

# Recreational Fishing Rules KAIKŌURA



**Effective from:** May 2022 (subject to change without notice).  
**Key changes:** Kaikōura Earthquake Shellfish Closure.

**COMBINED MAXIMUM BAG LIMIT  
OF 30 FINFISH**



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## 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 the fisheries sustainable the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) 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?

**Only active fishers are entitled to a daily limit, you cannot take fish or shellfish for someone else unless specified in the rules.** 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, unintentional catch or bycatch) must be immediately returned to the water, 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.

MPI provides lots of (free) ways to check the rules. This includes a free text service, a free Smartphone app, or visiting our website or offices. For more information check 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 size or mesh size.

For more information, MPI has a 'Fish Handling Guide' available online or through our offices.

### 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)

## Kaikōura Marine Area

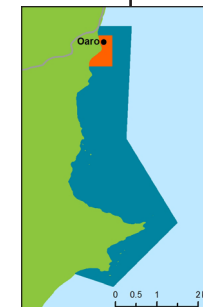
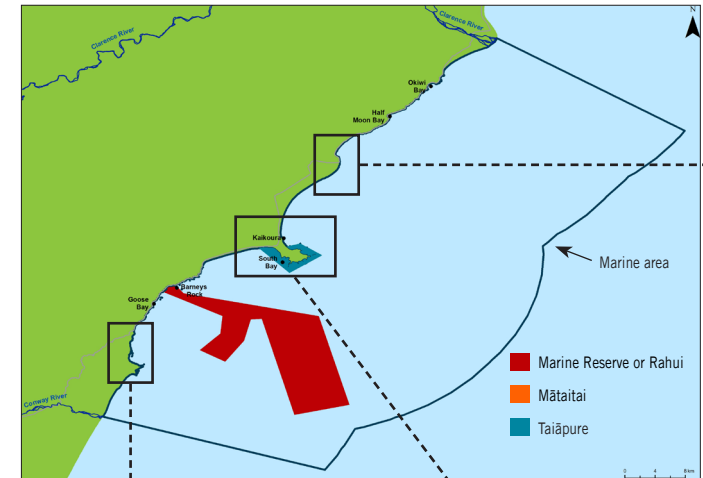
### Background

In 2005 Te Korowai o Te Tai ō Marokura (the Kaikōura Marine Guardians) a group of iwi, community and interested parties was formed. Over seven years, the Guardians developed a strategy for looking after the Kaikōura marine environment. In 2014, the Kaikōura Marine Area was created as a separate area within the South-East Fishery Management Area. There are a range of protected areas including; taiāpures, mātaitis, marine reserves and sanctuaries, which include a range of modified fishing rules and marine protection measures to protect Kaikōuras unique and delicate marine environment.

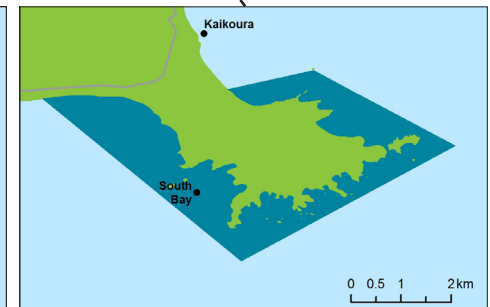
### Where is the Kaikōura Marine Area?

The Kaikōura Marine Area is all waters enclosed by a line starting from the mean high-water mark at Clarence Point (at 42°09.809'S and 173°56.379'E); then proceeding in a straight line in a south-easterly direction to a point on the outer limit of the territorial sea (at 42°16.440'S and 174°09.855'E); then proceeding in a south-westerly direction following the outer limit of the territorial sea to a point at 42°40.715'S and 173°44.093'E; then proceeding in a straight line in a north-westerly direction to a point on the mean high-water mark approximately 300m north of the mouth of the Conway River (at 42°36.909'S and 173°28.173'E); then proceeding in a generally north-easterly direction along the mean high-water mark to the point of commencement.

The area includes the Mangamaunu Mātaitai, Oaro Mātaitai, Te Waha o te Marangai Mātaitai, Te Taumanu o Te Waka a Māui Taiāpure, Oaro-Haumuri Taiāpure, Te Rohe o Te Whānau Pūha Whale Sanctuary, Ōhau New Zealand Fur Seal Sanctuary and the Hikurangi Marine Reserve.



