



Opportunity to Review the Management of SNA1

Following entry into the Quota Management System in 1986, management of the highly valued north east snapper stock (SNA1) has sought to rebuild stock levels.

Latest information tells us that the stock biomass (the amount of snapper) has increased, but still has some way to go to reach the most productive level.

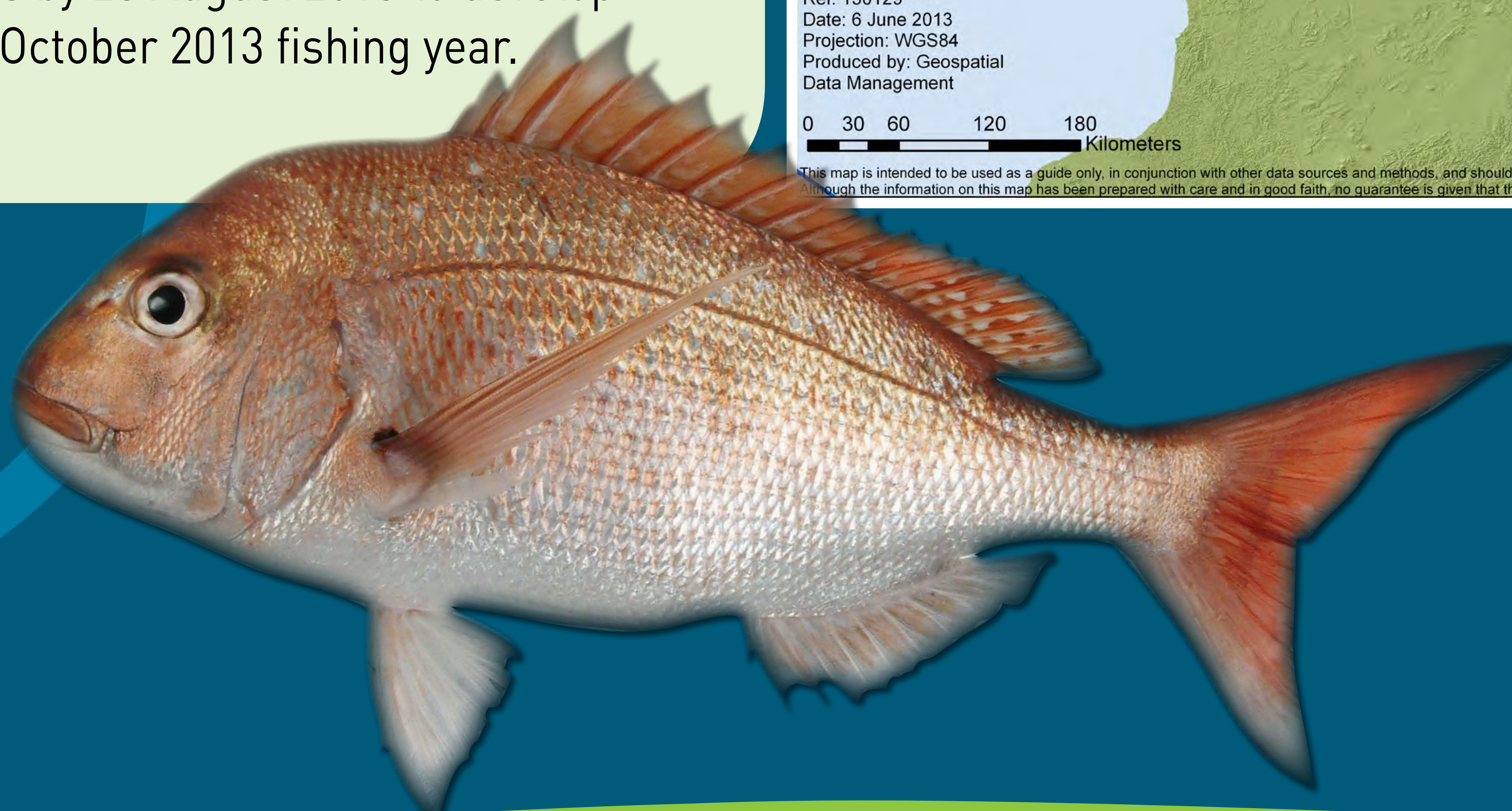
The opportunity to adjust management to reflect latest information will be approached in two phases.

The first phase is a review of current measures to support management for the upcoming fishing year.

The Minister will have three key decisions:

- Overall catch of SNA1.
- How the catch is shared.
- What, if any, changes to management controls are needed.

A range of options has been put forward as a starting point for feedback and refinement. MPI seeks your information and views by 23 August 2013 to develop final advice for the 1 October 2013 fishing year.



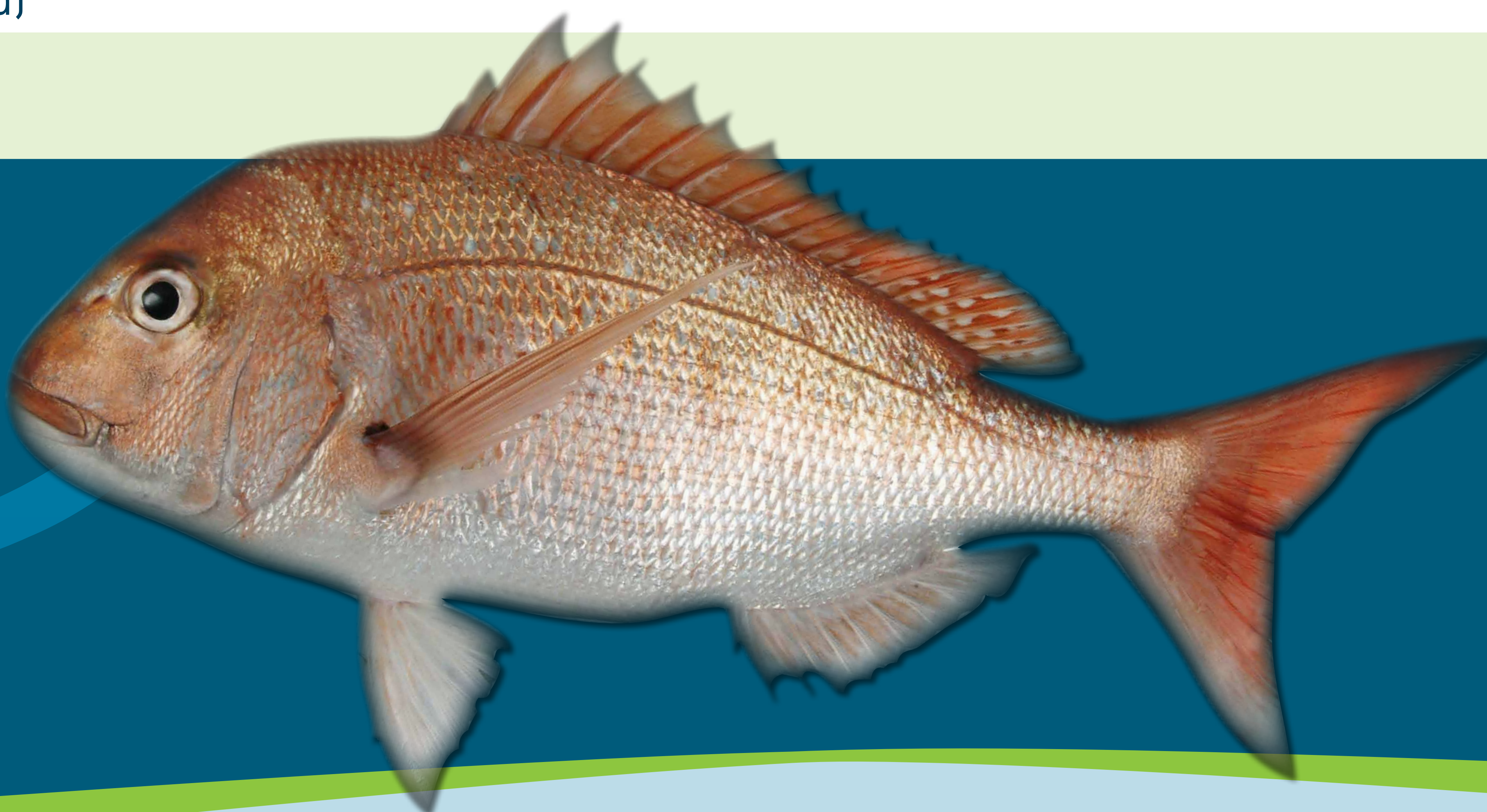


Current Use

(A snapshot from 2011/12)

The SNA1 fishery is New Zealand's most valuable inshore finfish fishery and is targeted and valued by customary, recreational and commercial fishers.

