole management area.**
- 3. Regularly monitor scallop abundance.**
- 4. Establish a mechanism to allocate available catch, prioritising public interests.**
- 5. Enable harvesting only when there is sufficient abundance to support removals.**
- 6. Prohibit dredging and enable low-impact harvesting.**



Income and Expenditure



NZSFC FISHERIES MANAGEMENT STANDING COMMITTEE

	30/6/2023	30/6/2024	30/6/2025	30/6/2026	Notes
SOURCE OF FUNDS					
NZSFC contribution	123,147	95,547	114,365	142,209	1,2
LegaSea Legends, public, unaffiliated club donations	135,636	108,085	113,794	138,827	
Grants received	50,000	94,500	47,000	0	
Sundry FMSC income	9,703	2,400	3,120	5,117	
Tackle and marine industry contribution	0	0	0	15,000	3
Total Fisheries Management Income	318,486	300,532	278,279	301,153	
EXPENDITURE					
Engagement and participation in fisheries management and marine protection processes					
Snapper	5,328	20,264	4,390	2,761	
Crayfish	49,077	42,759	47,619	34,145	
Pelagics	4,328	4,415	5,112	15,489	
Other fisheries	22,197	13,682	22,584	17,087	
Fisheries NZ (MPI) processes	28,594	86,308	27,895	62,571	
Fisheries Act reform process	65,041	11,664	30,870	58,015	4
Marine Protection and RMA process	13,031	17,432	41,430	10,512	
Regional issues/support	68,206	13,066	7,500	13,457	
Rescue Fish and FAQ project investment	5,035	8,570	3,569	7,270	5
Planning, projects and team development					
Administration, accountability, team development	27,054	44,598	41,702	33,645	
Policy development	5,763	3,125	2,080	4,309	
Grant seeking	3,510	1,954	2,200	122	
Communications and reporting	21,322	32,695	41,328	41,770	
Total expenditure	318,486	300,532	278,279	301,153	

NOTES

1. The NZSFC essentially 'underwrites' the work of the Fisheries Management Standing Committee. This year the 'Unspent LegaSea Contributions Reserve' was utilised, leaving a balance of \$51.
2. This year we have taken into account the Council's Administration Officer (Helen Pastor) for her administration and accountability of the FMSC finances. Also, our Communications and Operations Lead, Mike Plant, who serves as a vital liaison between the FMSC activities and our many affiliated clubs.
3. The fishing tackle and marine industry step up with a contribution to support the FMSC endeavours – over and above their long term, generous Partnership support for the LegaSea initiative. Thank you.
4. Officials are determined to radically rewrite the Fisheries Act in favour of marginal benefits for TACC shareholders to the detriment of the fisheries and the public interest therein. Minister David Parker saw through much of their nonsense in 2022. Sadly, Minister Shane Jones has fulsomely encouraged the officials legislation agenda and much of their regulatory review.
5. As Teddy Roosevelt once said 'Complaining about a problem without posing a solution is called whining'. From 2018 to 2021 we invested over \$1,000,000 to develop an alternative to the QMS. We call it Rescue Fish Ika Rauora. The time has come for us to follow through and deliver a compelling value proposition.

LegaSea Report

ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26



Sam Woolford,
LegaSea project lead

INTRODUCTION

LegaSea was established in 2012 by the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council (NZSFC), as its public outreach arm. Our mission hasn't changed in 14 years - elevate public awareness of issues impacting our coastal fisheries, and raise funds to support the vital work of the NZSFC Fisheries Management Standing Committee (FMSC).

LegaSea's challenge is to communicate the issues clearly and encourage Kiwis to make their voice heard. This means getting political, so our work is grounded in expert advice from the Committee and contractor team.

OUR PEOPLE

We're grateful for the ongoing guidance of the LegaSea Governance Advisory Standing Committee. Thank you to Peter Campbell for his longstanding contribution as LegaSea Director, we wish him well as he leaves the Committee in good hands. We welcome Brett Rigby, Andrew Johnson and Scott Macindoe. Thanks to Mark Connor, Richard Baker, and Dirk Sieling for their continued support.

