

# Recreational Fishing

## Why Recreational Fishing Rules Matter

Fishing is one of New Zealand's most popular outdoor activities. Recreational fishers (anyone fishing non-commercially or customarily) take large numbers of finfish and shellfish every year. To keep our fisheries sustainable Fisheries New Zealand (FNZ) sets recreational fishing rules. By sticking to the rules and fishing responsibly, fishers help make sure that there will be fish today, tomorrow and for generations to come.

## What do the rules cover?

Anyone fishing recreationally has to follow rules about:

- daily bag limits (how many fish you can keep);
- legal size limits (the sizes of fish you can keep);
- species restrictions (the types of fish you can keep);
- accumulation limits (how many fish you can keep over a period of more than one day);
- closed and restricted areas (where you can fish).

## Things to remember:

- it is illegal to sell or trade recreational catch;
- breaking the rules can lead to prosecution, fines and property confiscations;
- only those physically involved in taking finfish, rock lobster, or shellfish can claim a catch within the daily limit;
- unwanted or unlawful catch (catch above your daily limit, undersized fish, fish taken with undersized mesh, unintentional catch or bycatch) must be immediately returned to the waters from which they were taken, dead or alive.

## How can I check the rules?

**This brochure is a guide only** and may not include local restrictions or rules that have changed since it was printed. To keep up to date, check the rules each time you fish.

FNZ provides lots of (free) ways to check the rules. This includes a free text service, a free Smartphone app, or visiting our website or your local FNZ office. For more information see the back page of this brochure.

## Fishing Sustainably

### Good fish handling

Correctly handling and releasing unwanted or unlawful catch can increase their chances of surviving. When handling and releasing fish, remember:

- use wet hands (towel or wet gloves);
- be gentle – slide fish into the water from as close to the surface as possible;
- return fish as near as possible to where you found them (especially shellfish and rock lobster);
- the best way to protect undersized fish is not to catch them in the first place. If you are catching lots of undersized fish, change locations, or use a larger hook or mesh size.

For more information, FNZ has a 'Responsible Fishing Guidelines' brochure online at [www.fisheries.govt.nz](http://www.fisheries.govt.nz) or your local FNZ office.

### Looking after seabirds

Seabirds are experts at seeing bait and fish scraps in the water and can get hooked or become tangled in fishing line.

Find out how to avoid attracting seabirds and how to handle them safely at [www.southernseabirds.org](http://www.southernseabirds.org)

## New Zealand's fishing rules

If you're fishing or collecting seafood in New Zealand you need to know New Zealand's fishing rules. If you do not read English, have someone translate for you.

## 新西兰捕鱼条例

如果您要在新西兰垂钓或捕获海产品，您需要了解新西兰捕鱼条例。如果您不懂英文，请寻求他人帮助。

条例涵盖：允许捕获的类型及尺寸，允许捕获的位置，以及允许捕获的数量。

条例规定您不能将捕获的海产品进行贩卖或者交易，从而获得任何经济收入或者收益。

若违反条例，将面临被起诉、罚款并没收渔具。请您严格遵守法律，做有责任感的捕鱼者，这样才能确保我们现在、未来、世世代代有鱼可捕。

## Tulafono mo Fagotaga i Niu Sila

Afai o e fagotaina po'o e aoina foi figota o le sami e tatau ona e silafia tulafono nei mo fagotaga i Niu Sila. Afai e le mafai ona e faitauina i le Gagana Peretania faamolemole faafesoota'i sē tasi e mafai ona ia faaliliuina mo oe.

O tulafono e aofia ai: le ituaiga ma le lapo'a o i'a e mafai ona e taofina, o fea e mafai ona e fagota ai, ma le aofa'i o i'a e mafai ona e taofia.

E matua'i faasaina faaetulafono lou faatauina atu o i'a mo ni tupe maua po o se pōlōfiti.

O le lē usita'ia mai o tulafono nei e o'o ina molia ai oe, sala tupe ma aveesea faamalosi au mea totino. O le tausisi i tulafono ma fagota ma le faautauta lelei, e fesoasoani lea i le faamautiina o i'a mo le asō, taeao ma autupulaga o le lumana'i.