Māori Customary	Recreational	Commercial
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional and contemporary importance • Identified as taonga in the Te Hiku o Te Ika Fisheries Management Plan and the Mai i Ngā Kurī-a-Whārei ki Tihirau Forum Fisheries Plan • Take is specifically authorised under customary fishing regulations (take for customary purposes could also occur under recreational rules) • Information on amount of catch is uncertain (rough estimate of 50 tonnes suggested) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimate of catch approx 3800 tonnes • Likely to vary from year to year with availability • Approx 85% taken while fishing off boats and 90% using hook and line • Additional catch from aboard recreational charter vessels (rough estimate of 200 tonnes) • 13.2 tonnes catch reported off commercial vessels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4615 tonnes reported (70% of total NZ commercial snapper landings) • 199 vessels reported catch • Average price for Annual Catch Entitlement \$4130 per tonne • Average unit export value for snapper \$8325 per tonne • Key methods are bottom long-line, bottom trawl and then Danish Seine.





Estimating Recreational Catch

Aerial Access “onsite” Method

- Overflights count boats fishing at peak time of day
- Fishers’ catch is surveyed at boat ramps at same time
- Surveyed catch is expanded up to account for boats counted and shore-based catch
- Catch from aboard recreational charter vessels not included

2011-12 estimate = 3 754 t

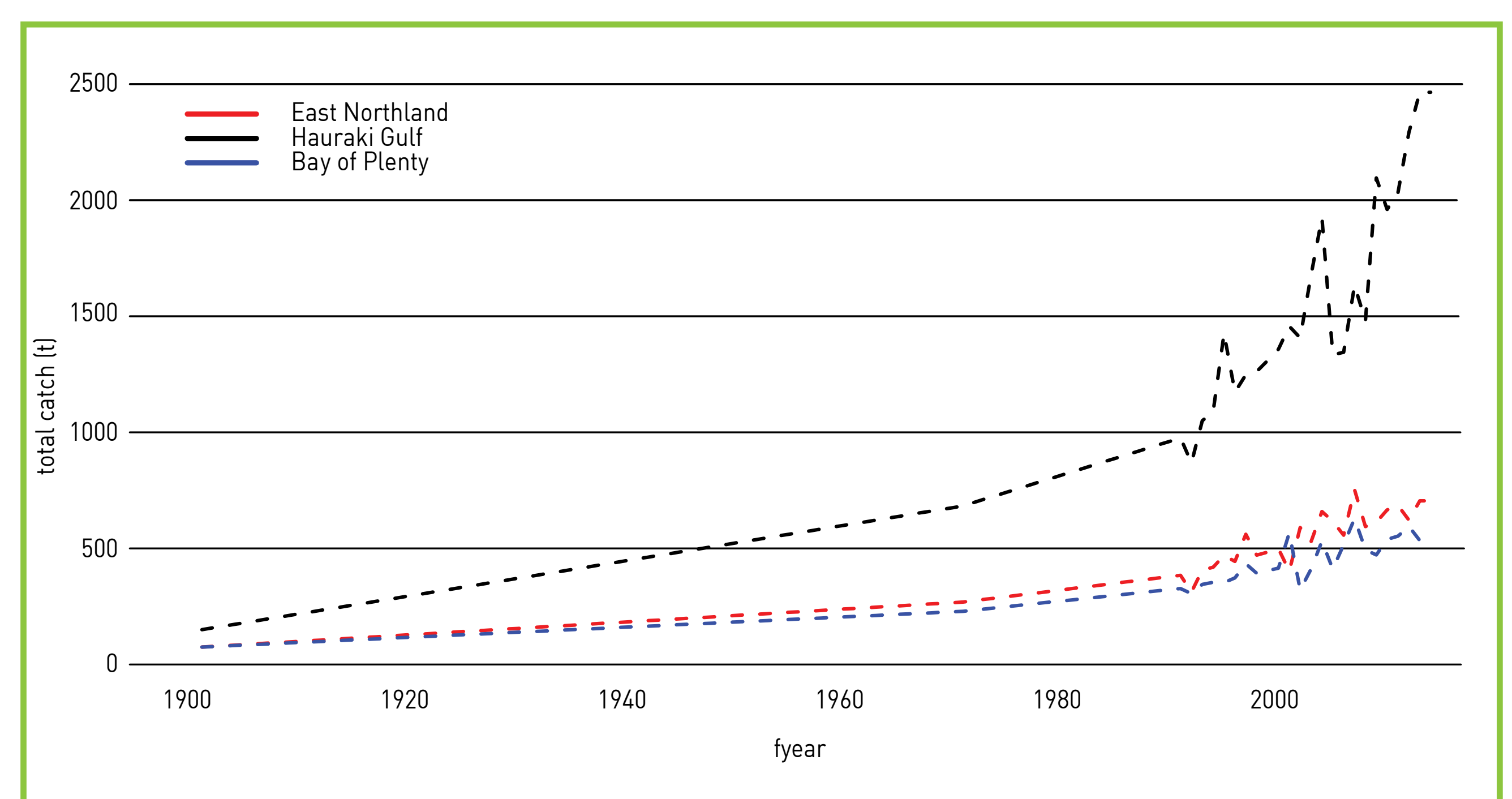
National Panel Survey “offsite” Method

- Recruit a panel of fishers and non-fishers for a full year
- Contact panel members regularly about their fishing activities
- Collect catch information in standardised phone interviews
- Expand catch for survey year up to national population
- Does not include estimate of charter catch

