



Office of Hon Phil Heatley

MP for Whangarei

Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture

Minister of Housing

B11-260

Tēnā koe,

I am writing to inform you of the decisions I have made on sustainability measures and other management controls under review for the 2011/12 fishing year, for highly migratory species. My decisions on the total allowable catch (TAC), allowances, and total allowable commercial catch (TACC) for Pacific bluefin tuna will come into effect on 1 October 2011. My decision on mitigation measures for incidental catches of seabirds in surface longline fisheries will come into effect later this year.

Copies of both the Ministry of Fisheries (the Ministry's) initial position and final advice papers are available on the Ministry's website (www.fish.govt.nz).

In reaching my decisions I have considered the submissions received on the initial position paper, as well as the Ministry's final advice and analysis of submissions. I would like to thank those who took the opportunity to submit as part of the process. I also considered the relevant legislative provisions and my obligations under the Fisheries Act 1996 (the Act).

My decisions are outlined below:

Pacific Bluefin Tuna (TOR 1)

I have decided to increase the TAC for Pacific bluefin tuna, and to make additional allowance for an existing recreational gamefishery for Pacific bluefin that has developed since the fishery was introduced into the quota management system (QMS) in 2004.

From 1 October 2011, the TAC, TACC, and allowances for Pacific bluefin tuna will be as follows:

Fishstock	TAC	Recreational allowance	Customary allowance	Other sources of fishing related mortality	TACC
Pacific bluefin tuna (TOR 1)	145	25	0.50	3.5	116

In making my decision, I considered the information presented that suggested the existing recreational allowance of 1 t is inadequate to cover current recreational catches. The gamefishery for Pacific bluefin tuna is an important regional fishery that provides recreational fishers with a unique opportunity to catch large trophy fish. Although many

fish are tagged and released – something I actively encourage – I was satisfied that an additional allowance for recreational fishers is required.

I am also confident my decision to increase the TAC to accommodate an increased recreational allowance is in line with my international obligations and in particular consistent with the conservation and management measure adopted by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.

Seabird Mitigation Measures for the Surface Longline Fishery

I have decided to revoke the Fisheries (Seabird Sustainability Measures–Surface Longlines) Notice 2008 (No. F429). The requirements contained in Notice No. F429 will instead be promulgated by way of a circular issued by the Director General under Regulation 58A of the Fisheries (Commercial Fishing) Regulations 2001.

In making my decision, I considered that the framework in place to regulate seabird mitigation requirements in the surface longline fishery can be improved by using regulatory provisions available under Regulation 58A, which provide for targeted and generalised mitigation tools. These will be a useful precursor to further improvement in the regulatory arrangements for seabird mitigation for surface longline fishing if required to address specific areas of risk in the fishery. This has the further advantage of consolidating the mitigation rules for surface longline fishing in one place.

The Director General will use this opportunity to amend the current provisions specifying seabird mitigation requirements in the surface longline fishery. These amendments will be:

- Setting a minimum length of a tori line at 100 metres (currently 150 metres), but where a tori line is less than 150 metres in length, a towed object must be attached to the end; and
- Removing a redundant provision for fishers to notify the Ministry of their intention to fish.

Nāku noa, nā



Hon Phil Heatley
Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture