



Fisheries New Zealand

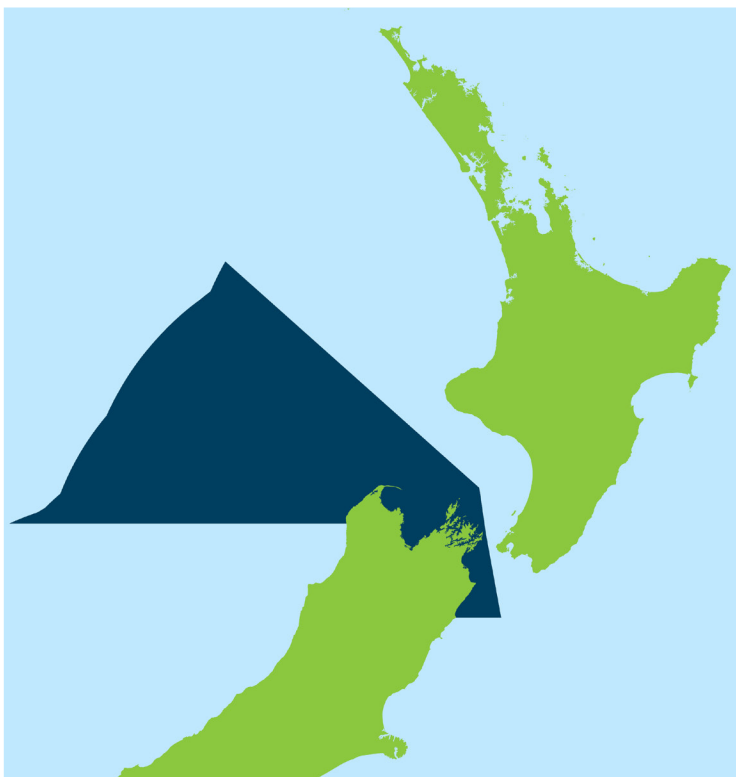
Tini a Tangaroa

Recreational Fishing Rules Challenger

(East and Kahurangi areas)



Effective from: December 2024 (subject to change without notice).



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Shared Sustainable **Fisheries** for the **Future**

Recreational fishing

Why recreational fishing rules matter

Fishing is one of New Zealand's most popular outdoor activities. Recreational fishers (people fishing non-commercially) take large numbers of finfish and shellfish every year. To keep our fisheries sustainable Fisheries New Zealand (FNZ) sets recreational fishing rules. By sticking to the rules and fishing responsibly, fishers help make sure that there will be fish today, tomorrow and for generations to come.

What do the rules cover?

Anyone fishing recreationally has to follow rules about:

- daily bag limits (how many fish you can keep);
- legal size limits (the sizes of fish you can keep);
- species restrictions (the types of fish you can keep);
- accumulation limits (how many fish you can keep over a period of more than one day);
- closed and restricted areas (where you can fish).

Only those people physically gathering are entitled to a daily limit, you cannot take fish or shellfish for someone else unless specified in the rules.

Things to remember:

- it is illegal to sell or trade recreational catch;
- breaking the rules can lead to prosecution, fines and property confiscations;
- unwanted or unlawful catch (catch above your daily limit, undersized fish, fish taken with undersized mesh, unintentional catch or bycatch) must be immediately returned to the waters from which they were taken, dead or alive.

How can I check the rules?

This brochure is a summary of the fishing rules for the Challenger Fishery Management Area (FMA) (East and Kahurangi areas). It is a guide only and may not include local restrictions or rules that have changed since it was printed. To keep up to date, check the rules each time you fish.

FNZ provides lots of (free) ways to check the rules. This includes a free text service, the free NZ Fishing Rules app, or visiting our website or offices. For more information see the back page of this brochure.

Good fish handling

Correctly handling and releasing unwanted or unlawful catch can increase their chances of surviving. When handling and releasing fish, remember:

- use wet hands (towel or wet gloves);
- be gentle – slide fish into the water from as close to the surface as possible;
- return fish as near as possible to where you found them (especially shellfish and rock lobster);
- the best way to protect undersized fish is not to catch them in the first place. If you are catching lots of undersized fish, change locations, or use a larger hook or mesh size.

For more information, FNZ has a “Responsible Fishing Guidelines” brochure available online at www.fisheries.govt.nz or at your local FNZ office.