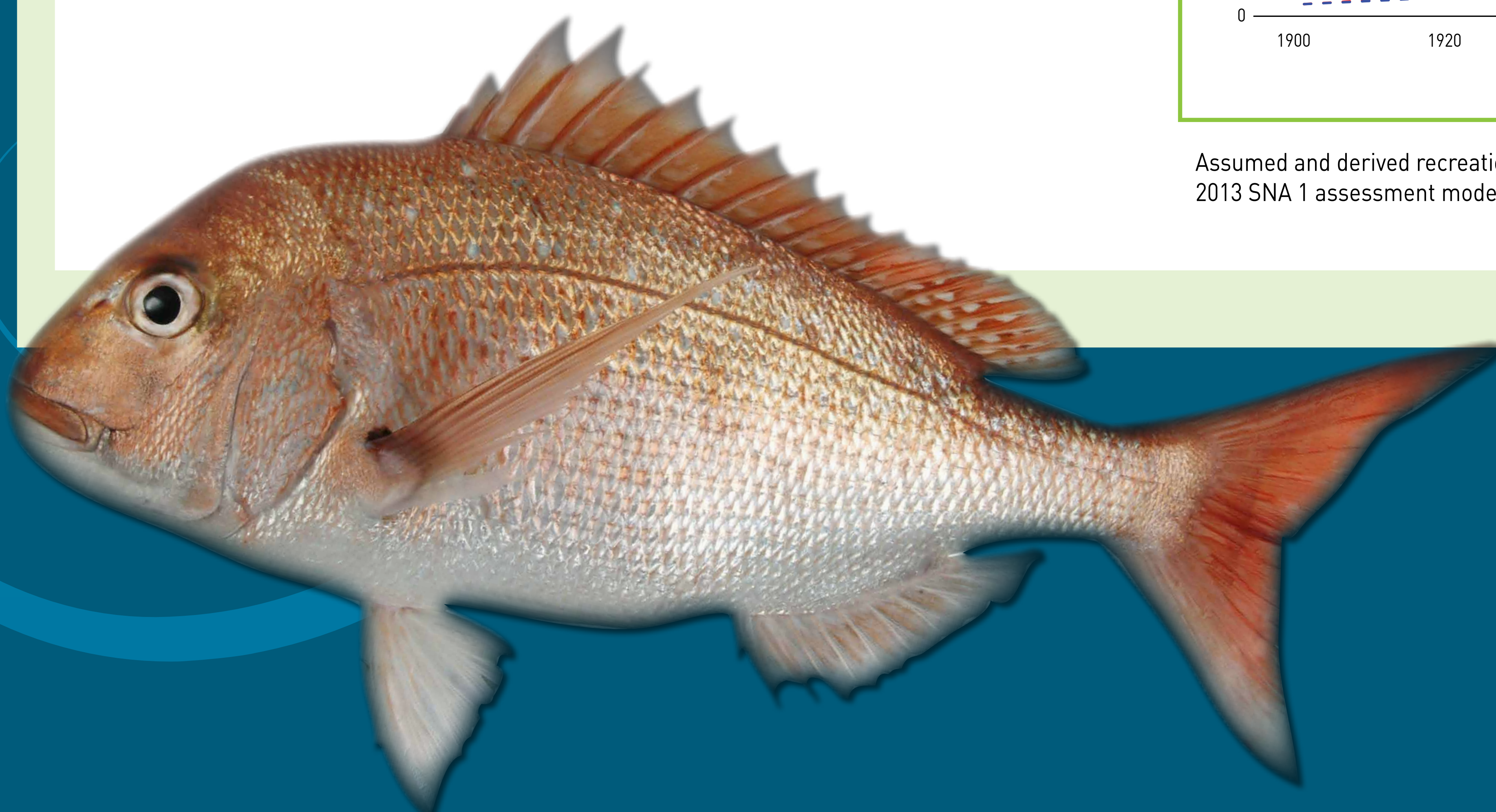
2011-12 estimate = 3 792 t

Likely variation between years

- Catch likely to vary between years in relation to snapper:
 - abundance;
 - availability (inshore/offshore).



Assumed and derived recreational catch histories for the period 1900 to 2013, that were used in the 2013 SNA 1 assessment model.





2013 Stock Assessment

Interim biomass target

Based on the Ministry's Harvest Strategy Standard an interim target of 40% of the unfished biomass has been used for the 2013 stock assessment. A long term management target will be developed with stakeholders in 2014.

Stock status

East Northland

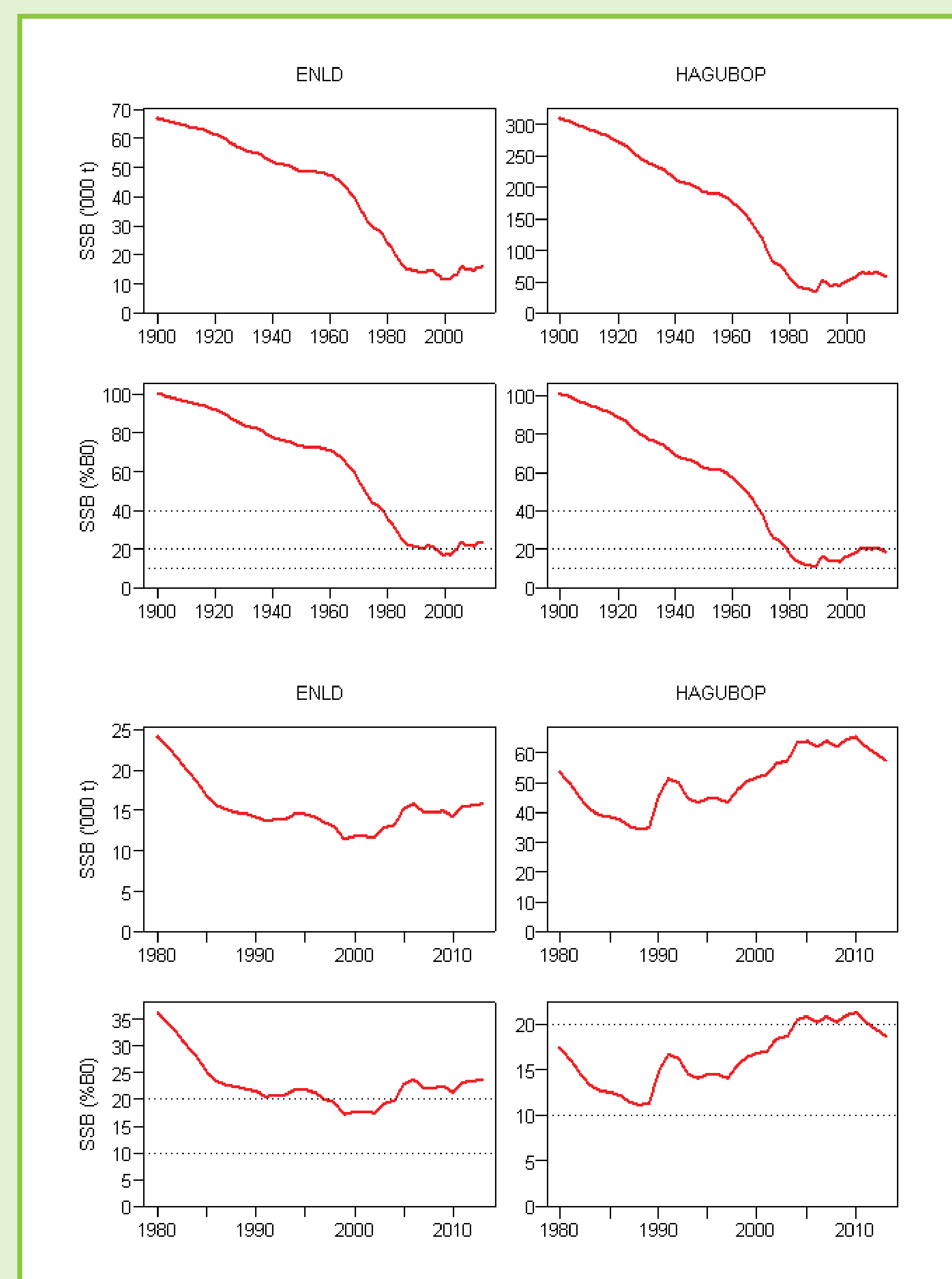
Biomass in 2013 = 24%B₀

- Very Unlikely (< 10%) to be at or above the target
- About as Likely as Not (40-60%) to be below the soft limit of 20% B₀
- Very Unlikely (< 10%) to be below the hard limit of 10%

