

# Fish stock reviews for 1 October 2024

## West Coast – Kingfish (KIN 7 & 8)

Proposal [online here](#).

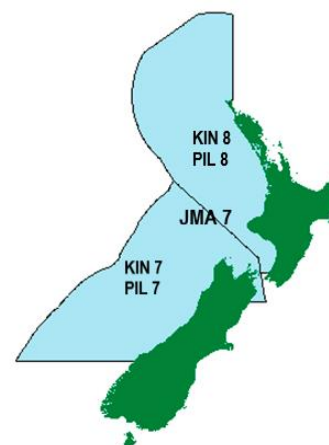


### 1. Current total allowable catch (TAC) settings and proposed options (tonnes).

| Stock | Option                            | TAC       | TACC      | Allowances      |              |                                       |
|-------|-----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|--------------|---------------------------------------|
|       |                                   |           |           | Customary Māori | Recreational | All other mortality caused by fishing |
| KIN 7 | Option 1<br>( <i>Status quo</i> ) | 98        | 44        | 6               | 40           | 8                                     |
|       | Option 2                          | 105 (↑7)  | 50 (↑ 6)  | 6               | 40           | 9 (↑ 1)                               |
|       | Option 3                          | 109 (↑11) | 54 (↑ 10) | 6               | 40           | 9 (↑ 1)                               |
| KIN 8 | Option 1<br>( <i>Status quo</i> ) | 167       | 80        | 19              | 55           | 13                                    |
|       | Option 2                          | 179 (↑12) | 90 (↑ 10) | 19              | 55           | 15 (↑ 2)                              |
|       | Option 3                          | 184 (↑17) | 95 (↑ 15) | 19              | 55           | 15 (↑ 2)                              |

### 2. Estimated landings (tonnes)

| Commercial   | Year    | Estimated landings (tonnes) |      |
|--------------|---------|-----------------------------|------|
| KIN 7        | 2021-22 | 25 t                        | 54 t |
| KIN 8        | 2022-23 | 83 t                        | 69 t |
| Recreational |         |                             |      |
| KIN 7        | 2017-18 | 25 t                        | 13 t |
| KIN 8        | 2022-23 | 43 t                        | 46 t |



### 3. What is the current status of this fish stock?

The North (KIN 8) and South Island (KIN 7) west coast kingfish stocks are assessed together. The most recent estimates state the kingfish stock along the west coast of New Zealand is ‘Very Likely (>90%)’ to be at or above the management target<sup>1</sup>. The future projection of the stock is ‘Unknown’<sup>2</sup>.

### 4. Is overfishing occurring?

It is ‘Unknown’ whether overfishing is occurring or if current catch levels or the allowable catch settings will cause overfishing in the future<sup>3</sup>.

### 5. What is the primary fishing method used to catch kingfish in this area?

Commercial caught kingfish is almost all bycatch in fisheries targeting other species. The midwater trawl fishery targeting Jack mackerel catches the largest proportion of kingfish in the KIN 7 & 8 fishery.

### 6. What are the associated species and habitats?

Kingfish are caught in mixed species assemblages primarily catching Jack mackerel, barracouta, snapper and spiny dogfish in KIN 7 & 8.

<sup>1</sup> Management target is the level that a fish stock should be managed at or above to ensure sustainable use.

<sup>2</sup> Fisheries Assessment Plenary – Volume 3: Red Gurnard to Yellow-eyed mullet. May 2024. Fisheries New Zealand. At [p.792]

<sup>3</sup> At [p.792]

**7. What are the of the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council & LegaSea recommendations/concerns for this review?**

- a. Subject to further discussion prior to finalising a submission, our preliminary recommendation is Fisheries New Zealand's (FNZ) **Option 1 - Status quo for both KIN 7 & 8**, based on retaining the status quo for JMA 7.
- b. KIN 7 & 8 are being reviewed in combination with Jack mackerel (JMA 7). FNZ are proposing an increase to JMA 7 total allowable commercial catch (TACC). If approved, this will increase the catch of kingfish. There are additional proposals to increase snapper TACC along the west coast (SNA 7 & 8). Approval of these snapper proposals will result in a similar outcome.
- c. **We will not be supporting an increase in TACC for Jack mackerel 7.** As Jack mackerel is an important forage fish and kingfish is primarily bycatch, we do not view Option 2 or 3 as a necessary option for KIN 7 & 8.
- d. The abundance of kingfish in KIN 7 & 8 is estimated to have increased significantly between 2012 and 2016. Partial stock assessments suggest that abundance has continued to remain high. FNZ state that current abundance is at a level which could provide greater utilisation opportunities<sup>4</sup>, but the value of frozen kingfish from the Jack mackerel trawlers is very low.
- e. The stock status of KIN 7 & 8 is estimated using available Catch Per Unit of Effort information from Jack mackerel trawl trips with FNZ observers on board. However, available information is sourced only from fishing trips targeting Jack mackerel and does not cover the full range of kingfish habitat.
- f. The pelagic trawl fleet is responsible for 65% of the combined catch of kingfish (returned and retained). Approximately 120 other vessels have recorded small amounts of kingfish from KIN 7 or KIN 8 over the same time period.
- g. In 2020 when the total allowable catch (TAC) was reviewed for KIN 7 & 8, the Minister considered it was appropriate that "**commercial catch be managed at unavoidable non-target levels only**". Since 2020, the landings for KIN 7 exceeded the TACC in one year (2022/23), and it's probable that excessive kingfish catch in 2022/23 is due to fishers exceeding Jack mackerel ACE by 2012 t. Commercial fishers exceeded the KIN 8 TACC in 2020/21 by 18 t and in 2021/22 by 3 t.
- h. Under section 72A of the Act, commercial fishers are permitted to return live legal-size kingfish to the sea, in accordance with the Fisheries (Landing and Discard Exceptions) Notice, only if the fish is likely to survive on return and the return takes place as soon as practicable. This excludes kingfish caught by set net. All commercially caught kingfish under the commercial minimum legal size (MLS) of 65 cm are required to be returned to sea, dead or alive.
- i. We recognise that as abundance increases, high deemed value invoices may have an economic impact on individual fishers. Increases in bycatch may be unavoidable, particularly for fishers utilising non-selective fishing methods. However, as the Minister noted in 2020, modest TACCs are necessary to both retain the incentive to release kingfish that are likely to survive, and to discourage targeting by commercial fishers. Targeting of kingfish was a major problem in KIN 1 and KIN 2 in the 1990s.
- j. The issue at hand is that kingfish in KIN 7 & 8 are a bycatch species, and many are not able to be returned to sea due to low survival rates because of the fishing method used, and the rollout of cameras on boats monitoring fishing activity.
- k. **We recommend** bottom trawl fishers transition to using lower impact, more selective fishing methods so there is higher chance of returning kingfish live to the sea.

