



LEGASEA
FISH FOR THE PEOPLE

Media Release – for immediate release

18 September 2013

Snapper decision falls short

Recreational fishing advocacy group LegaSea, say recreational fishers are rightfully angry that their daily bag limits have been cut from nine to seven and the minimum legal size has been increased, from 27 to 30cm, when there is no change to commercial catch limits.

Most of the snapper quota in Area 1 is held by corporate fishing entities that can now maintain their interests in the biggest inshore fishery in the country, while public fishers are hit with a 22% decrease in individual daily bag limits.

Mandy Kupenga, national programme leader for LegaSea says, "It's a real shame that the positive aspects of the Minister's decision are overshadowed by senseless changes to public catch limits. While the recreational allowance was adjusted up to reflect our needs, those benefits are taken away in the same breath with a decrease to our bag limits."

"The conservation impact of the changes to recreational fishers will do almost nothing to rebuild the fishery, and it's simply not balanced and fair that the people of New Zealand have food taken off the table while commercial quota remains unchanged – including the continuation of the smaller 25cm size limit for commercial fishers."

Measures outlined in the Minister's decision yesterday to address commercial waste were viewed positively by LegaSea, but they say a watchful eye is still necessary, especially since significant funding for these initiatives comes from taxpayer dollars. "It's taken more than 30 years to get recognition of this issue and a plan to address this waste. If Mr Guy's proposed initiatives are implemented thoroughly it will make a significant impact on rebuilding the fish stocks" says Ms Kupenga.

On the other side of the fence, the reaction from Sanford CEO Eric Barratt has been negative. He said in a statement released yesterday "It is unfair to penalise commercial fishers and sends a poor message to the commercial sector – look after the fishery but ultimately you will lose it. That drives a deep wedge into the heart of the conservation ethic out on the water."

With statements like this outraging the public further it's little wonder the credibility of Sanford is at an all time low. The view that addressing commercial waste is "penalising

commercial fishers" demonstrates the self-proclaimed sense of entitlement Sanford has in relation to fish stocks, and is also an insight as to how the care and protection of this public resource is viewed by the commercial sector.

The impact of an increased size limit will be great for many Kiwi fishers. Recent research shows that around 40% of people who fish in the snapper 1 area fish from the beach or rocks. Those in touch with land-based fishing know that on average it's much harder to bring in a snapper over 30cm when close into shore, compared to boat fishing. Many of these people rely on what they catch to feed their families.

Further research also showed that 73% of National voters wanted to see commercial quota reduced as a conservation measure taken to rebuild the snapper 1 fishery. Already, social media sites have been inundated with comments from upset fishers who vow to change their vote away from the current government in the next election.

Due to overwhelming public outrage Nathan Guy has shown glimpses of strength, pushing back on poor advice from his Ministry. However, the end result still shows favour to protecting commercial quota, and this is the gap that must be closed, preferably before the election next year.

LegaSea will continue working with the people of New Zealand to communicate the implications of this decision and seek feedback so that an appropriate course of action can be taken. For the latest information visit www.legasea.co.nz.

Ends

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Background information

Online video where celebrities combine to call for united action:

1. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-BKaLhGwy6s>
2. Over 1 million Kiwis enjoy fishing every year. Protecting our marine environment, our fisheries and our access to these, is vital to the Kiwi way of life and our national well-being, now and in the future.
3. LegaSea was launched in February 2012 and is the public outreach brand for the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council. Our aim is to collectively protect our precious fishing resources for people, our communities and future generations of New Zealanders. LegaSea raises awareness facilities people working

together, promotes education initiatives and provides an opportunity for people to unite in action, to stand up for and protect our rights to better fisheries management.

www.legasea.co.nz

4. All relevant information for the snapper 1 fishery including regular updates can be found here:

<http://www.legasea.co.nz/snapper1.php>

5. Sanford press release

http://www.sanford.co.nz/shadomx/apps/fms/fmsdownload.cfm?file_uid=0E774C1B-B90A-4750-9650-91493D024238&siteName=sanfordfisheries