Every year we're humbled by the generosity of people who give their time to LegaSea. In the past year, volunteers invested hundreds of hours supporting our team at events, LegaSea HQ and with Kai Ika kaimoana distributions.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Public outreach sits at the heart of our work. It's our chance to talk directly with supporters about the work we do on behalf of all New Zealanders.

In March, we attended the Auckland Boat Show thanks to our Gold Partner NZ Marine Industry, showcasing how important a thriving coastal fishery is for the marine industry.

A highlight of our year is attending the May Hutchwilco New Zealand Boat Show. Over four days, around 4000 people visited our stand. It was heartening to hear from many who'd made a submission opposing the Fisheries

Amendment Bill. By the end of the show, our stand wall was covered with fish stickers spelling out 'Kill the Bill'.

We relish the opportunity to present to school groups on the state of our fisheries, and show how the next generation can help restore abundance.

ARTICLES

This year we published more than 40 articles through local and national outlets. This includes Fishing in Godzone, Dive Pacific, The Adventurer, Mahurangi Matters and Whangamata News. This consistent coverage keeps LegaSea visible and relevant in coastal communities.

CAMPAIGNS

This past year, officials gave LegaSea several opportunities to respond to unacceptable proposals. We swiftly launched public campaigns opposing proposals that threaten our goal of restoring marine abundance.

MARLIN AND REEF FISH

In November, we informed the public about risky proposals to [allow the commercial sale of marlin and 19 vulnerable reef fish species](#).

Supporters, including Matt Watson, Kurt Eklund and industry organisations, shared our 'Hands off our Marlin' message across social media. Central to our campaign was an online submission tool that made it easy for concerned Kiwis to have their say. We received more than 22,000 submissions. The majority of respondents opposed the commercialisation attempts by Shane Jones.

In early 2026, the Minister bowed to public pressure, [announcing](#) that the commercialisation proposals will not proceed. LegaSea is grateful to everyone who made a submission and helped raise awareness. We couldn't have achieved that result without widespread public support.

KILL THE BILL

Despite 25,000 Kiwis opposing the Minister's proposed fisheries reforms in April 2025, officials pressed ahead, releasing the Fisheries Amendment Bill in March 2026. Given the gravity of the proposed changes, we poured significant time and resources into our '[Kill the Bill](#)' campaign.

We broke down what the Bill meant for our fish, the marine environment and the public. We received more than 33,000 submissions from our online submission tool, then sent them to Parliament's Select Committee in May 2026.

Supporters, partners, NZSFC affiliated clubs and politicians joined the wave of public action, urging followers to make a submission opposing the Bill. We also engaged mainstream media including Radio NZ, Newsroom and reporters including Michael Morrah.

Public pressure paid off. [The Minister has paused progress](#) of the Bill until the next parliamentary term. To keep the pressure on, we rallied MPs on the steps of Parliament In July 2026, seeking a commitment that they would not proceed with the current Bill if re-elected. All parties who attended agreed.

TIME OUT FOR TARAKIHI

Tarakihi populations are so depleted that Fisheries NZ proposed significant commercial catch reductions alongside cuts to the daily bag limit nationwide. The FMSC commissioned LegaSea to develop a campaign to educate and mobilise the public.

More than 1200 Kiwis used our online form to make thoughtful submissions. A reminder that behind every submission is someone who cares enough to speak up for the future of our fisheries. A Ministerial decision on tarakihi is expected in September.

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

LegaSea is non-partisan. Our role – on behalf of the NZSFC, is to inform the public on where political parties stand on issues impacting our coastal fisheries. Given how politicised fisheries has become, this role matters more than ever.

The Minister holds significant power, having the final say on fisheries decisions. Over the past three years – Shane Jones' decisions have largely favoured commercial fishing interests.