Seabird safety

Seabirds are experts at seeing bait and fish scraps in the water and can get hooked or become tangled in fishing line. Find out how to avoid attracting seabirds and how to handle them safely at www.southernseabirds.org

New Zealand’s fishing rules

If you’re fishing or collecting seafood in New Zealand you need to know New Zealand’s fishing rules. If you do not read English, have someone translate for you.

Lao ki he toutai ‘a Nu’usila

Kapau ko ha tokotaha toutai ika koe, pe ‘oku ke fangota ki ha me’atahi ‘i Nu’usila, kuopau ke ke ‘ilo ki he ngaahi lao ‘o e toutai ‘a Nu’usila. Kapau ‘oku ‘ikai ke ke lava ‘o lautohi fakapilitania, pea kole ki ha taha ke ne liliu ki ho’o lea.

Ko e lao ‘oku anga pehe ni: ko e fa’ahinga mo e lalahi ‘o e ika ‘oku lava ke ke ma’u; feitu’u ‘oku ngofua ke ke toutai ai; pea mo e ika ‘e fiha ‘oku lava ke ke ‘ave.

‘Oku ta’efakalao ke fakatau atu pea ke fai ha fefakatau’aki e ika ‘o ke ma’u ai ha fa’ahinga pa’anga, pe tupu fakapa’anga.

Ko hono maumau’i ‘o e lao, ‘e ala faka’ilo ai koe, tautea pa’anga, pea to’o mo e koloa ‘oku ke ma’u. Ko e tauhi ‘o e lao mo e toutai fakapotopoto, ‘e tokoni ia ki hono fakapapau’i ‘e ma’u ha ika he ‘aho ni, pongipongi, pea mo e to’utangata ‘o e kaha’u.

Quy định cá của New Zealand

Nếu bạn đang đánh bắt cá hoặc thu mua hải sản ở New Zealand, bạn cần phải biết quy tắc đánh cá của New Zealand. Nếu bạn không đọc được tiếng Anh, có một người nào đó phiên dịch cho bạn.

Các quy tắc bao gồm: các loại và kích cỡ của cá bạn có thể giữ; nơi bạn có thể câu cá; và bao nhiêu cá bạn có thể giữ.

Sẽ là bất hợp pháp nếu bán hoặc kinh doanh thứ bạn bắt được vì bất kỳ lợi ích hay lợi nhuận tiền bạc.

Phá vỡ các quy tắc này có thể dẫn đến truy tố, phạt tiền và tịch thu tài sản. Gắn chặt với các quy tắc và đánh bắt cá có trách nhiệm giúp đảm bảo rằng sẽ có cá ngày hôm nay, ngày mai và cho thế hệ mai sau.

បទបញ្ញត្តិស្តីពីការនេសាទរបស់បុរេសេដ្ឋកិច្ច

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ងនឹងជួយការបកប្រែជូនលោកអ្នក។

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Remember there may be local restrictions and area closures, check the Closed and restricted areas section.

Finfish

Daily limits and size restrictions

In the Challenger FMA (East and Kahurangi areas) there is a **combined maximum daily bag limit of 20 for finfish*** (excluding specified baitfish and freshwater eels). Individual species limits within this combined daily bag limit must also not be exceeded.

* Finfish includes all species of finfish of the classes Agnatha, Chondrichthyes, and Osteichthyes, at any stage of their life history, whether living or dead.

Individual species limits within the combined daily bag limit

Finfish species	Max daily limit per active fisher	Min fish length (cm)	Min net mesh size (mm)
Blue cod Challenger East – Farewell Spit to Clarence River**	2†	33 landed whole or gutted only	–
Blue cod Kahurangi – Heaphy River to Farewell Spit**	10††	33 landed whole or gutted only	–
Bluenose	5	–	160
Groper (Hāpuku)/ Bass***	2	–	160
Kingfish	3	75	100
Quinnat salmon	1	–	–
Snapper (Challenger area)	10	25	100
Snapper (Marlborough Sounds area)	3	25	100 (set net bans apply)
Southern bluefin tuna	1	–	100

** Minimum pot mesh size for targeting blue cod is 54mm for all fishers. All blue cod must be landed in a measurable state. Fishers may possess blue cod in another state if it is immediately eaten on board the fishing vessel that it was taken. The recreational accumulation limit for blue cod is no more than two times the daily limit when taken over two days or more.