Hauraki Gulf and Bay of Plenty

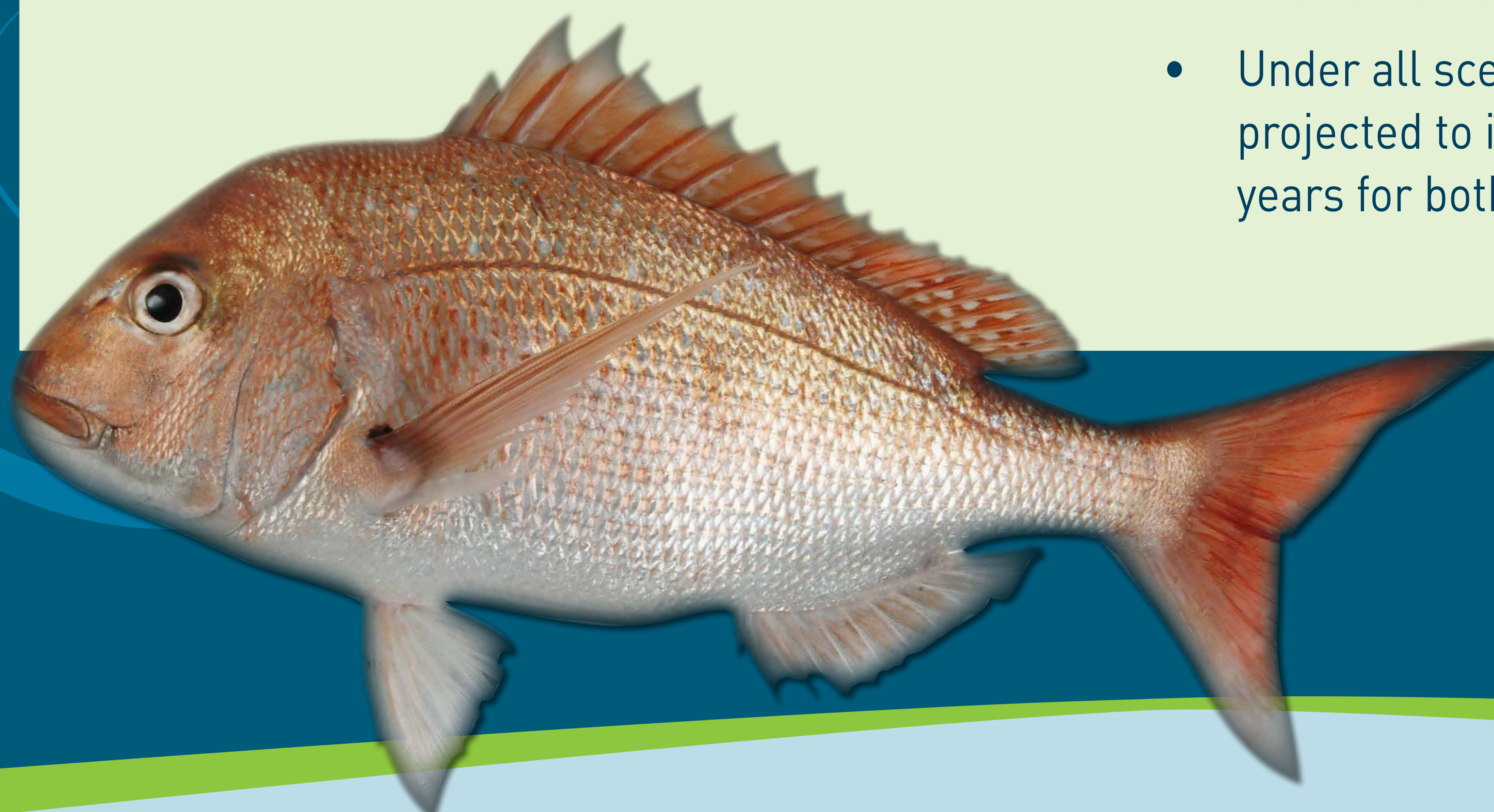
Biomass in 2013 = 19% B₀

- Very Unlikely (< 10%) to be at or above the target
- About as Likely as Not (40-60%) to be below the soft limit
- Very Unlikely (< 10%) to be below the hard limit



Projections

- A range of scenarios explored including a 500 tonne increase to the Total Allowable Catch and a 500 tonne decrease to the Total Allowable Catch
- Under all scenarios the spawning biomass was projected to increase slowly over the next five years for both sub-stocks



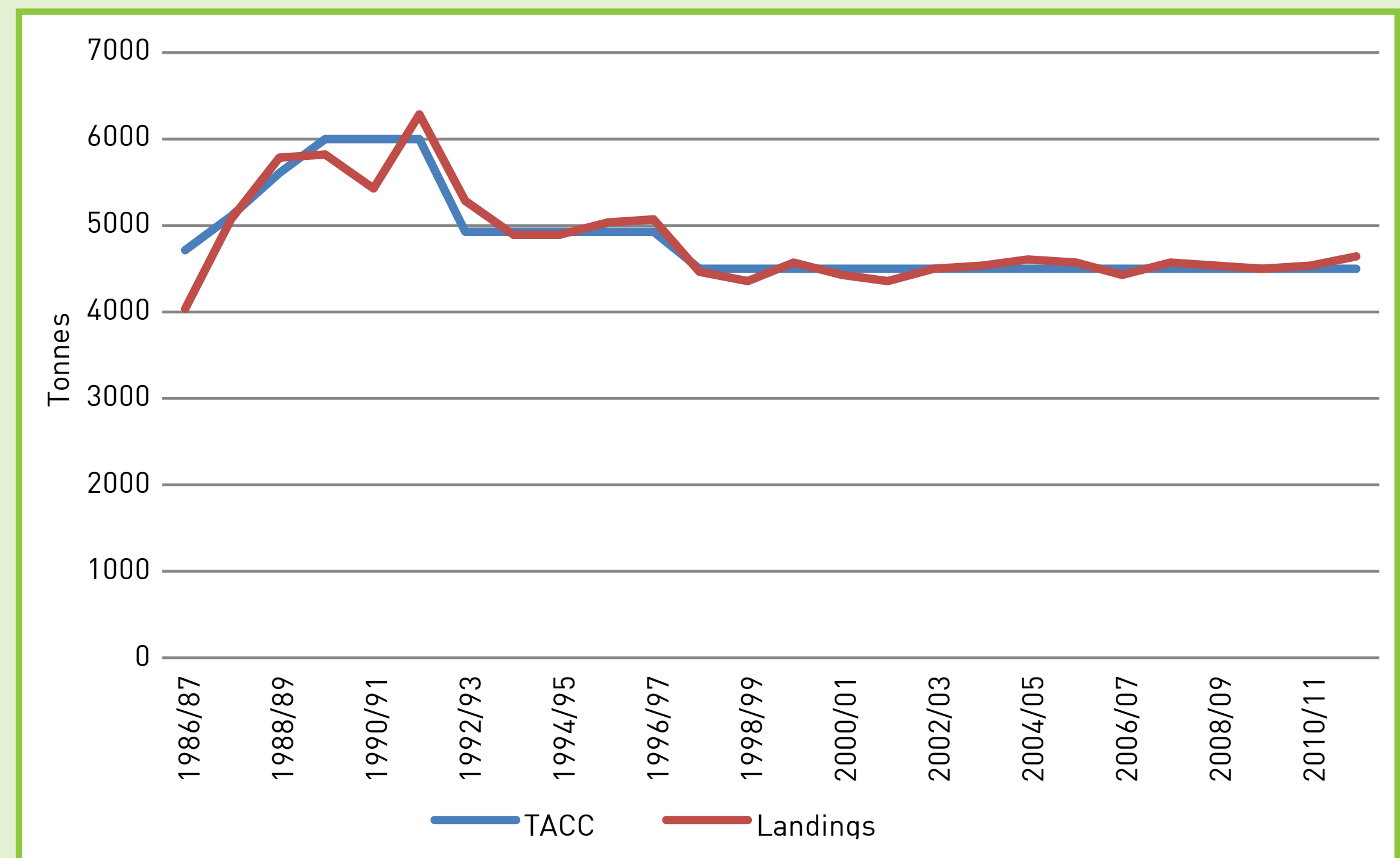


Controls on SNA1

Current Management Settings

Total Allowable Catch	7550t
Combined Māori Customary and Recreational Allowance	2600t
Total Allowable Commercial Catch	4500t
Other sources of fishing-related mortality	450t
Interim Deemed Value Rate	\$7.20
Annual Deemed Value Rate	\$8- \$22
Recreational Minimum Legal Size	27cm
Recreational daily bag limit	9