With the November 2026 general election approaching, our team has invested significant effort into engaging with all political parties and MPs to discuss policies that will contribute to restoring abundance.

PARTNERS

LegaSea Partners are our lifeblood. With their support we can respond to threats, launch public campaigns, and hold officials to account.

We highly value the endorsement from ongoing [Platinum and Gold partners](#) (see page 28), and welcome the addition of three new Partners to support our efforts.

A key focus this year has been growing our [Works Partner programme](#). We've welcomed 67 new Works Partners. This reflects a steady increase in alignment from the business

community with LegaSea's vision for restoring marine abundance.

Alongside LegaSea's long-standing partner Okuma, tackle brands Daiwa and Shimano have stepped up as Platinum Partners. Daiwa summed up this partnership perfectly *"The past couple of years have been a wake-up call for our Industry. If there aren't enough fish in the water, Kiwis won't be able to go fishing. That impacts our way of life – and it affects businesses like ours that rely on people being able to catch a fish."*

If you or your business wants to be a part of this movement, email jessica@legasea.co.nz or matt@legasea.co.nz to learn more.

FUNDRAISING

We remain committed to distributing 100% of public and unaffiliated club donations to the NZSFC. These donations are earmarked for investment in advocacy, research, education and alignment work streams.

Despite many Kiwis feeling the economic squeeze, it's encouraging to see an upwards trend in [LegaSea Legend](#) recurring payments. A pleasing response to our targeted fundraising campaigns for 'Kill the Bill', 'Hands off our Marlin' and 38 submissions.

The LegaSea team is grateful to the Fisheries Management Standing Committee and our fisheries experts for their guidance. And we're most humbled by the growing public support for our collective goal of more fish in the water and a fair go for current and future generations.

22,000

marlin and reef fish submissions

\$61,000

invested in campaigns over the past year

64

Platinum and Gold Partners supporting LegaSea

'HE IKA HE TAONGA' – THE GIFT OF FISH

INTRODUCTION

Since 2016, [The Kai Ika Project](#) has been on a mission to change the way Kiwis think about kaimoana. Fish heads and frames are a taonga (treasure) valued across communities, yet are often underutilised once the fish is filleted. Kai Ika recovers these parts from recreational fishers and commercial processors and gets them onto the tables of the families, marae and community organisations who value them most.

Nearly a decade on, Kai Ika and its partners have shared over 700,000 kg of fish heads and frames. A remarkable milestone for this kaupapa (work). It is a testament to the strength of our volunteers, partners, grant funders and communities who make this work possible each year.

AUCKLAND

Our core Auckland distribution remains based in Māngere, facilitated by founding partners Papatūānuku Kōkiri Marae and the Hotene whanau. Thanks to Woolworths and Hilton Foods, fresh kaimoana is distributed twice weekly to communities.

This year we launched a fortnightly distribution with trusted community organisations including Maranga Whānau, Visionwest and The Grace Foundation, who collect in bulk and distribute within their networks.

Working alongside the New Zealand International Convention Centre (NZICC) and Fair Food, Kai Ika now facilitates frozen fish distributions to key community partners. This includes Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei, Everybody Eats, Visionwest, and Auckland City Mission.

Looking ahead, our focus is on strengthening our fundraising base and deepening community distribution through the marae and our wider network of partners.

WELLINGTON

Kai Ika Wellington continues to grow. Chris Jupp and his team are all hands on deck distributing kaimoana, with ongoing support from Rutherford & Bond Toyota making this possible.

We welcomed Moana Fisheries as our primary kaimoana supplier this year, doubling kaimoana volumes. This has allowed us to supply additional community groups, marae and volunteers.

Thanks to Plimmerton Boating Club, who have generously opened their doors to give our Wellington operations a working home base. Ngā mihi nui, team.



CANS FOR KAI

Distributing fish heads and frames comes at a cost. [Cans for Kai](#) was established in 2023, in collaboration with [Phoenix Recycling Group](#), to generate revenue for The Kai Ika Project. The Kai Ika team collects aluminium cans and Phoenix recycles them, kindly donating the money back into our kaupapa.