Map 1: Oaro Mātaitai and Oaro-Haumuri Taiāpure



Map 2: Te Taumanu o Te Waka a Māui Taiāpure

## Closed and Restricted Areas

### Closed areas

Closed areas are areas where no fishing is allowed. These may be closed by MPI as prohibited areas or sanctuaries or by the Department of Conservation (DOC) as marine reserves. For full details of marine reserves contact DOC.

### 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. This includes Māitaitais and Taiāpures. Some restricted areas in the Kaikōura Marine Area are listed below. However, these are only a guide. Check for local restrictions and recent closures by contacting your nearest MPI Fisheries Compliance or DOC Office.

### Restricted Areas

**Map 1:** Oaro Māitaitai and Oaro-Haumuri Taiāpure – daily limit of two blue cod per fisher otherwise all other recreational fishing rules apply.

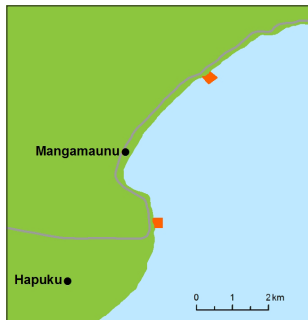
**Map 2:** Te Taumanu o Te Waka a Māui Taiāpure – daily limit of two blue cod per fisher otherwise all other recreational fishing rules apply.

**Map 3:** Mangamaunu Māitaitai and Te Waha o te Marangai Māitaitai – no change to recreational fishing rules, no commercial fishing permitted.

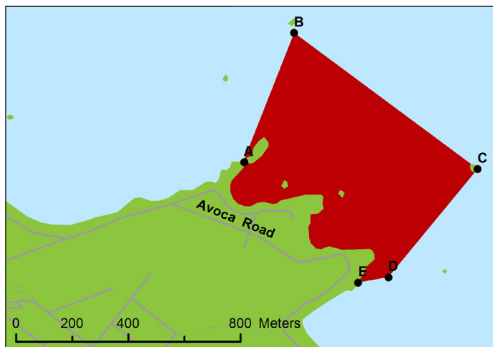
### Closed Areas

**Map 4:** Hikurangi Marine Reserve – all fishing is prohibited.

**Map 5:** Rahui – all fishing prohibited.



Map 3: Mangamaunu Māitaitai and Te Waha o te Marangai Māitaitai



Map 5: Rahui

## Blue cod rules

### Blue cod information

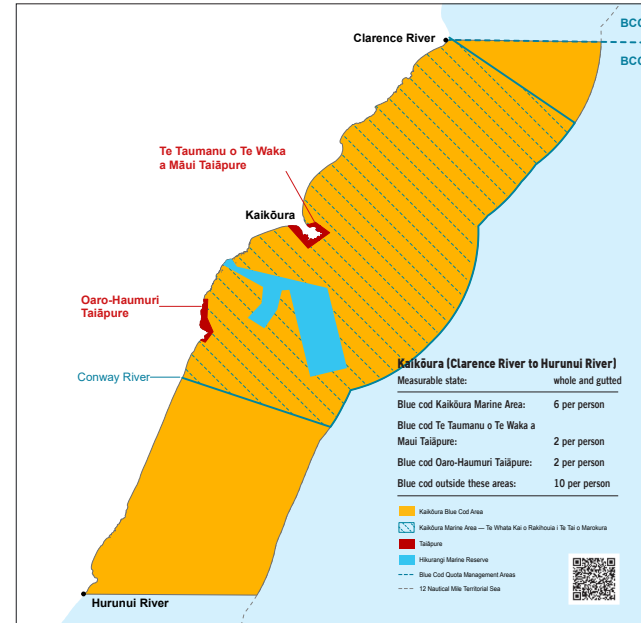
**Kaikōura Marine Area:** daily limit of six, see other limits on the map below.

**Minimum legal size:** 33cm

**Measurable state:** blue must be landed whole or gutted only.

**Accumulation limit:** a maximum of four blue cod can be accumulated over two (or more) days fishing, only if you can prove no more than two blue cod where taken on any one day.

**Transiting:** If you are transiting from one blue cod management area to another, you cannot possess more than the daily limit for the management area you transit into.



### Measuring blue cod

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



Blue cod minimum size: 33cm

## Finfish

### Daily bag limits and size restrictions

In the Kaikōura Marine Area there is a **combined maximum daily bag limit of 30** for finfish\* (excluding specified baitfish and freshwater eels). Individual species limits within this combined daily bag limit must also not be exceeded. Any catch taken from the Kaikōura Marine Area is included in the combined daily bag limit for the South-East FMA.

