



26th Sept 2022

The Minister of Oceans and Fisheries

The Hon. David Parker.

Dear Minister,

I had the privilege of attending the NZ Sport Fishing AGM and Conference. I was present when you spoke and I was very dismayed with your take on the Fisheries Management Bill.

Minister, I have had reason to be in direct discussion with your Fisheries Ministry. In particular, Dave Turner, Steve Halley and Lead Scientist Pamela Mace, all in regard the Gurnard and Snapper Fishery in Area 2. In short, after some three years of discussion/negotiations involving Ministry, Quota Owners, Commercial Fishers and ourselves we had to remove Ministry and Owners from the room as they were taking us nowhere. All that has been achieved here in Hawkes Bay has been through discussion across the table by Recreational Representatives and local Fishers.

I am not sure if you are aware of the issue that led to the inception of LegaSea Hawkes Bay so I will outline the matter briefly.

From 2010 the Fishery was showing signs of significant decline in several species. Snapper, Trevally, Hapuku but in particular Gurnard. In 2012 alone Commercial fishers took 120 Tonne over the TACC of 725t. Add to this the 90t not fished for by Moana during this and preceding years means there was some 200t over the allowable catch in one single year (Approx half a million fish)

Over the following three years with the fish settling into pods of a similar fashion as that of the Canadian Cod fishery and in 2018 while according to your Ministry the CPUE showed the fishery was fine it essentially crashed and the Gurnard went missing. The only thing that kept this fishery from what should have been closure was that while fishing for a different species at 70m one of the local Fleet caught Gurnard. Never before in this fishery had they been caught at this depth. Was there any thought by Ministry or the Commercial sector to just stop and ask why? No!! Fifteen trawlers, 24/7 worked that area until the nets came up empty. However, this did keep the CPUE looking acceptable.

During this period the local Pania Surfcasting Club went from landing and weighing between 300-350 per season to in 2015 fifteen, 2016 three, 2017 three and 2018 one.

Again, all this time, according to your Ministry the CPUE showed the Fishery was fine.

CPUE allows the Snapper Fishery in the Eastern Bay of Plenty to sit at between 6% and 10 % of original Biomass.

You mentioned in your speech Operations Hippocamp and Archilles. I am familiar with both and they are an indictment on this Ministry. A Ministry that has a history of massive failures of leadership, scientific acceptability and management to which accountability has not been seen to have been addressed.

I must point out, Cray 1, Tarakihi, Hapuku/Bass, John Dory, some Blue Cod fisheries, Scallops, Paua and please Minister, where are the peoples fish, the humble Kahawai??? Yes, there are hundreds but there used to be tens of thousands. My point, Minister, is that these Fisheries have crashed, some essentially burned because they have been assessed and managed using CPUE. A totally inept and ailed method of assessing our stocks. This and a total lack of leadership and actions by Fisheries NZ.

Minister, like those in the room at the Sport Fishing Council Conference, I applaud many of the decisions you have made regarding New Zealanders fish and I would like to feel that your position to make these courageous decisions remains and are not circumvented in any context.

As President of the New Zealand and Angling Association Inc. I ask that you take the opportunity to revisit the Fisheries Amendment Bill and see those particular areas that, not may but will, exclude you and future Ministers in your role along with those representatives of the Recreational Sector from having the ability to be heard and acted for. The Bill as it is written allows for this to occur. I reiterate, "It allows for it to occur"

With tongue in cheek, you can get two pair for \$299 at Specsavers and I am happy to pay.

Regards

Jim Yeoman

President NZ Angling & Casting Association Inc.