The programme has grown steadily, collecting over 45,000 kgs of aluminium cans this year as new venues and event recycling partners came on board.

In Wellington, lead-acid battery collections show strong potential for further growth. A new logistics partnership with EnviroNZ is exciting, they now collect 40% of can volumes in Wellington and are incorporating Cans for Kai into their offering to existing customers.

COFFEE CART

This year also saw the launch of a new initiative – a mobile coffee cart taking LegaSea to events across Auckland, including boat shows, fishing competitions and community days. The cart's purpose is discussing fisheries management and marine health over a coffee.

700,000 kgs

of fish parts distributed since 2016

45,000 kgs

of aluminium cans collected this year

LegaSea Hawkes Bay

INTRODUCTION

LegaSea Hawkes Bay (LHB) was established in 2015 as the local arm of LegaSea, the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council's public outreach initiative. We are volunteers committed to addressing the decline of inshore fish stocks along the Bay's coastline.



Our dedicated team includes John Stewart (Chairman), Wayne Bicknell, Jim Yeoman, David Bicknell, Brian Firman, Alex Smith, David Cheetham, David Scott, Carl Fairey, Alan Hay, Brett Rigby, Peter Draper, Chris Scott, Paul Ratapu, Titan Puna and Sandra Mauger.

Our team continues to build strong relationships with mana whenua and local organisations that have an interest in the marine environment. We are represented on working parties including Hawkes Bay Regional Council's Marine and Coast Group, Napier Port's Fisheries Liaison Group, and Te Kohanga Steering Committee. LHB work closely with the Twofold Bay Charitable Trust.

WAKA PŪKAWA – LEGASEA REEF

On 18 June, after more than three years of environmental assessment and consultation, the retired fishing trawler *Twofold Bay* was scuttled. A flotilla of 45 boats and around 350 people witnessed the sinking, with thousands more watching via [live stream](#).

Donated by Napier businessman Rodney Green, the vessel now rests in about 17 metres of water, 400 metres off Pania Reef and 3 nautical miles from Napier Inner Harbour. The new reef is named Waka Pūkawa - LegaSea reef. A rāhui is currently placed over the site.

More than 800 volunteer hours were invested into preparing the vessel. Thank you to the volunteers, partners and sponsors who made this possible.

The Twofold Bay Charitable Trust led the project, alongside LegaSea Hawkes Bay, tangata kaitiaki, Mana Ahuriri Trust, and Ngāti Parau Hapū Trust. Our collective goal is to create a reef, a thriving fishing and diving destination.

We're working to place concrete structures around the reef. This will help protect it in rough weather and add habitat for invertebrates, reef fish and crayfish.

Nearby, an existing artificial reef 1.4 km east of Pania Reef continues to support flourishing marine life. Built in 2021 and 2022 from 24,000 tonnes of limestone boulders salvaged from the old Napier Port revetment wall, the 90,000 m² reef remains under a further two-year rāhui until June 2027.

MILESTONES

This year marks two milestones for LegaSea Hawkes Bay.

The 20th anniversary of the Colin Murray Ramp Survey. LHB continues to work with Hawkes Bay Sports Fishing Club to monitor recreational catch trends for gurnard, snapper, hapukū, tarakihi and trevally caught during the Club's annual fishing competitions.

It's 10 years since the "Springs Box" voluntary agreement between LHB, Napier Commercial Fisherman's Association and Fisheries Inshore NZ. From December to February each year, bottom trawling and purse seining are excluded from a 237 square kilometre area. The agreement is testament to ongoing collaboration between recreational and commercial fishers with the common goal of improving local fish stocks.

THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

LegaSea Hawkes Bay thanks all our supporters for their continuing financial and volunteer contributions, particularly with the Twofold Bay project. Together we are making meaningful progress in meeting our vision of more fish in the water for the benefit of current and future generations.