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

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

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

Finfish species		Max daily limit per active fisher	Minimum fish length (cm)
Albacore tuna		Combined daily bag limit of 5 per person with a maximum of 3 of any one species.	-
Bluenose			-
Groper (Hapuku)/Bass			-
Kingfish			75
Ling			-
Blue cod	Te Whata Kai o Rākihōuia i Te Tai o Marokura / Kaikōura Marine Area	6	33 landed whole or gutted only
	Te Taumanu o Te Waka a Māui Taiāpure and Oaro-Haumuri Taiāpure	2	33 landed whole or gutted only
	Everywhere else within Kaikōura	10	33 landed whole or gutted only
Blue moki		10	40
Blue shark		1 game shark total	-
Bronze shark		1	-
Butterfish/Greenbone		10	35
Elephant fish		5	-
Hammerhead shark		1 game shark total	-
Kahawai		10	-
Mako shark		1 game shark total	-
Marlin		1	-
Porbeagle shark		1 game shark total	-
Quinnat salmon		1	-
Red cod		10	25
Red moki		NO TAKE	
Rig		3	-

Finfish species	Max daily limit per active fisher	Minimum fish length (cm)
School shark	3	–
Sea perch	20	26 Te Whata Kai o Rakihouia i Te Tai o Marokura/Kaikōura Marine Area only
Seven gilled shark	1 game shark total	–
Skate/Ray	5	–
Snapper	10	25
Spiny dogfish	15	–
Southern bluefin tuna	1	–
Tarakihi	10	25
Thresher shark	1 game shark total	–
Trumpeter	15	35
Warehou	15	–

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

Finfish Species	Min fish length (cm)
Flatfish (except Sand flounder)	25
Grey mullet	–
Red gurnard	25
Sand flounder	23
Trevally	25
All other finfish	–

For all species not listed a max bag limit of 20 applies.

### 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

### Groper (Hapuku)/Bass, Kingfish, Bluenose, Ling and Albacore Tuna daily bag limit

Within the combined daily bag limit above, there is a combined daily bag limit of five groper (hapuku)/bass, kingfish, bluenose, ling and albacore tuna with no more than three of any one species.

### Game shark restrictions

There is a maximum daily limit of one game shark per fisher. (Game sharks include: seven-gilled shark, mako shark, blue shark, hammerhead shark, porbeagle shark and thresher shark).

### Measuring finfish

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



### Blue cod measurable state

Within the Kaikōura area, all blue cod must be landed either whole, gutted (minimum length 33cm). Any fish eaten form part of the daily limit. 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.

### Blue cod accumulation

Within the Kaikōura area a two day blue cod accumulation limit applies when legally taken over 2-days or more. Each fishers catch must be held in a separate bag or container labelled with the fisher's surname and first name and the date caught.

### Finfish Restrictions

#### Quinnat salmon restrictions

There are restrictions for fishing for quinnat salmon. When fishing for quinnat salmon, fishers:

- must only be in possession of, or have control over, one assembled rod and running line;
- must not use a rod and running line to take quinnat salmon unless that person is within 15 metres of the rod and has the rod under visual observation;
- may use another rod and running line to jig for sprat or other baitfish, so long as any salmon taken on that rod and running line is returned to the water immediately.

#### Line fishing restrictions

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);
- 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 on board that vessel;
- surface floats attached to any line must be marked clearly, legibly and permanently with the fisher's initials and surname. A phone number is also useful.

### Set netting

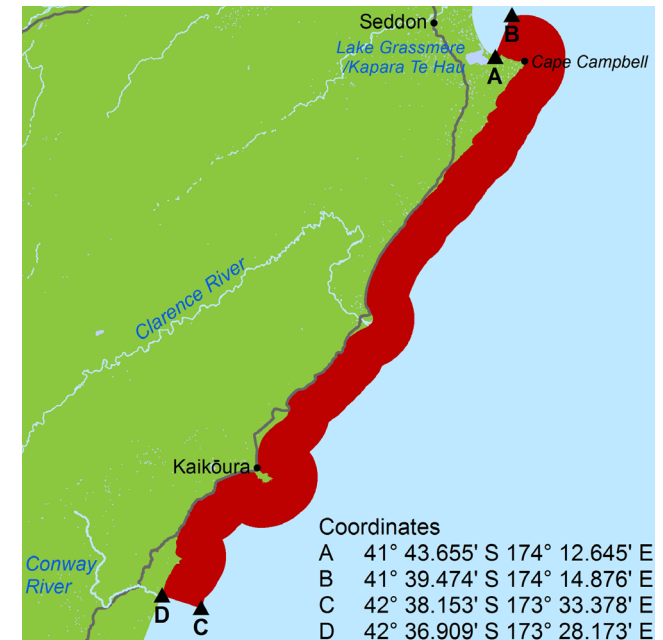
Set netting is prohibited in the Kaikōura Marine Area.