Reported commercial catch landings and TACC for SNA 1 from 1986-87 to 2011-12



1 Oct 1983-30 Sep 1986
Average commercial catch 6438 tonnes

1 Oct 1986 introduction into the QMS

1 Oct 1991 Total Allowable Commercial Catch set at 4938.2 tonnes

1 Oct 1997 Total Allowable Catch set at 7550 tonnes, Total Allowable Commercial Catch set at 4500 tonnes

1 Jan 1985 Recreational daily bag limit of 30 introduced

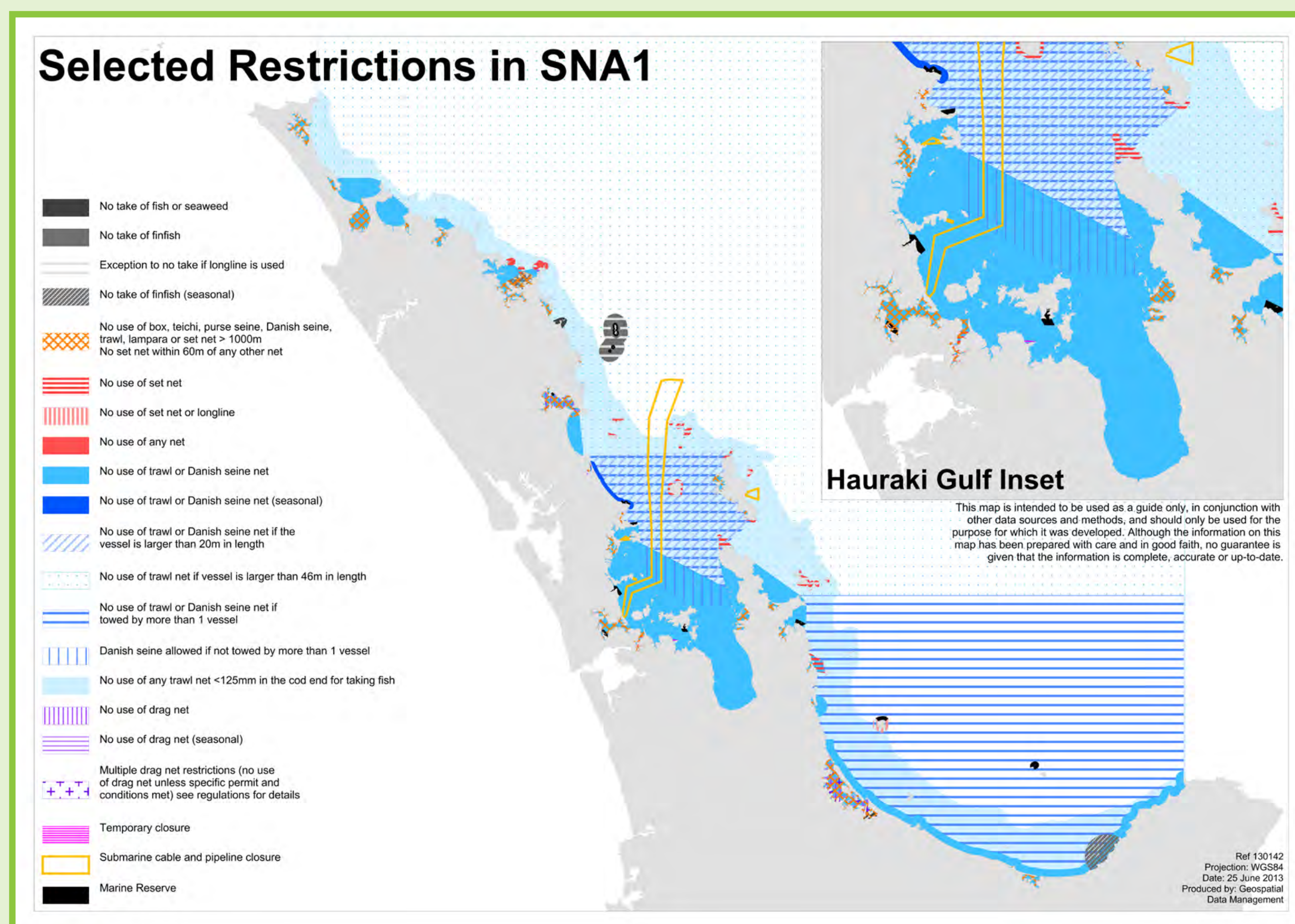
30 Sep 1993 Recreational daily bag limit reduced to 20