## Lao ki he toutai ‘a Nu’usila

Kapau ko ha tokotaha toutai ika koe, pe 'oku ke fangota ki ha me'atahi 'i Nu'usila, kuopau ke ke 'ilo ki he ngaahi lao 'o e toutai 'a Nu'usila. Kapau 'oku 'ikai ke ke lava 'o lautohi fakapilitania, pea kole ki ha taha ke ne liliu ki ho'o lea.

Ko e lao 'oku anga pehe ni: ko e fa'ahinga mo e lalahi 'o e ika 'oku lava ke ke ma'u; feitu'u 'oku ngofua ke ke toutai ai; pea mo e ika 'e fiha 'oku lava ke ke 'ave.

'Oku ta'efakalao ke fakatau atu pea ke fai ha fefakatau'aki e ika 'o ke ma'u ai ha fa'ahinga pa'anga, pe tupu fakapa'anga.

Ko hono maumau'i 'o e lao, 'e ala faka'ilo ai koe, tautea pa'anga, pea to'o mo e koloa 'oku ke ma'ū. Ko e tauhi 'o e lao mo e toutai fakapotopoto, 'e tokoni ia ki hono fakapapau'i 'e ma'u ha ika he 'aho ni, pongipongi, pea mo e to'utangata 'o e kaha'u.

## 뉴질랜드의 낚시 규정

뉴질랜드에서 낚시를 하거나 해산물을 채취할 경우 반드시 뉴질랜드 낚시 규정을 숙지하고 있어야 합니다. 만약 규정 안내판의 영어를 읽지 못할 경우 번역이 가능한 사람에게 부탁 하십시오.

규정 내용: 낚시 또는 채취 가능한 물고기의 종류 및 크기, 낚시 가능 장소, 채취 가능한 물고기의 수.

채취한 해산물을 상업 및 이용 취득의 목적으로 판매 또는 거래하는 것은 불법입니다. 본 규정을 위반할 경우 기소, 벌금 또는 재산 압류 등의 결과를 초래할 수 있습니다. 본인 책임하에 낚시 규정을 반드시 준수하여 다음 세대 어류가 정상적으로 성장할 수 있도록 해 주십시오.

## Finfish

### Daily limits and size restrictions

In the Auckland and Kermadec FMA there is a **combined maximum daily bag limit of 20 for all finfish\*** (excluding specified baitfish and freshwater eels). Individual species limits within this combined daily bag limit must also not be exceeded.

### Individual species daily limits within the combined daily limit

Finfish Species	Max daily limit per active fisher	Min fish length (cm)	Min set net mesh size (mm)
Bluenose	5	–	160
Groper (Hāpuku)/Bass***	2	–	160
Kingfish	3	75	100
<b>Snapper (Auckland East – SNA1)</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>125</b>
Snapper (Auckland West)	10	27	125
Southern bluefin tuna	1	–	100

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

Finfish Species	Min fish length (cm)	Min set net mesh size (mm)
Blue cod**	30 must be landed in a measurable state	–
Blue moki	40	114
Butterfish/Greenbone	35	108
Elephant fish	–	150
Flatfish (except Sand flounder)	25	114
Grey mullet	–	90
Kahawai	–	90
Parore	–	114
Red cod	25	100
Red gurnard	25	100
Red moki	40	115
Rig	–	125
Sand flounder	23	114
School shark	–	125
Tarakihi	25	100
Trevally	25	125
Trumpeter	35	100
All other finfish	–	100

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

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

### And

Finfish Species	Max daily limit per active fisher	Min mesh size (mm)
Eel	6	12

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

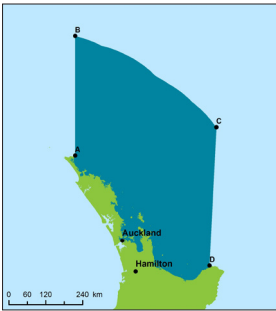
\*\* Minimum pot mesh size for targeting blue cod is now 54mm for all fishers. All blue cod must be landed in a measurable state. Fishers may possess blue cod in another state if it is immediately eaten on board the fishing vessel that it was taken. The recreational accumulation limit for blue cod is no more than two times the daily limit when taken over two days or more.