*** When fishing over multiple days you can possess up to 3 Groper (Hāpuku)/ Bass if you can prove that no more than 2 Groper (Hāpuku)/Bass were taken on any one day.

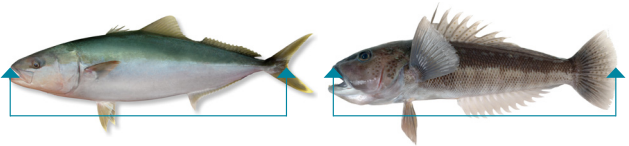
† When fishing over multiple days you can possess up to four blue cod in the Challenger East area (includes the Marlborough Sounds area) if you can prove that no more than two of those blue cod were taken on any one day from the Challenger East area. This restriction also applies if you caught the fish from outside of the Challenger East area and want to move into the Challenger East area.

Continued over page

†† When fishing over multiple days you can possess up to 20 blue cod in the Challenger Kahurangi area if you can prove that no more than 10 blue cod were taken on any one day.

Measuring finfish

Measure from the tip of the nose to the middle ray or “V” in the tail. Blue cod must only be landed whole or gutted. Do not cut the throat or sever the spine.



Further size limits for finfish within the combined daily limit

Finfish species	Min fish length (cm)	Min net mesh size (mm)
Blue moki	40	114
Butterfish/Greenbone	35	108
Elephant fish	–	150
Flatfish	25	100
Red cod	25	100
Red gurnard	25	100
Red moki	40	114
Rig	–	150
School shark	–	150
Tarakihi	25	100
Trevally	25	100
Trumpeter	35	100
All other finfish	–	100

For any species not listed a max bag limit of 20 applies.

In addition, you may also take the following:

Baitfish species	Max daily limit per active fisher
Anchovy	Daily limit of 50 for any combination of these species
Jack/Horse/Chilean mackerel	
Koheru/Scad	
Pilchard	
Piper/Garfish	
Slender/Stout sprat	
Yellow-eyed mullet	

And

Finfish species	Max daily limit per active fisher	Min mesh size (mm)
Eel	6	12

Gear restrictions

Surface floats attached to any line or net must be marked clearly, legibly and permanently with the fisher’s initials and surname at each end of the line. A phone number is also useful.

Set line restrictions

Set line fishing includes the use of long lines and dahn (drop) lines but does not include rod and reel or hand lines. In areas where line fishing is permitted, the following restrictions apply:

- no person may use, or be in possession of, more than one line (other than handlines, or rod and reel lines);
- no person may use or possess a line with more than 25 hooks;
- where more than one person is using a line from a vessel (other than rod and reel lines), no more than two lines (other than rod and reel lines), may be used, set from or possessed on board that vessel.

Netting restrictions

Please check where netting is permitted.

- no person may set or possess more than one net;
- only one net is allowed to be used from or aboard any vessel unless a bait fish net (less than 10 metres long);
- nets cannot extend across more than one quarter of the width of any channel;
- nets cannot be baited (except fyke net);
- nets must be hauled by hand only.

Set nets

- must not exceed 60 metres in length;
- must not be set within 60 metres of another net;
- must not be used in a way that causes fish to be stranded by the falling tide.

Drag nets

- Must not exceed 40 metres in length.
- Total warp length must not exceed 200 metres.

Marlborough Sounds Area rod and reel hand line restrictions

Maximum of 2 hooks per line.

Shellfish

Daily bag limits and size restrictions

Shellfish are taken when they cannot freely return to the water e.g. placed into a catch bag or similar. At no time while gathering may you be in possession of more than your daily limit.

Limits for taking and possessing shellfish are listed below.

Shellfish species	Daily limit per fisher	Minimum size (mm)
Cockles	150	none
Kina (sea eggs)	50	none
Mussels	50	none
Oysters – Dredge – Rock & Pacific	50 250	58 none
Pāua – Ordinary – Yellowfoot	5 5	125 80
Pipi	150	none
Scallops	Closed	Closed
Toheroa	Prohibited	Prohibited
Tuatua	150	none
All others (combined) •	50	none

- This is a combined, mixed-species bag limit. It applies to all shellfish species not specifically named above, and includes all crabs, limpets, starfish, periwinkles, whelks, barnacles and freshwater crayfish (kōura).