1 Oct 1994 Recreational daily bag limit reduced to 15

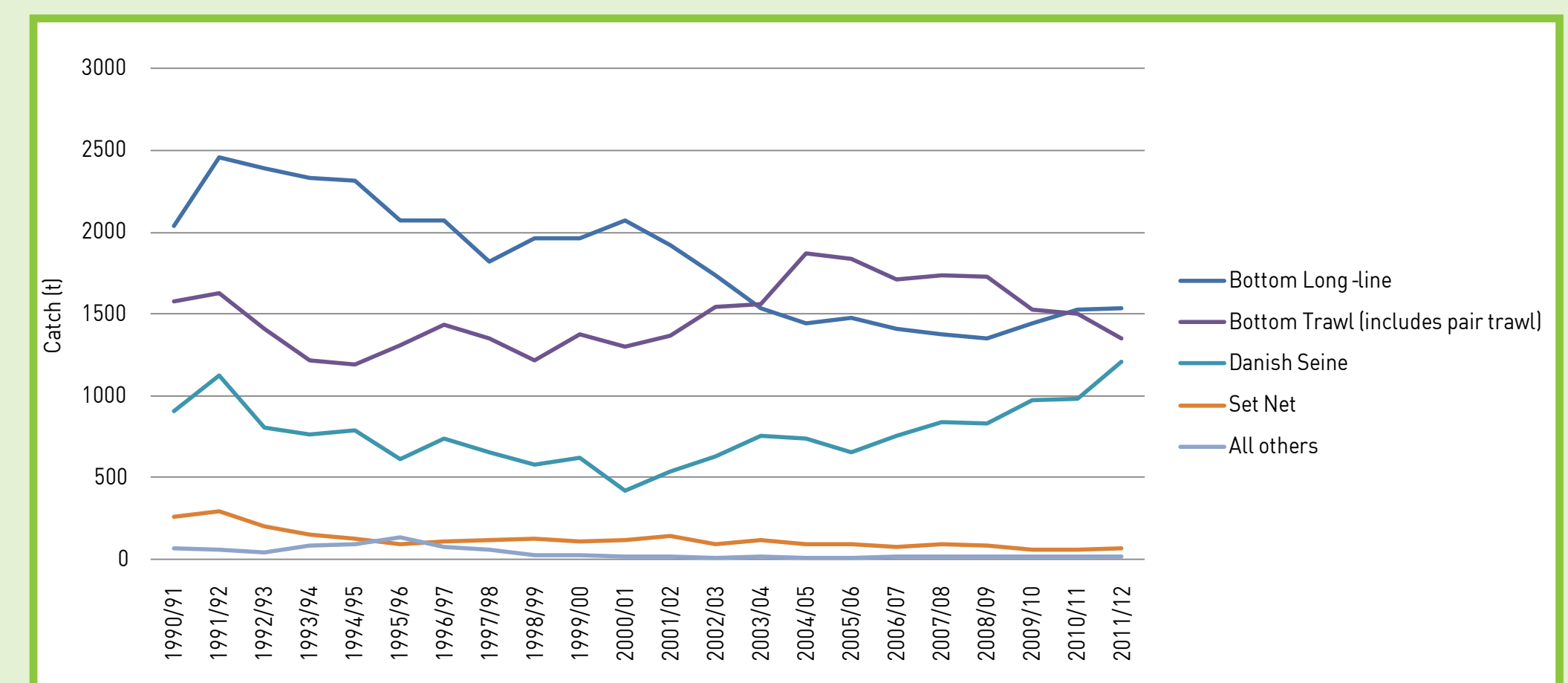
MLS increased from 25-27cm

1 Oct 1997 Recreational daily bag limit reduced to 9

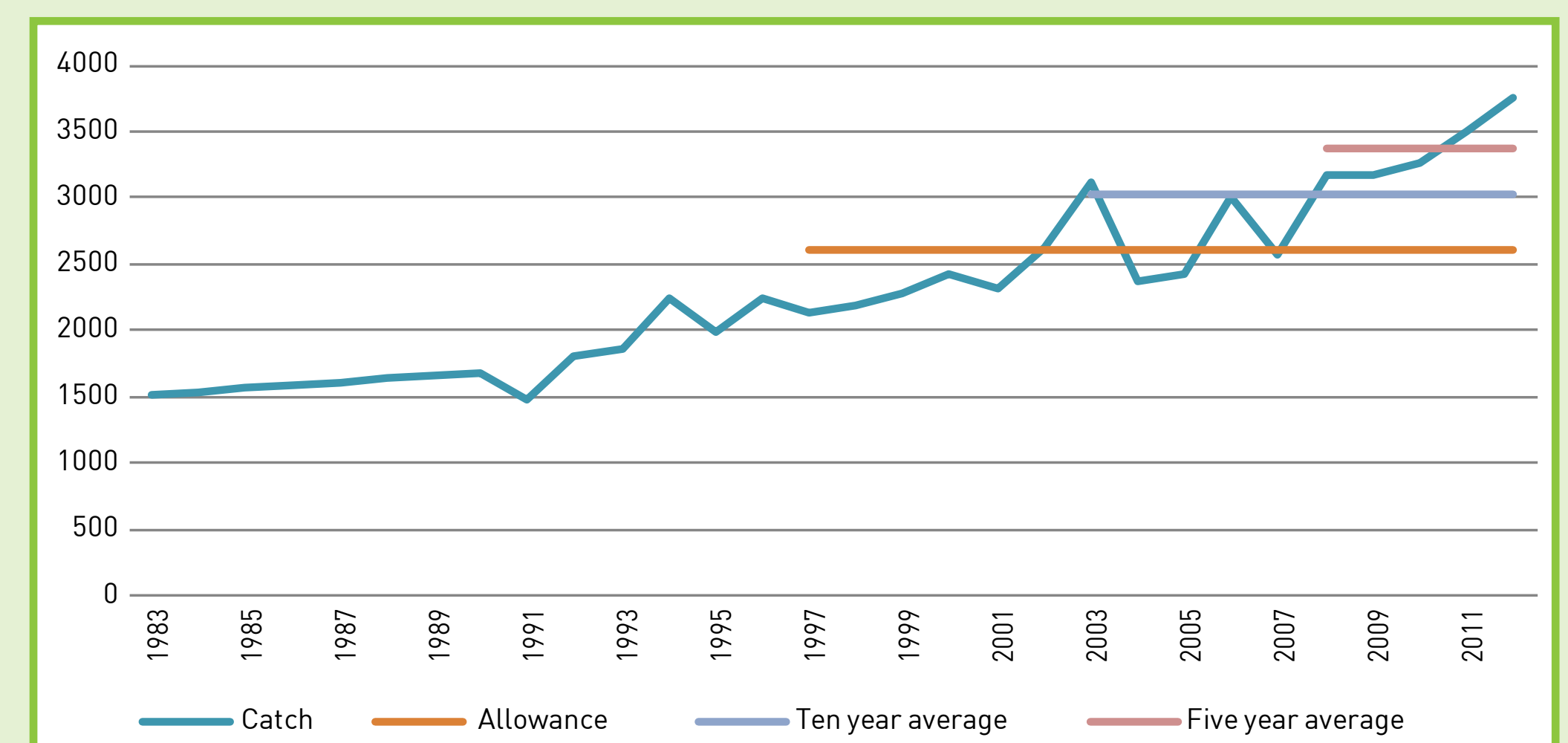
Commercial fishing method restrictions in SNA 1



Commercial catch landings of SNA1 by fishing method 1990-91 to 2011-12



Estimated recreational catch from 1986 to 2012 used in the stock assessment model





Proposed Options

Decision 1: Total Allowable Catch

Latest information tells us that if fish continue to enter the SNA1 fishery (grow above the Minimum Legal Size (MLS)) at recent rates the stock could sustain substantial increases in catch over the next five years with little impact on the long term rebuild.

However, if rates are closer to the long term average the number of fish above the MLS will decline.

Given this uncertainty, the options that have been proposed are cautious and represent a narrow range of possible changes. They focus on the short term and would be supported by more regular reviews of SNA1.

Option	Proposed TAC	Change from current TAC	Five Year Projections (recent average levels of recruitment)	
			East Northland	Hauraki Gulf/ Bay of Plenty
Current biomass estimates			24.1% B0	19.5% B0
1	7550 t	No Change	27.3% B0	21.3%B0
2	8050 t	+ 500 t	26.8% B0	20.6%B0
3	7050 t	- 500 t	28.1%B0	21.9%B0

An alternative would be to take a hands-off approach and reduce catch by a large amount now to let the stock rebuild as quickly as possible.

The options presented result in different short term benefits and costs. MPI invites feedback, information and suggestions to help inform development of final advice.



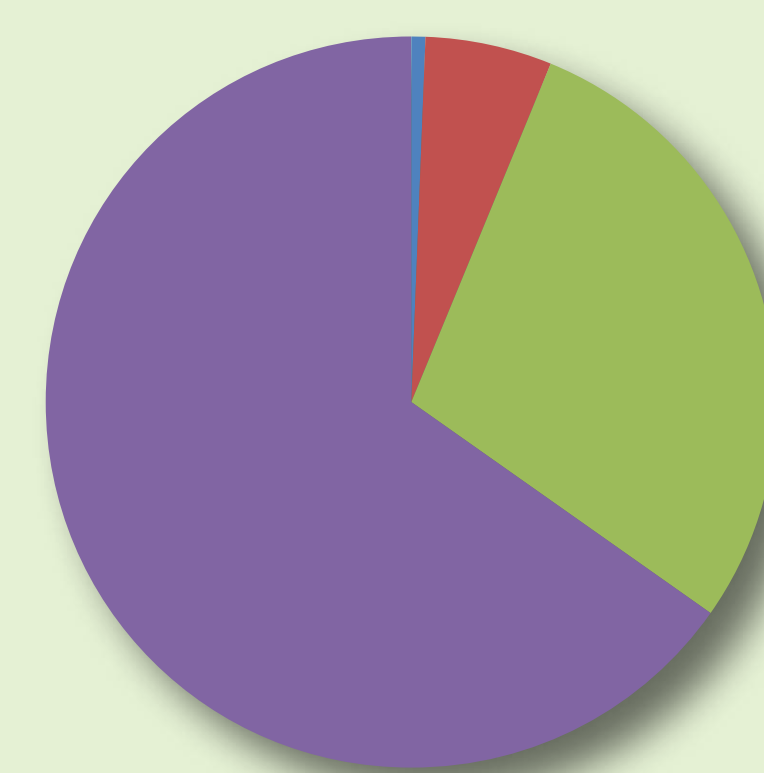
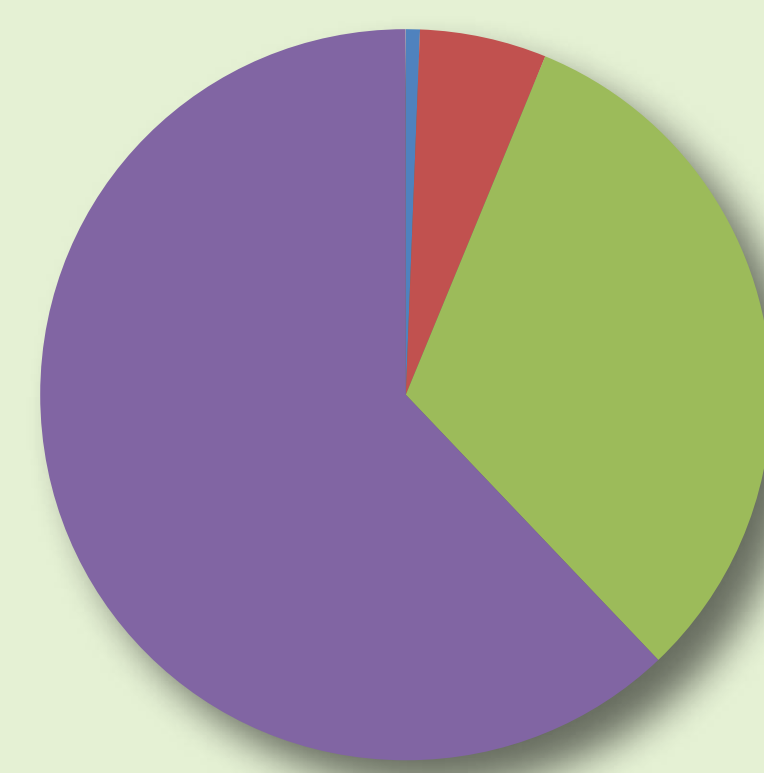
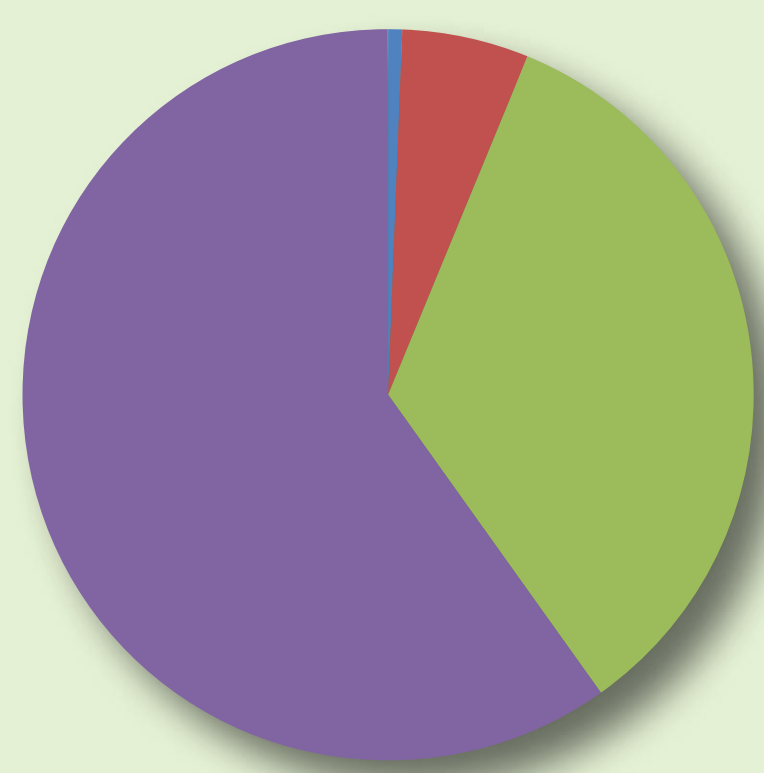
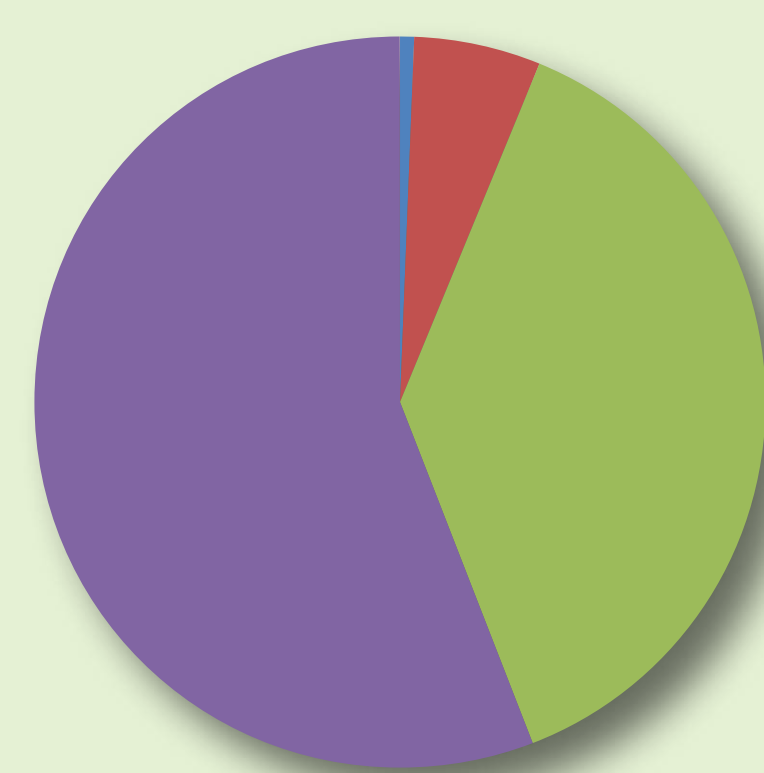
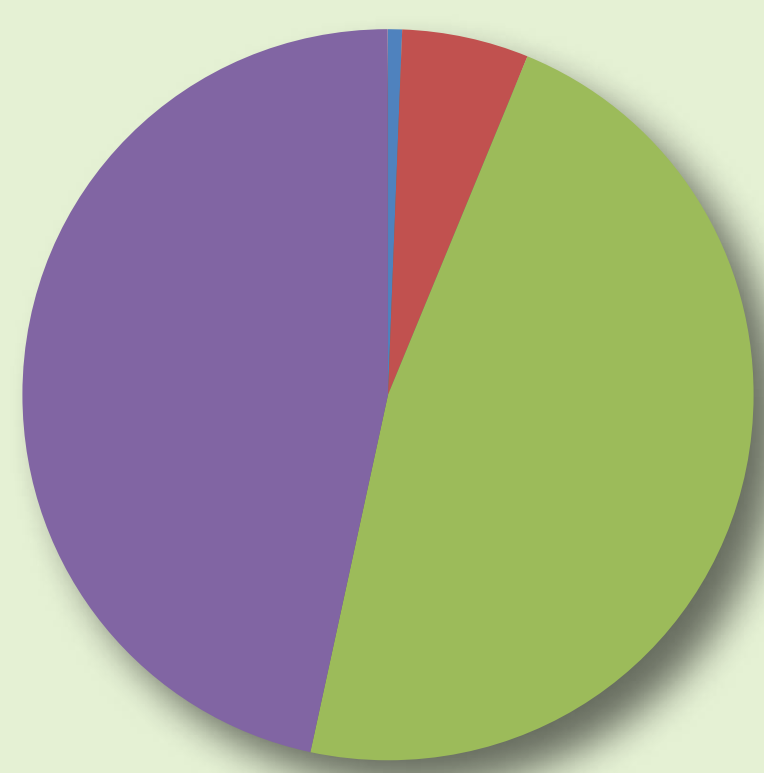