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<sup>4</sup> Review of sustainability measures for jack mackerel (JMA 7), kingfish (KIN 7 & 8), and pilchard (PIL 7 & 8) for 2024/25. Fisheries New Zealand. Discussion Paper. [At 24 & 25]  
KIN 7 & 8 TAC review for 1 October 2024. NZSFC Preliminary view. July 2024.

## 8. Who can you contact?

- a. Email submission to: [FMSubmissions@mpi.govt.nz](mailto:FMSubmissions@mpi.govt.nz)
- b. Email NZSFC fisheries team: [FM@legasea.co.nz](mailto:FM@legasea.co.nz)
- c. Submissions are due with Fisheries New Zealand by 29 July 2024.

## Appendix – Kingfish 7 & 8 associated species

### Commercial landings (tonnes)

| Species and fish stock                        | 2021-22  | 2022-23  | TACC (2022-23) | % TACC caught (22-23) |
|---|----------|----------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Barracouta - BAR 7 West Coast NZ              | 2442 t   | 1596 t   | 11 173 t       | 14%                   |
| Jack mackerel - JMA 7 West Coast NZ           | 27 782 t | 34 549 t | 32 537 t       | 106%                  |
| Kingfish – KIN 7 West Coast South Island      | 25 t     | 54 t     | 44 t           | 122%                  |
| Kingfish – KIN 8 West Coast North Island      | 83 t     | 69 t     | 80 t           | 87%                   |
| Pilchard – PIL 7 West Coast South Island      | 31 t     | 72 t     | 150 t          | 48 %                  |
| Pilchard – PIL 8 West Coast North Island      | 92 t     | 61 t     | 65 t           | 94%                   |
| Snapper – SNA 7 West Coast South Island       | 361 t    | 518 t    | 450 t          | 115%                  |
| Snapper – SNA 8 West Coast North Island       | 1720 t   | 1728 t   | 1600 t         | 108%                  |
| Spiny dogfish– SPD 7 West Coast South Island  | 722 t    | 578 t    | 1902 t         | 30%                   |
| Spiny dogfish – SPD 8 West Coast North Island | 114 t    | 96 t     | 307 t          | 31%                   |
| Trevally – TRE 7 West Coast New Zealand       | 1461 t   | 1132 t   | 2153 t         | 53%                   |

### Recreational harvest estimates<sup>5</sup> (tonnes)

| Species and fish stock                                    | 2017-18 | 2022-23 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Barracouta - BAR 7 West Coast NZ                          | 14.6 t  | 6.6 t   |
| Jack mackerel - JMA 7 West Coast NZ                       | 6.2 t   | 2.6 t   |
| Kingfish – KIN 7 West Coast South Island                  | 25 t    | 13 t    |
| Kingfish – KIN 8 West Coast North Island                  | 43 t    | 46 t    |
| Pilchard – PIL 7 West Coast South Island (number of fish) | 10 346  | N/A     |
| Pilchard – PIL 8 West Coast North Island (number of fish) | 27 864  | 11 293  |
| Snapper – SNA 7 West Coast South Island                   | 158.5 t | 139 t   |
| Snapper – SNA 8 West Coast North Island                   | 853 t   | 702 t   |
| Spiny dogfish– SPD 7 West Coast South Island              | 7.7 t   | 1.5 t   |
| Spiny dogfish – SPD 8 West Coast North Island             | 1.5 t   | 0.1 t   |
| Trevally – TRE 7 West Coast New Zealand                   | 64 t    | 36 t    |

<sup>5</sup> Recreational harvest totals include recreational fishers estimates from National Panel Surveys, amateur charter vessel reported catch and recreational take from commercial vessels under s111 landings, where available.  
KIN 7 & 8 TAC review for 1 October 2024. NZSFC Preliminary view. July 2024.