Contributions to the Twofold Bay Charitable Trust project can be made online [here](#).



Scan here to read the full Colin
Murray Ramp Survey results

Income and Expenditure



LEGASEA

	30/6/2023	30/6/2024	30/6/2025	30/6/2026	Notes
INCOME					
Donations from Legends, public & unaffiliated clubs	137,848	110,929	116,710	143,335	
Partner sponsorship programme	462,511	450,219	368,109	371,639	1
Grants received	452,286	216,157	585,931	546,300	
Merchandise income	19,670	(4,139)	28,364	(1,534)	
Other income	3,072	1,449	239,075	26896	2
Total Income	1,075,387	774,615	1,338,189	1,086,636	
EXPENDITURE					
Donations to NZSFC and LegaSea Hawkes Bay	137,848	110,929	116,710	143,335	
Public outreach	258,953	287,659	215,368	311,413	
Fundraising	170,978	109,163	121,793	83,361	
Governance, Strategy and planning	94,021	94,490	84,101	99,969	
Administration	121,250	110,418	100,396	150,309	
Projects and Campaigns	319,039	384,175	635,419	274,410	3
Total expenditure	1,102,089	1,096,834	1,273,787	1,062,797	
Surplus/deficit	(26,702)	(322,219)	64,402	23,839	

NOTES

1. A LegaSea Works drive saw 55 new Works partners come aboard.
2. Other income includes, donations from affiliated clubs and event income.
3. Projects and Campaigns include, The Kai ika Project, Cans for Kai, FishCare, Free Fish Heads, Fisheries Amendment Bill, Artificial Reefs, Crayfish, Marlin & Reef Fish, Scallops.

GRANTS

This past year we have generously received more than \$546,000 in grants. Thank you to our Grant and Partnerships lead Jess Beetham with support from Bjarne Morris and Chris Jupp who have engaged with a variety of fund providers.

Our thanks go to the generous organisations who supported our projects this year through grants.

- Ngati Whatua Orakei Whai Maia
- W N Pharazyn Trust
- E B Firth Charitable Trust
- Wellington Community Fund
- Auckland Lotteries
- NZ Marine Research Foundation
- Woolworths NZ Food Rescue Funding
- Mouri Ora Fund
- Hutt City Council Healthy Families
- Here for New Zealand Foodstuffs
- Pelorus Trust
- Orakei Marina Management Trust

Committee Profiles

FISHERIES MANAGEMENT STANDING COMMITTEE



MARK CONNOR – CO-CHAIR

Mark is the South Island's representative on the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council's Executive Board, and a Co-chair of the Fisheries Management Standing Committee. Mark is a long-standing member of the [Ashley Sport Fishing Club](#) in north Canterbury and has represented the NZSFC in working groups discussing the future management of snapper, pāua and blue cod around the South Island. Mark was the President of the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council between 2012 and 2015, and was Vice President for two years. He has been a director of LegaSea since 2012.



JIM YEOMAN – CO-CHAIR

Jim has recently stepped up as co-chair of the Fisheries Management Standing Committee. He is also the Advocacy Officer and Past President of the [New Zealand Angling & Casting Association](#) (NZACA), representing the NZACA's members' interests on the Committee. Jim is a spokesperson for LegaSea Hawkes Bay advocating for local and regional interests in fisheries and the marine environment. His generous and authentic contribution to the Committee and the discussions over the past ten years is much appreciated.



ANDREW JOHNSON

Andrew is currently Vice President of the NZSFC Board and a proud member of the Bay of Islands Swordfish Club, serving on the committee of the Club for over 10 years. He spends most of his time on the water either as an engineer and marine contractor or gathering kai moana with family and friends. More recently, Andrew has represented NZSFC in the Environment Court and Select Committee processes and has been involved in designing a suction dredge to mitigate the spread of the invasive, exotic seaweed Caulerpa.



