



Office of Hon Nathan Guy

MP for Otaki

Minister for Primary Industries

Minister for Racing

B16-0310

Dear Stakeholder

Division of South Island Eel Stocks – Notification under Section 25B of the Fisheries Act 1996

I intend to recommend to the Governor General under section 25(1) of the Fisheries Act 1996 (the Act) the alteration of the South Island eel Quota Management Areas (QMAs). The alterations will be undertaken via section 25(1)(a)(iii) and section 25B of the Act by dividing the existing multi-species stocks into South Island shortfin and long fin stocks. Further details are set out below.

I am satisfied, having considered alternative options, that the alterations are necessary to ensure sustainability.

The alterations will allow longfin and shortfin eels to be managed separately in the South Island. Managing the species separately will allow for:

- The different biological characteristics of each species to be reflected in sustainability settings;
- A more precautionary approach to be taken for the more vulnerable longfin eel to help increase its abundance, without impacting on utilisation of the less vulnerable shortfin eel; and
- A more effective and targeted response to the current sustainability risks associated with some South Island eel stocks.

As required by section 25B of the Act, I have approved a plan that provides for the following matters:

- The boundaries of the proposed QMA or QMAs:
 - The boundaries for the separate longfin and shortfin QMAs will remain the same as they are under the current combined stocks (ANG 11-16) (Appendix 1). For example the QMA boundary for LFE 12 and SFE 12 will be the same as the current ANG 12.
- The species that comprise the stock or stocks after the alteration:
 - The new stocks will comprise of the shortfin eel *Anguilla australis* (SFE 11 - 16)¹ and the longfin eel *Anguilla dieffenbachii* (LFE 11 – 16).

¹ A third species of freshwater eel, the Australasian longfin (*Anguilla reinhardtii*) was identified in the North Island 1996. When caught it is included as part of the shortfin catch as this species has productivity characteristics closer to shortfins than longfins, and because the catch is not sufficient to justify its own separate stocks

- The manner in which quota shares are to be apportioned after the alteration:
 - The existing shareholders of ANG shares will be allocated, pro-rata, the new LFE and SFE shares. That is, if a quota holder holds 20% of quota shares in ANG 11 they will receive 20% of quota shares in each of SFE 11 and LFE 11. This approach enables quota holders to utilise both species (should they choose) in the future, or to buy or sell quota to obtain their preferred mix of longfin and shortfin shares.

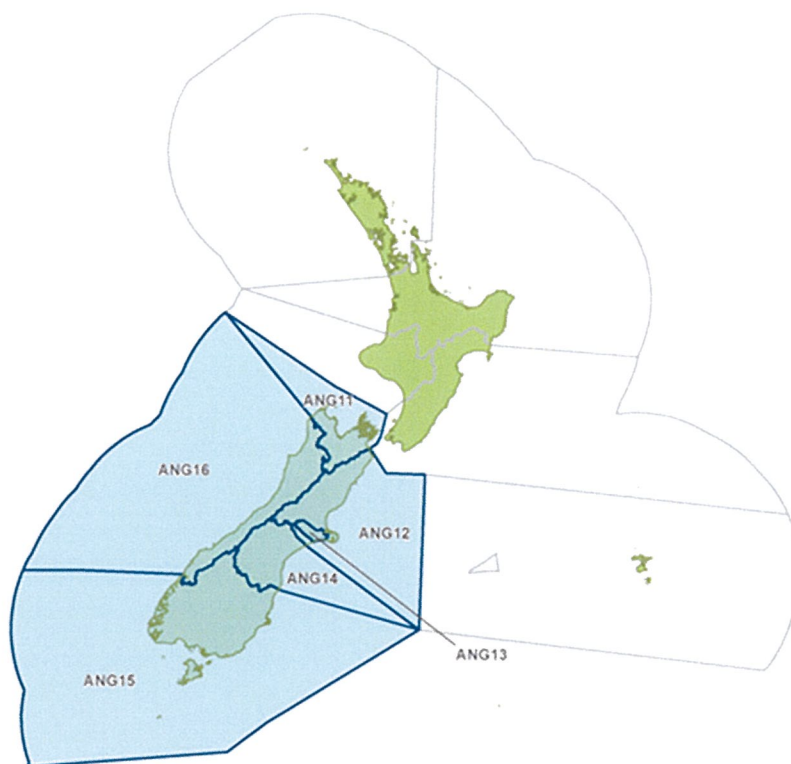
Schedules to the Fisheries Act 1996 and the Fisheries (Reporting) Regulations 2001 will be amended to allow for the separation of the South Island eel stocks. Catch limits and allowances for the new separated stocks will be reviewed as part of the overall review of Sustainability Measures for October 2016. The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) will be commencing this review shortly. Please refer to the MPI website www.mpi.govt.nz/news-and-resources/consultations for updates on this process.

All changes associated with the separation will come into effect on 1 October 2016 for all QMAs, except for SFE 13 and LFE 13 which will come into effect on the 1 February 2017 in line with the different fishing year for those QMAs.

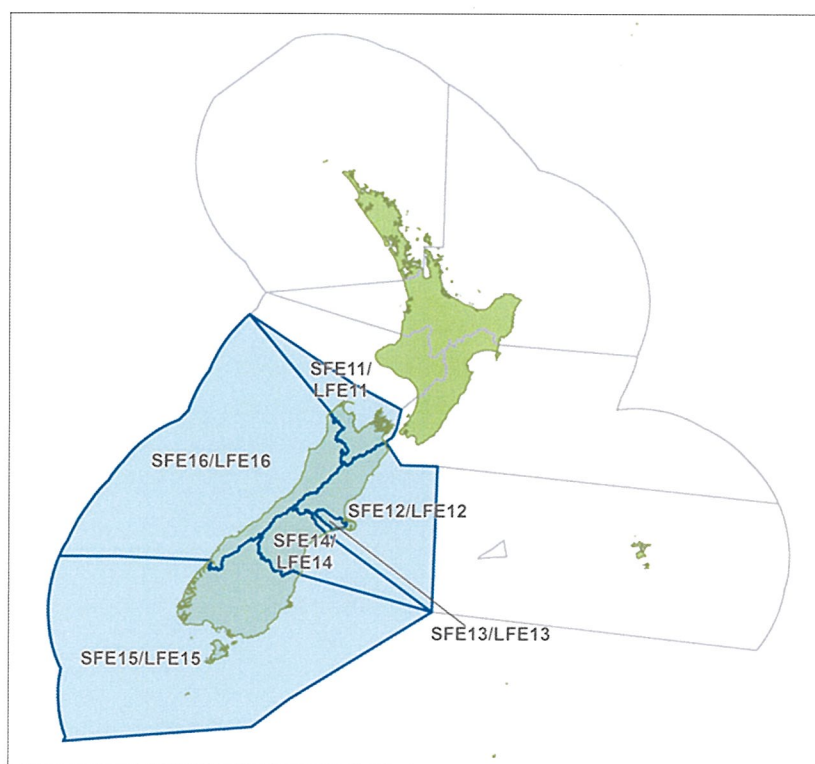
Yours sincerely



Hon Nathan Guy
Minister for Primary Industries



The six current South Island Quota Management Areas (QMAs) for freshwater eels (ANG - shortfin and longfin combined).



The twelve recommended South Island QMAs for shortfin (SFE) and longfin (LFE) eels.