Proposed Options

Decision 2: Sharing the Fishery

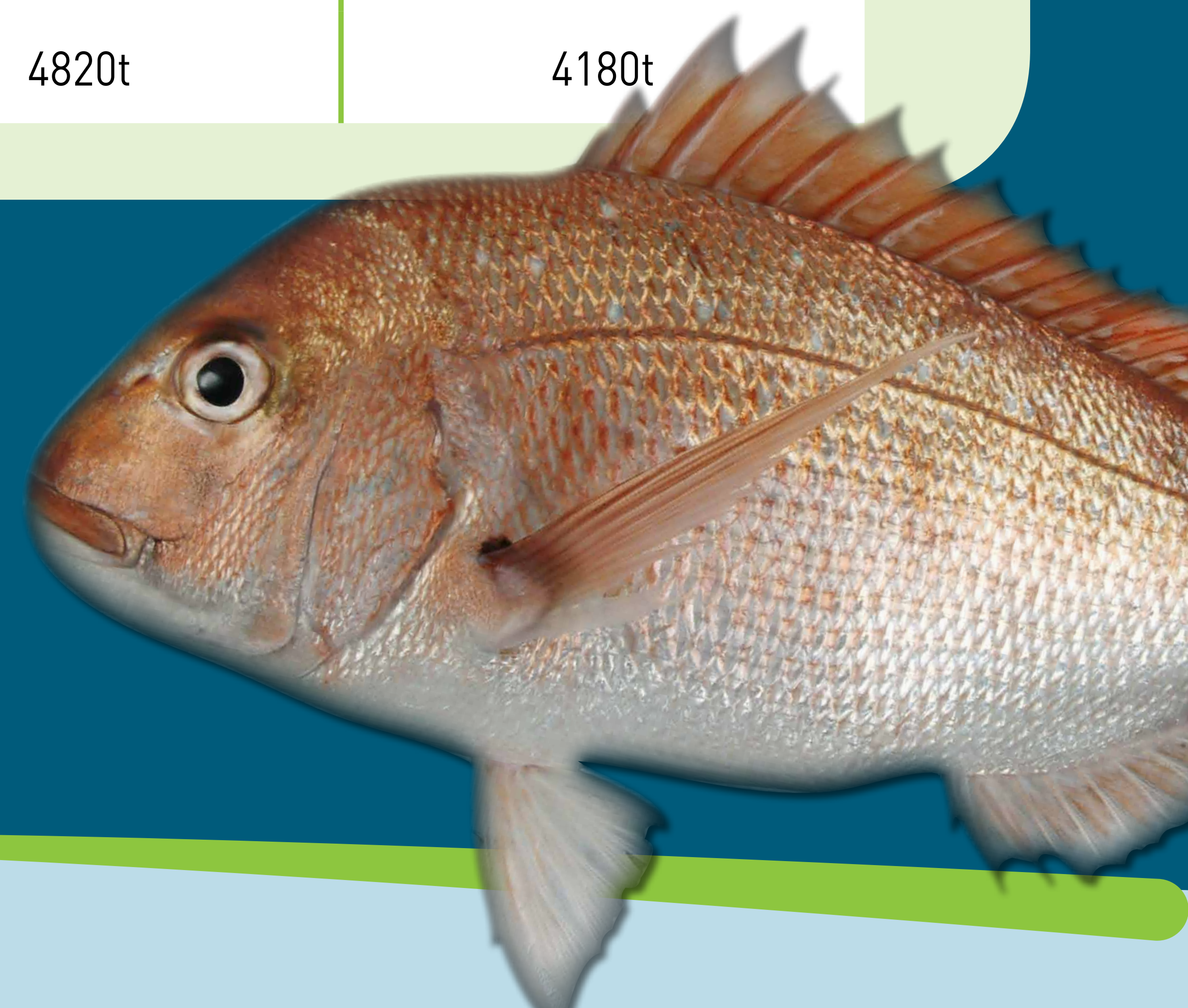
The Minister has wide discretion on the way that catch is allocated between sectors. The final advice will provide recommendations on a number of important matters. Your views and information are sought to help with the development of final options to support these decisions.