VANCE FULTON

Vance first became a NZSFC Zone delegate for the [Mount Maunganui Sport Fishing Club](#) in 2004. He was the Vice President for a number of years. He has been the NZSFC Board representative for the Zone 4 (Central Bay of Plenty) clubs since 2019. Vance has a strong interest in the New Zealand Game Fishing Tagging Programme. Vance's background in science and his analytical skills make him an asset on the Committee.



RICHARD BAKER

Richard has worked in a voluntary capacity for recreational fishing interests for decades. He's a foundation member of the New Zealand Land Based Game Fishing Club, and the Club's delegate to the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council. Richard has been involved with the NZSFC for over 30 years. Richard served as Vice President of the Council for seven years. He was Council President from 2008 to 2011, and was the Council's youngest ever life member. Richard is the Council's spokesperson on fisheries management issues and a spokesperson for LegaSea.

Committee Profiles

FISHERIES MANAGEMENT STANDING COMMITTEE



MIKE PLANT

Mike is communications and operations lead for the NZSFC and was co-opted onto the Fisheries Management Standing Committee in 2025. Mike is committed to fostering close relationships with NZSFC affiliated clubs, ensuring their voices and concerns are heard. Growing up fishing in the Coromandel, Mike understands the importance of getting out on the water and gathering kaimoana.



JOSH BARCLAY

Josh was co-opted onto the Fisheries Management Standing Committee in 2024 to represent New Zealand Underwater Association (NZUA) members' interests. Josh serves on the NZUA board as well as their independent director and chair of Environmental Impact. Josh has a strong background in fisheries and coastal management having previously been a contractor to the Council and LegaSea. He helped construct the policy and science behind Rescue Fish - Ika Rauora, NZSFC and LegaSea's alternative to the Quota Management System.

FISHERIES TEAM



JOHN HOLDSWORTH (BSC)

John is a director of Blue Water Marine Research, established in 1997 to conduct research, recreational fishers surveys, and tagging projects. With over 20 years experience in fisheries research and management, combined with his love for fishing, John provides a powerful scientific and topwater perspective. John is the ideal representative for our club members' interests in the science, policy and working group processes run by Fisheries New Zealand.



BARRY TORKINGTON

Barry has worked in the commercial fishing and aquaculture industry since the 1970s, as a fisherman, in marketing, and product innovation. He was a director of Leigh Fisheries for 10 years. Barry's particular interests over 40 years has been in policy development, the impacts of inshore industrial fishing, and innovative replacement technologies. Also productivity, in terms of yield per recruit and benthic protection. Barry has been a policy advisor to the NZ Sport Fishing Council since 2005.

Service Providers



TRISH REA

Trish has over 20 years experience in fisheries management and advocacy, driven by a passion to ensure everyone now, and in the future, can enjoy fishing and gathering kaimoana. A skilled communicator and coordinator, Trish has developed a variety of valuable skills that allows her to effortlessly pivot between working with organisations and communities, and working on policy and fisheries management issues on behalf of the Council.



STUART RYAN

Stuart is a barrister with specialist practice in public law, environmental law and related areas. He represented the (then) New Zealand Big Game Fishing Council and other non-commercial interests in the [Kahawai Legal Challenge](#) proceedings from 2004 to 2009. Stuart has over 20 years experience in advising public and private sector clients. Over the years Stuart has built a strong relationship with many non-commercial environmental and fishing group interests.



SYDNEY CURTIS (BSC)

Sydney is one of our marine scientists sitting on the frontlines of Ministry-led science and management groups as a representative for the NZSFC. Her position in these meetings allows the NZSFC to have a deeper understanding of the science driving fisheries management. Sydney is the director of Marinus, which has taken over the NZ Gamefish Tagging Programmes and Billfish Logbook Programme from Blue Water Marine Research.



KATIE GOODWIN (BSC)

Katie's background in environmental and marine science underpins her strong contributions to the Council's submissions and fisheries management communications. She represents NZSFC in Ministry-led management groups, particularly around the future management of the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park and Coromandel scallops, advocating for abundance. She ensures our communications are science-based and understandable for various audiences.