\*\*\* The recreational accumulation limit for Groper (Hāpuku)/Bass is no more than 3 per fisher when taken over two days or more.

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

## SNA1 Region

SNA1 refers to the area from North Cape to Cape Runaway, out to a distance of 200 nautical miles offshore.



### Measuring Finfish

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



### Protection of white pointer shark and spotted black groper

No person may take or possess any white pointer shark or spotted black groper.

## Finfish

### Set line restrictions

Set line fishing includes the use of long lines and dahn (drop) lines but does not include rod and reel or hand lines. In areas where line fishing is permitted, the following restrictions apply:

- no person may use or be in possession of more than one line (other than handlines or rod and reel lines);
- all surface floats attached to any line must be marked permanently and legibly with the fisher's initials and surname. A phone number is also useful;
- no person may use or possess a line with more than 25 hooks;
- where more than one person is using a line from a vessel (other than rod and reel lines), no more than two lines (other than rod and reel lines) may be used, set from or possessed onboard that vessel.

### Netting restrictions

There are rules relating to the use of nets, please refer to the App, website, or your nearest FNZ office for a copy of the netting brochure.

## Shellfish

### Daily bag limits and size restrictions

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

Shellfish Species	Auckland Coromandel area daily limit per gatherer	Daily limit per gatherer	Minimum size (mm)
Cockle	50	150	–
Kina (sea eggs)	50	50	–
Green-lipped mussels	25	50	–
Oysters – Dredge*+ – Rock and Pacific†	50 100	50 250	58 –
Pāua – Ordinary/Blackfoot* – Yellow foot*	10 10	10 10	125 80
Pipi	50	150	–
Scallops+*	20	20	100
Toheroa#	Prohibited	Prohibited	–
Tuatua	50	150	–
All others (combined) •	50	50	–

\* Dredge oyster, pāua and scallop must be landed in the shell and cannot be shucked or shelled seaward of the mean high water mark. This does not include dredge oysters and scallops shucked onboard for consumption while at sea within daily bag limits.

† Rock and Pacific oysters must not be opened while they adhere to the object on which they grow.

+ Limited provision allows only one diver diving from a vessel to gather an extra bag limit of oysters and scallops for up to two other people acting in a dive safety capacity from that vessel.

# Toheroa must not be taken, possessed, or disturbed unless an open season is declared by the Director-General of the Ministry for Primary Industries.

• This is a combined, mixed-species bag limit. It applies to all shellfish species not specifically named above and includes all crabs, limpets, starfish, periwinkles, whelks, barnacles, freshwater crayfish (koura), cats eyes (snails) and sea cucumbers.

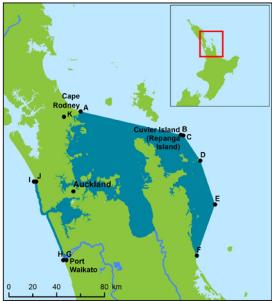
### Shellfish must be landed in a measurable state

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

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

## Auckland and Coromandel Area

Recreational shellfish daily bag limits apply in the Auckland Coromandel area (highlighted right). This area extends on the east coast from Cape Rodney around the Coromandel Peninsula to Homunga Point (northern end of Waihi beach) and on the west coast from Okiritoto River (Muriwai Beach) to the sand-spit at Port Waikato.



### Pāua accumulation limits

When daily limits are accumulated the maximum number or amount of pāua that one person can have in their possession at any one time is:

- 20 pāua or;
- shucked weight (shell removed) of 2.5kgs of pāua;
- this possession limit applies everywhere, including in the home.

### Measuring shellfish

**Pāua:** measure the greatest length of the shell in a straight line. Do not measure over the curve of the shell.



Ordinary/Blackfoot Pāua minimum size 125mm

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



Scallop minimum size 100mm

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

## Shellfish Restrictions

### Underwater breathing apparatus (UBA)

- UBA does not include snorkels, masks, fins and wet suits;
- no person may take pāua using UBA;
- no person may be in possession of pāua while in possession of UBA. This includes possession in or on any vessel or vehicle.

### Open seasons

**Oysters:** There is no season restricting the taking of oysters. They can be taken all year round. However, oysters may not be taken from a small number of designated Māori reserves in the Northland and Waikato Region. Contact the local FNZ office for the exact locations.