- A figure of 50 tonnes is suggested to allow for existing Māori Customary fishing. This proposal is based on best available information, but information is highly uncertain.
- The existing allowance for other sources of fishing-related mortality is currently set at 450 tonnes. It is proposed that this allowance be retained in the short term and reconsidered in the context of a longer term SNA1 strategy.
- The remaining portion of the Total Allowable Catch could be distributed in a range of ways between the recreational and commercial sectors.



- Any change to the TAC could be directed to one of these two sectors, or shared between them based on current proportions (as below), or another ratio the Minister considers reasonable.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Proposed Total Allowable Catch	7550t	8050t	7050t
Recreational Allowance	2550t	2730t	2370t
Total Allowable Commercial Catch	4500t	4820t	4180t





Proposed Options

Decision 3: Additional Management Controls

Commercial

The Total Allowable Commercial Catch informs the amount of Annual Catch Entitlement (ACE) for the fishing year. Graduated payments known as deemed values provide incentives for fishers to acquire sufficient ACE to balance against catch. Deemed value rates were adjusted for the 2012/13 fishing year. No further adjustments are proposed.

Recreational

Although recent average recreational catch estimates are higher than the recreational allowance, availability of snapper can cause recreational catch to fluctuate considerably.

Primary management tools available to manage recreational catch are the recreational daily bag limit and the recreational Minimum Legal Size (MLS).

The Minister could choose a combination of measures or make no change, depending on the size of the allowance set, the likelihood that it could be exceeded and the impact that the additional catch may have.

Recreational Minimum Legal Size and Daily Bag limit Combinations to Constrain Recreational Catch to proposed allowances

		Proposed Recreational Allowance		
		Option 1 2550t	Option 2 2730t	Option 3 2370t
Daily Bag Limit	3	27-35cm	27-35cm	27-36cm
	4	33-35cm	27-35cm	35-36cm
	5	35cm	33-35cm	35-36cm
	6	35cm	33-35cm	36cm
	7-9	35cm	35cm	36cm



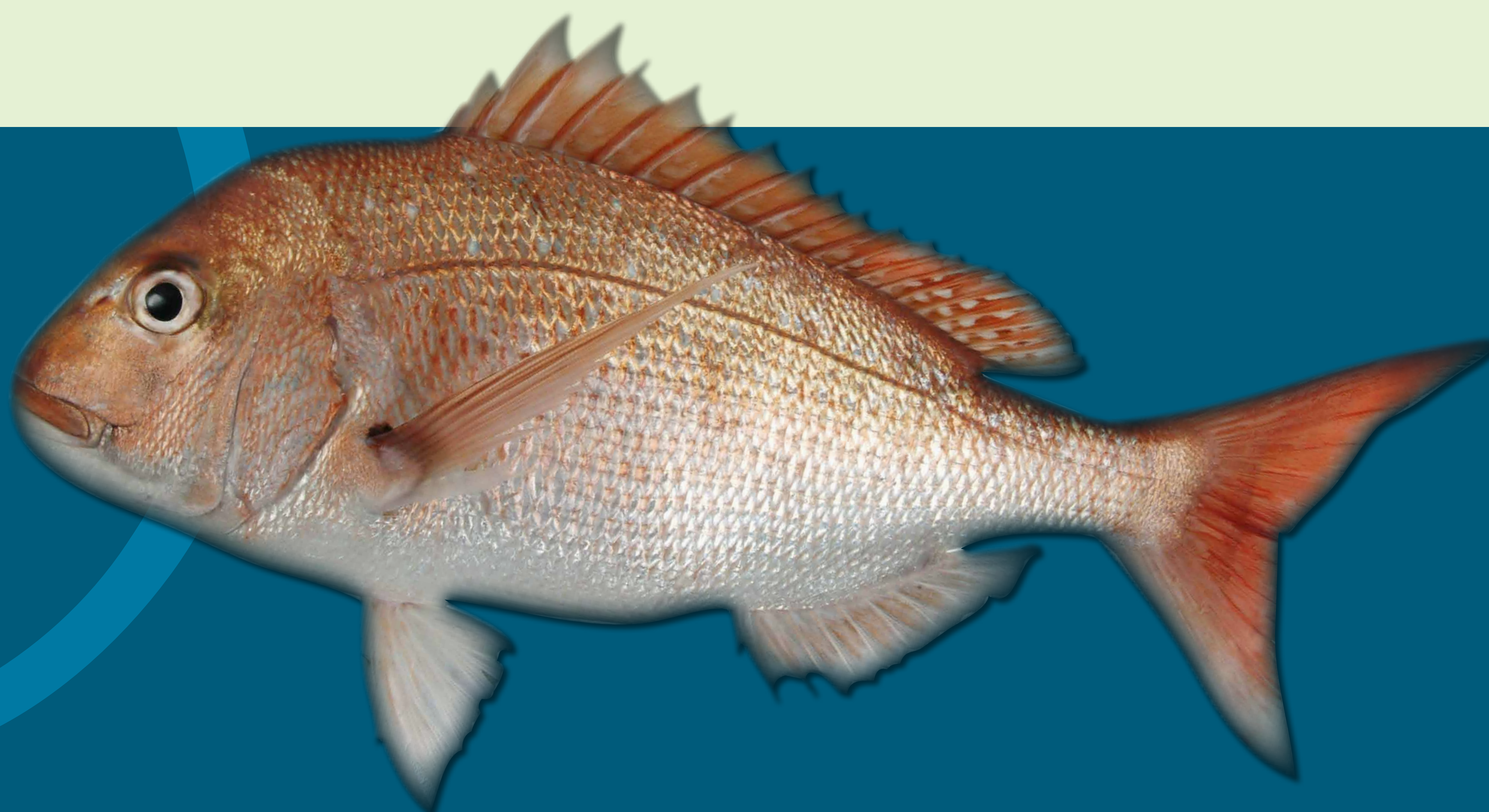


The Future

The current consultation focuses on decisions for the management of SNA1 ahead of the upcoming fishing year. The last review of this type occurred sixteen years ago and set out a long term rebuild plan.

There is an opportunity to take a more active management approach for our most valuable inshore finfish fishery. MPI would like to support discussion with stakeholders on future management. Key elements would include options to:

- Improve productivity of the fishery including:
 - ways to reduce juvenile mortality;
 - measures to protect spawning snapper;
 - processes to identify and protect habitats of significance for the snapper population.
- Secure better information to improve benefits from the fishery.
- Understand what maximising benefits would mean in the context of the SNA 1 fishery.
- Determine a target biomass that will ensure benefits are maximised.
- Monitor performance of the fishery.
- Increase certainty and transparency in the management of the fishery.
- Identify tools and approaches to manage more effectively, including consideration of the substocks within SNA1.





Submission Process

MPI welcomes your feedback and additional information in response to the Initial Position Paper released 12 July 2013 **Review of sustainability and other management controls for Snapper 1.**

The Initial Position Paper was prepared for the purpose of consultation and all views and recommendations within it are preliminary.

Written submissions should be sent directly to:

Inshore Fisheries Management
Ministry for Primary Industries
PO Box 2526
Wellington 6011

or emailed to FMsubmissions@mpi.govt.nz

Submissions must be received by MPI no later than 4pm on Friday 23 August 2013.

Following consultation MPI will compile a Final Advice Paper summarising MPI and stakeholder views, and provide final advice and recommendations to the Minister for Primary Industries. A copy of the Final Advice Paper and the Minister's letter setting out his final decisions will be posted on the MPI website as soon as these become available. Hard copies will be available on request.