ROWAN ASHTON

Rowan is a senior associate with Brookfields Lawyers and specialises in the Resource Management Act (RMA), local government and public law. Rowan has experience in a diverse range of resource management matters. This experience has proven to be invaluable as he helps the Council respond to proposed RMA fishing controls due to the 2020 Mōtiti Environment Court decision impacting areas in the Marlborough Sounds, Northland, Hawke Bay, Taranaki and Waikato. .

Service Providers

LEGASEA TEAM



SAM WOOLFORD

Sam has been the LegaSea Project Lead since 2016. Over time his role has evolved, he is now well versed in both LegaSea leadership and fisheries management issues. His networking skills are sharp, enabling him to develop meaningful relationships with representatives from environmental, Māori, fisheries and science organisations. His ability to think strategically adds a valuable contribution to the fisheries management work programme.



JESS BEETHAM

Jess specialises in grant funding and project administration, leading partnerships for LegaSea and New Zealand Sport Fishing Council initiatives, on average securing over \$600,000 per year. Jess particularly enjoys maintaining quality governance, financial oversight, and accountability reporting for the LegaSea work stream. She also doubles as Human Resources lead for LegaSea ensuring the team is working smoothly.



BENN WINLOVE

Benn has coordinated the Hauraki Gulf Alliance since 2022. Over time he has developed a deeper understanding of the complexities associated with fisheries management and marine protection. Benn's ability to coordinate a disparate group of 120 organisations, businesses and individuals under the Alliance umbrella has been a major contributor to the ongoing advocacy for more fish in the water for future generations.



CHRIS SCOTT

Chris led LegaSea's social media content for three years and has a strong background in building online presence and community management for prominent Kiwi brands. Chris' contribution will be sorely missed as he has now moved onto other things.



LOUISE O'SULLIVAN

Louise brings over 20 years of experience to her administration and organisational support role at LegaSea. Her professionalism and dedication have made her a trusted backbone for a range of community organisations, ensuring they run smoothly and effectively. Most recently, Louise has applied her skills as the Warkworth Gamefish Club delegate and held multiple roles at Sandspit Marina Society and the Sandspit Yacht Club.

Service Providers

KAI IKA TEAM



MATT WELCH

Matt leads The Kai Ika Project in Auckland, engaging with Papatūānuku Kōkiri Marae and Ngāti Whatua Orakei to facilitate fish heads and frames distributions across Auckland. Matt is skilled at maintaining relationships with important partners and stakeholders within the kaupapa.



VALERIE TERAITUA

Val is the CEO at Papatūānuku Kōkiri Marae in Māngere, and has been instrumental in establishing The Kai Ika Project. Since 2016, she has led with wisdom and passion, helping the kaupapa grow within the community and uplifting rangatahi (young people) by creating pathways to employment through mahi based at the marae.



CHRIS JUPP

Chris has led The Kai Ika Project in Wellington since 2022. He oversees the logistics, fundraising, community engagement and also organises fish head and frame distributions across Wellington. Chris continues to enhance our relationships with local fishing clubs by offering filleting services for fishing tournaments.



CARLOS HOTENE

Carlos is the head of distribution for The Kai Ika Project at Papatūānuku Kōkiri Marae. Carlos has played a pivotal role in transforming the marae gardens into a hub of food production and sustainability. His leadership highlights the profound impact of combining traditional Māori values with modern sustainability practices.



BEN MANSFIELD

Ben leads the Kai Ika fundraising project Cans for Kai, overseeing can collection sites across Auckland. Over the summer season, Ben was a key part of the Westhaven filleting station, helping it run smoothly. Ben's also applying his project management experience to running the LegaSea coffee cart.



KHARL RAMEKA

Kharl is Carlos' right hand man, organising the logistics at The Kai Ika Project distributions at Papatūānuku Kōkiri Marae. Kharl is not afraid to get his hands dirty and ensures that the weekly distributions of kaimoana at Māngere run smoothly.