## Shellfish and Seaweed

### Kaikoura shellfish and seaweed closed season

The area from Marfells Beach to the Conway River is subject to a seasonal closure for shellfish and seaweeds (excluding rock lobster and kina)

**Please check the current season is open before gathering seaweed or shellfish.**



### Marfells Beach to Conway River closed area

■ This area has a seasonal closure which extends out to four nautical miles

### The taking of shellfish and seaweed in this area is restricted to a seasonal closure.

It is an offence to take shellfish or seaweed in this area during the closed season. Rock lobster and kina are excluded from the closure.

## Rock Lobster

### Daily bag limits

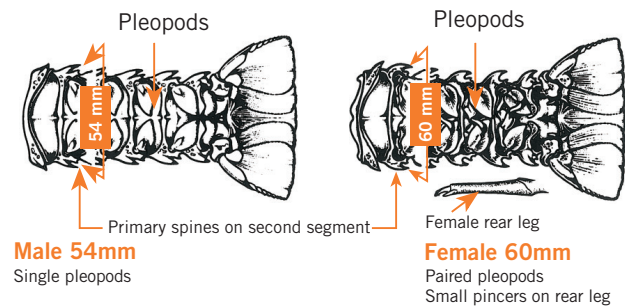
No person may take or possess more than six rock lobster (both species combined) on any one day.

There is a maximum accumulation limit of three days (18 spiny rock lobsters).

### Spiny rock lobster minimum size

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

**Minimum width:** male 54mm and female 60mm.



## 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:

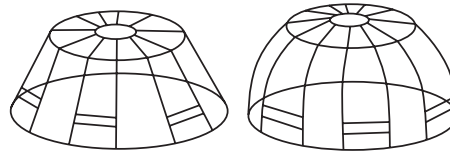
- rock lobster may not be possessed seaward of the high water mark in an unmeasurable state;
- only hand operated loops or lassos may be used. Spring loaded loop or lassos are prohibited;
- spears or devices which could puncture the shell must not be used when taking rock lobster. Possessing any rock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

### Rock lobster pots

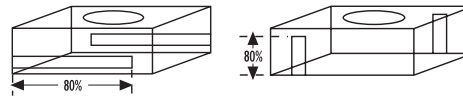
Rock lobster pot means any pot, baited or not, that is capable of catching or holding rock lobster; and includes any other device capable of catching, holding or storing rock lobster. All rock lobster pots must have escape gaps (apertures). These are openings

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.

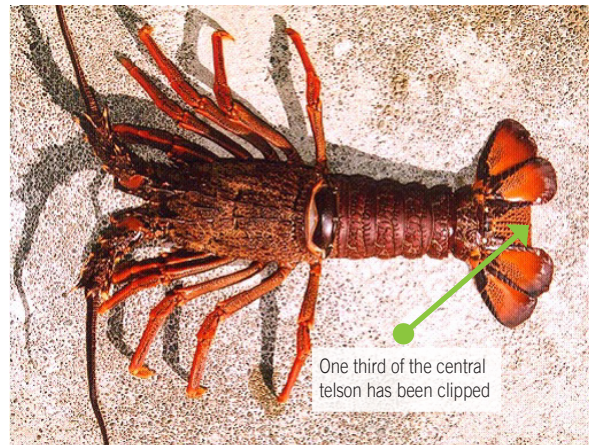
## What is the telson clipping rule?

The telson is the central part of the tail fan on a rock lobster.

Telson clipping is a way of marking spiny rock lobster to make it clear that they have been recreationally caught. One-third of the telson is cut off so that it is noticeably shorter than the other sections of the tail fan. (See the picture for an example).

Under the new rules, once a fisher has checked that a lobster is legal size, condition and not subject to any other protections (i.e. carrying eggs) they must immediately cut one-third off the telson.

A person must not possess any spiny rock lobster taken from within the Kaikōura Marine Area if it has not had one-third of the telson cut off.



## Poacher Prevention

MPI's Fisheries 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 (800 476 224).**

## New Zealand's Fishing Rules at your Fingertips

This brochure is a summary of the recreational fishing rules for the Kaikōura 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 [recfishingteam@mpi.govt.nz](mailto:recfishingteam@mpi.govt.nz) to subscribe to fishing related updates in your area.
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