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**Southern Sport Fishing Club Inc**



Fisheries Management  
Spatial Allocations  
Fisheries New Zealand  
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18 November 2024

## **Submission: Oppose the request for Ruapuke mātaītai reserve, Foveaux Strait, Southland.**

### **Submitters**

1. The New Zealand Sport Fishing Council (**NZSFC**) is a recognised national sports organisation with over 37,000 affiliated members from 55 clubs nationwide. The Council has initiated LegaSea to generate widespread awareness and support for the need to restore abundance in our inshore marine environment. Also, to broaden NZSFC involvement in marine management advocacy, research, education, and alignment on behalf of our members and LegaSea supporters. [www.legasea.co.nz](http://www.legasea.co.nz).
2. The Southern Sport Fishing Club has been an affiliated member of the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council since 2002, representing the fishing, environmental, cultural and social interests of our members, families and close community.
3. Collectively we are '*the submitters*'. The joint submitters are committed to ensuring that sustainability measures and environmental management controls are designed and implemented to achieve the Purpose and Principles of the Fisheries Act 1996, including "maintaining the potential of fisheries resources to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations..." [s8(2)(a) Fisheries Act 1996].
4. While we have previously supported [Māori customary management controls](#) where there has been a clear purpose to restore abundance and productivity of the marine environment. We objected to this application in August, and do so again on the basis that we have strong and historical interests in the fisheries surrounding the Ruapuke Islands.
5. The Islands are the only safe anchorage between the mainland and Stewart Island so any area closures to fishing will jeopardise the safety of the crew aboard recreational vessels. Given the nature of weather, tides and conditions in Foveaux Strait, this is an unacceptable risk to human life.
6. We have ongoing concerns that this application and potential, proposed bylaws are clearly biased towards supporting ongoing commercial harvest while seeking to constrain recreational harvest.

7. We repeat comments from our [August submission](#) as they are still relevant today, as follows:

*No evidence has been produced that demonstrates the need for prohibitions on recreational harvesting shellfish or finfish. Nor is there any evidence to support bag limit reductions, method restrictions, area closures, size limit increases and recreational reporting, as mentioned in the application. [At p.7]*

*We understand there is considerable use of holding pots by commercial fishers when harvesting crayfish. Also, that there are resident quota holders on the Island that fish the local area, so any application from people with commercial interests, that seeks to restrict recreational harvest, needs to be treated with due caution by the Minister.*

*Fishing in Foveaux Strait, Southland, is not for the faint-hearted. It's an exercise that takes planning, family support, and sharp senses for monitoring the weather and forecast. Every fish taken from Foveaux Strait and around the Ruapuke Islands has a story attached and maybe even someone's blood, sweat and tears to get that fish home to the family. These fish are prized for their eating quality and the social value that comes with sharing time on board a boat with family, your children and mates. Money can't buy what is attached to these fish.*

*If there is an issue with the level of recreational harvest then surely it is incumbent on FNZ and local interests to initiate discussions with local recreational fishers to see if agreement can be reached on matters of mutual interest. This pathway has been successful in establishing Te Puna Mātaitai in the Bay of Islands, and numerous s186A 2-year temporary closures around the country. The submitters have participated fulsomely in these successful outcomes because it has engaged the community and generated ongoing interest and support for the use of a Māori customary tool to manage the local marine environment.*

8. Our representatives are available to discuss this submission in more detail if required. We look forward to positive outcomes from this process. We would like to be kept informed of future developments. Our contact is Helen Pastor [secretary@nzsportfishing.org.nz](mailto:secretary@nzsportfishing.org.nz).