LIONEL HOTENE

Lionel leads the efforts at Papatūānuku Kōkiri Marae in Māngere as part of The Kai Ika Project. Under Lionel's leadership, the marae has become a crucial hub for the Kai Ika Project, processing around 1500kg of fish parts weekly along with fresh vegetables from their organic gardens.



GERALD WHATA

Gerald is a recent addition to the Kai Ika Wellington team as Operations manager. For 20 years Gerald has served his local community, ensuring no kai moana goes to waste. Gerald assists with collecting cans and distributing kai moana weekly around the Wellington region.

Friends and Partners

TESTIMONIALS

ANTONIO GUZZO – MARINE DEALS

Our ocean is New Zealand's most important economic and cultural asset. A healthy ocean supports thriving communities nationwide, both financially and culturally. LegaSea's dedication to protecting this asset ensures future generations can enjoy and rely on our marine environment. Our business is committed to connecting people with the sea and supporting their ability to benefit from it. We proudly support LegaSea's work

CHRIS SHARLAND – DAIWA

At Daiwa NZ, we see LegaSea as our frontline advocates for recreational fishers - fighting the good fight to protect our fisheries, championing sustainable practices, and providing vital education on fisheries management. This small but passionate team is tireless, highly knowledgeable, and deeply connected.

We're proud to not only support LegaSea financially, but also to have a seat at the table alongside the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council, contributing to meaningful discussions and lending our voice to the cause. Initiatives such as The Kai Ika Project, Cans for Kai, and the Free Fish Heads app reflect the practical impact of their work – ensuring that every part of a fish is valued and the wider community benefits from our fishing efforts.

LegaSea's dedication inspires us, and we're honoured to stand with them in protecting New Zealand's marine legacy for generations to come.

SCOTT KENNEDY – YAMAHA

At Yamaha Motor New Zealand, we are proud to support LegaSea and the important work they do to restore and protect our coastal fisheries. As a company built around New Zealanders' passion for boating and fishing, we believe future generations should have the same opportunity to experience abundant marine environments and world-class recreational fishing. LegaSea's commitment to science-based advocacy, education, and driving positive change aligns closely with our values of sustainability and responsible stewardship. By partnering with LegaSea, we are investing in the long-term health of our fisheries and helping ensure a thriving future for New Zealand's marine communities.

AMELIA BICKNELL – SUBSCRIPTION BOAT CLUB (SBC)

At SBC, the Hauraki Gulf is at the heart of everything we do. With 24 boats across Auckland, we see the joy and wellbeing that comes from getting people out on the water, and we feel a responsibility to help protect it.

We proudly support LegaSea and Kai Ika because we passionately believe in their work to restore abundance, reduce waste and advocate for healthier fisheries.

We want our children and grandchildren to experience the same magic our members enjoy today, and ideally something even better. LegaSea's work gives the Gulf hope, and we're incredibly proud to stand with them.

STEVE NEWLAND – BLACK MAGIC TACKLE

Black Magic Tackle are a proud, long-term supporter of LegaSea because we align with their mission to restore marine abundance for future generations. Our industry relies on having fish in the water, so supporting LegaSea is a meaningful way to give back. Many of us grew up fishing with their parents and grandparents, and we want our kids to have that same opportunity. Backing LegaSea helps us contribute to that.

MATT AND KAYLENE WATSON – SWORDFISH MOJO

We've been behind LegaSea since day one. We don't see LegaSea as a group we just support, we see it as something we are a part of, and will always be a part of. So when we decided to break away from the corporate brewers and make a beer for the fishers of New Zealand, it was only natural that we gave it some real substance by not just having a beer made Of the Sea, but For the Sea, and we proudly carry the LegaSea logo on every can. We are so grateful for the work that LegaSea does for all Kiwi's.

PLATINUM



GOLD