**Scallops:** The open season is 1 September to 31 March inclusive. **Specific area closures may apply**, please contact the local FNZ office for details or visit [www.fisheries.govt.nz/rules](http://www.fisheries.govt.nz/rules).

### Protection of Coral

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

## Potting

In areas where potting is permitted the following general restrictions apply:

- individuals may use, set, or possess, up to three pots in any one day;
- all pots and surface floats must be clearly and permanently marked with the fisher's surname and initials;
- two or more individuals fishing from a vessel may use, set, or possess up to six pots in any one day provided they have their name on the pots and that each person is using no more than three of the pots;
- bobs and ring pots may be used to catch rock lobster but all other requirements such as marking and pot limits apply;
- pots used to catch rock lobster have specific escape gap requirements – see 'Rock Lobster';
- species specific pots (cod pots, crab pots etc) can be used. They are exempt from escape gap requirements but all other requirements (such as marking and pot limits) remain.

## Rock lobster

### Daily bag limits

No person may take or possess more than 6 rock lobster (both species combined).

In CRA1 and CRA2 (from the Kaipara Harbour on the west coast of the North Island, around North Cape and then south east to Cape Runaway) the catch limit for spiny rock lobster is different. Within the combined limit of 6 rock lobster, you can take a maximum of 3 spiny rock lobster and the remainder can be packhorse lobster. If you do not take any spiny rock lobster, then you can take a total of 6 packhorse lobster.

Rock lobster may not be possessed seaward of the mean high water mark in an unmeasurable state.

### Spiny rock lobster minimum size

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

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

### Packhorse lobster minimum size

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

Must have a tail length of at least 216mm (male and female).

*Note: from 1 April 2024 how packhorse rock lobster are measured will change.*

## Rock lobster restrictions

### Protected rock lobster

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

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

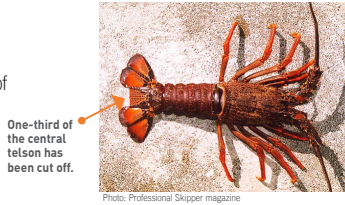
### General restrictions

In areas where rock lobster may be gathered, the following restrictions apply:

- rock lobster may not be possessed seaward of the high water mark in an unmeasurable state;
- only hand operated loops or lassos may be used. Spring loaded loops or lassos are prohibited;
- spears or devices which could puncture the shell must not be used when taking rock lobster. Possessing any rock lobster which has been speared is an offence;
- external eggs or the egg-bearing appendages must not be removed from any rock lobster.

### Telson clipping (CRA2 East Coast)

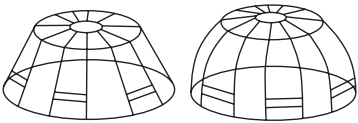
Spiny red rock lobsters must have 1/3 of the middle telson removed immediately once the decision has been made to keep the lobster (refer to diagram).



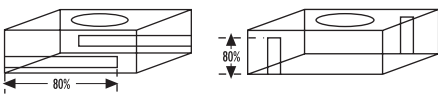
### Rock lobster pots

Rock lobster pot means any pot, baited or not, that is capable of catching or holding rock lobster; and includes any other device capable of catching, holding or storing rock lobster. All rock lobster pots must have escape gaps (apertures). These are openings in the pot designed to allow undersized rock lobster to escape. No escape gap shall be incorporated in either the top or the bottom of any pot. Each escape gap must have an inside dimension of at least 54mm x 200mm.

**Round or beehive pots:** must have at least three escape gaps (other than the mouth).



**Square or rectangular pots:** must have at least two escape gaps (other than the mouth) in opposite faces of the pot. Each shall not be less than 80 percent of the height or length of the face of the pot in which the escape gaps are contained.



**Mesh pots:** any pot constructed entirely of unaltered spot welded mesh with minimum inside dimensions of 54mm x 140mm does not require escape gaps. Mesh pots may be used with covers or liners provided they leave unencumbered at least 80 percent of the surface area of each of two opposite sides.

## Closed and Restricted Areas

Restricted areas are areas where the use of particular fishing methods (e.g. set nets) is restricted or where catch limits may be different (e.g. area near the Auckland International Airport) or by the Department of Conservation as marine reserves (e.g. Long Bay – Okura Marine Reserve).

### Shellfish closed areas

Within the Auckland/Kermadec FMA there are areas closed to shellfish gathering. The following notes identify some of the areas, but should only be used as a guide as rules may change. If you are unsure of closures or restrictions contact your nearest FNZ office.

**Umupuia Beach** – closed to taking of cockles.

**Cockle Bay** – closed for taking of all shellfish 1 October to 30 April each year inclusive.

**Whangateau Harbour** – closed to taking of cockles and pipis.

**Eastern Beach, Karekare Beach, and Cheltenham Beach** – are closed to all shellfish gathering.

**Ngunguru Estuary** – closed to taking of cockles and pipis.

**Te Mata/Waipatukahu** – closed to taking of pipi, cockles, mussels and oysters.

**Waiheke Island** – closed to taking scallops, mussels, rock lobster and pāua.

### Scallop closed areas

- From 1 April 2022, the entire Quota Management Area SCA 1 (Northland scallop fishery), and most of SCA CS (Coromandel scallop fishery) were closed to scallop harvesting until further notice.
- This closure applies to both commercial and recreational fishers. It does not restrict the taking of scallops for customary purposes.
- Refer to the app or go to [www.fisheries.govt.nz/rules](http://www.fisheries.govt.nz/rules) for map showing areas of closure.

## Shellfish restricted areas

### Daily limit for green-lipped mussels in Maketu Taiāpure

It is unlawful for any person to take or possess more than 25 green-lipped mussels per day in the Maketu Taiāpure area.

### Daily limit for mussels in Mount Maunganui Mātaitai Reserve

It is unlawful for any person to take or possess more than 25 mussels per day in the Mt Maunganui Mātaitai area.

### Set net closed areas

The following areas are closed to set netting: Three Kings Islands, Cape Reinga – Scott Point, Reef Point to Whangape Harbour, Bay of Islands (Cape Wiwiki, Whale Rock, The Twins – Cape Brett) northern side of the Hen and Chickens, Mokohinau Islands, Simpson Rock, Little Barrier, Great Barrier (Needles Point, eastern side of Arid Island, Cape Barrier), Channel Island, Cape Colville, most of the Mercury Islands, Pauanui, Tamaki River, Panmure Basin, Muriwai Beach, Karekare Beach, Pariokariwa Point to Maunganui Bluff, Manukau Heads and Cape Runaway.

### Set nets and set lines

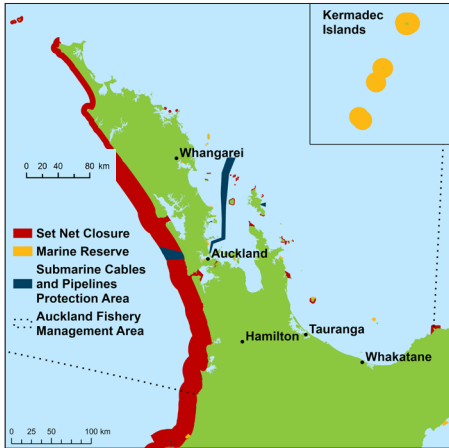
These methods are prohibited in the following places: all year round the Poor Knights Islands, Mimiwhangata, and Mayor Island; from 1 October to 30 April in the Eastern Bay of Islands (except for grey mullet and flatfish nets); from 1 December to 31 March for 6 nautical miles from Okatoa Rock (near Motu River mouth). Contact Fisheries New Zealand's Compliance Team for the exact locations.

Set netting is prohibited between Maunganui Bluff north of Kaipara Harbour and Pariokariwa Point north of New Plymouth – offshore to seven nautical miles.

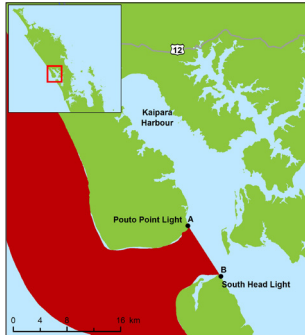
Set netting is prohibited at the entrance of the Kaipara, Manukau and Raglan harbours as well as at the Waikato River entrance.

### IMPORTANT

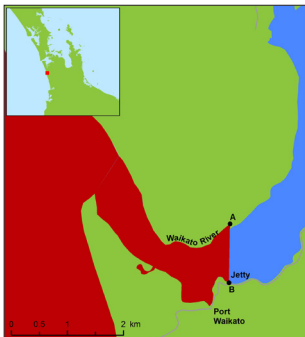
Unless specified, the prohibition does not apply to rivers and harbours. Subject to any other fisheries restrictions, you can use set nets in rivers and harbours inside a straight line joining the natural entrance points of the waterway. There are other set net prohibitions and restrictions in place to protect Maui dolphin. Before you go fishing visit [www.fisheries.govt.nz](http://www.fisheries.govt.nz) or call your nearest FNZ office to check for set net closures and restrictions in the area where you plan to fish.



**Set netting is prohibited at the entrance of the Manukau harbour, from Taumatārea Point in the North to Matakawau**



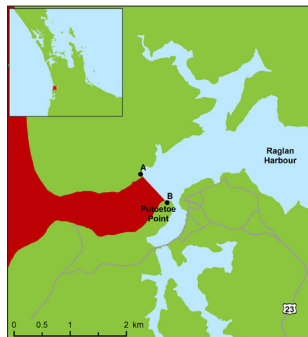
Set net prohibition in the Kaipara Harbour entrance



Set net prohibition in the Waikato River entrance



Set net prohibition in the Manukau Harbour entrance



Set net prohibition in the Raglan Harbour entrance

## Poacher Prevention

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

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

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

## New Zealand's Fishing Rules at your Fingertips

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

## Check the rules

### Check the rules using our FREE app:

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



### Other services

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

**f** MPI Fisheries – Northland  
MPI Fisheries – East Cape/Bay of Plenty  
MPI Fisheries – Nelson/Marlborough/Kaikōura  
MPI Fisheries – Canterbury/Westland  
MPI Fisheries – Otago/Southland

**Contact us 0800 00 83 33**

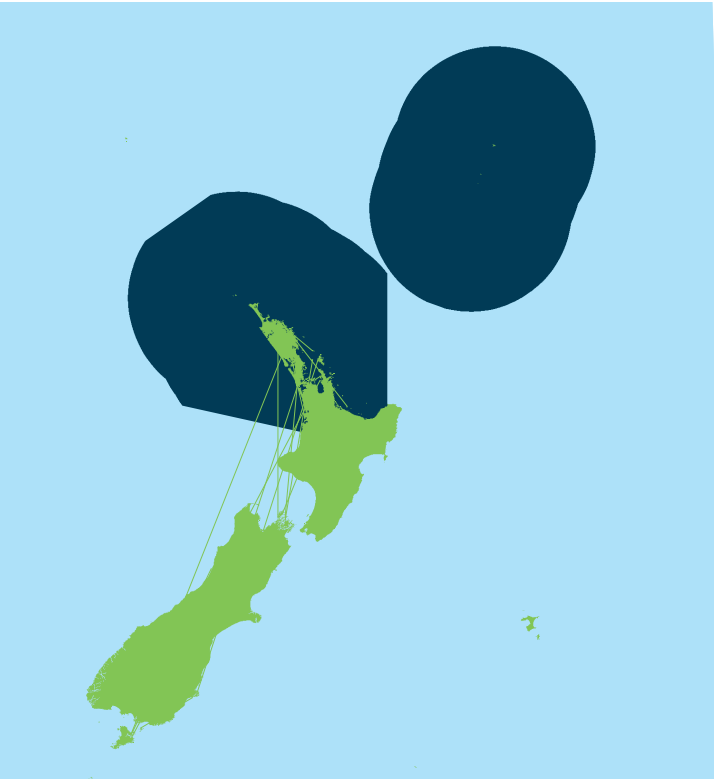
FSH001DEC23

**Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa**  
New Zealand Government



## Recreational Fishing Rules AUCKLAND/KERMADEC

Effective from: December 2023 (subject to change without notice).



### WANT THE RULES ON YOUR PHONE?

Use our free-text service.

Download our free smartphone app.

Check the back of the brochure for details.



Shared Sustainable Fisheries for the Future