Shellfish must be landed in a measureable state

All shellfish to which a minimum size restriction applies (including pāua, and dredge oysters) must be landed in the shell and cannot be shucked or shelled seaward of the mean high-water mark. This includes transporting on the water.

Dredge oysters may be opened for immediate consumption on board the vessel. Any dredge oysters eaten form part of your daily limit.

Pāua accumulation limits

When daily limits are accumulated the maximum number of pāua that one person can have in their possession at any one time is 10 pāua or 1.25kgs shucked meat weight (shell removed). This possession limit applies everywhere including in the home.

Measuring shellfish

Pāua: measure the greatest length of the shell in a straight line. Do not measure over the curve of the shell.



Dredge oysters: must not pass through a rigid circular metal ring with an inside diameter of 58mm.

Shellfish restrictions

Underwater breathing apparatus (UBA)

- UBA does not include snorkels;
- no person may take pāua using UBA;
- no person may be in possession of pāua while in possession of UBA. This includes possession in or on any vessel or vehicle.

Open seasons

- **Oysters:** the oyster fishery is open year round. Rock oysters and Pacific oysters must not be opened while they are attached to the object they are growing on.
- **Scallops:** Scallop fishing is closed until further notice.

Protection of black coral

No person may take or possess black coral.

Rock lobster

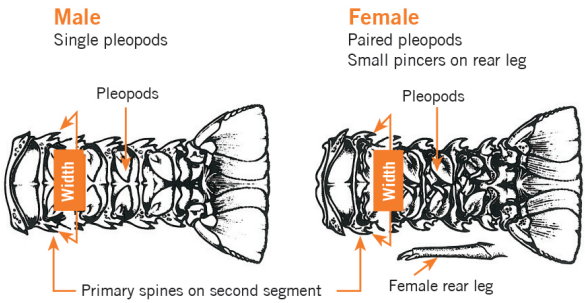
Daily bag limits

No person may take or possess more than 6 rock lobster (both species combined on any one day).

Rock lobster may not be possessed seaward of the mean high water mark in an unmeasurable state.

How to measure rock lobster

Measure the tail width in a straight line between the tips of the two large (primary) spines on the second segment of the tail.



Minimum sizes

Lobster species	Tail width measurement
Red or spiny rock lobster	Male – 54 mm Female – 60 mm
Packhorse rock lobster	Male – 84 mm Female – 90 mm

If you are unsure of the sex, use the female (larger) measurement.

Telson clipping

Red or spiny rock lobsters must have 1/3 of the middle telson removed immediately once the decision has been made to keep the lobster (refer to diagram).

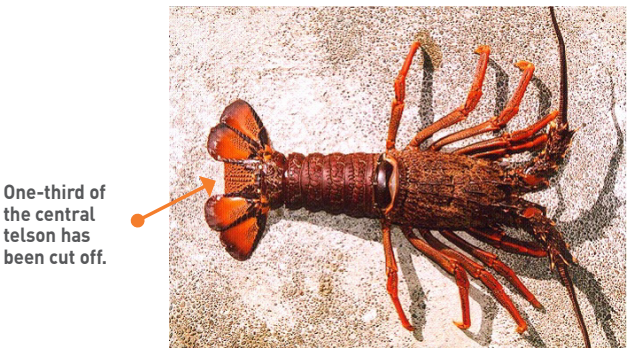


Photo: Professional Skipper magazine

Rock lobster restrictions

Protected rock lobster

The following types of rock lobster are protected by law and must be returned immediately to the water:

- undersized rock lobster;
- female rock lobsters carrying external eggs (in berry) – these are carried between the pleopods on the underside of the tail;
- soft shell stage rock lobster;
- rock lobster that cannot be measured (e.g. because of damage to the tail preventing accurate measurement). Specific exemptions apply for very large rock lobster with damaged tails – for more information go to

www.fisheries.govt.nz/rock-lobster

General restrictions

In areas where rock lobster may be gathered, the following restrictions apply:

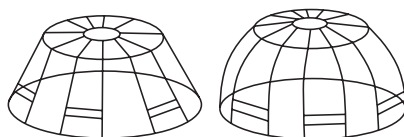
- rock lobster may not be possessed seaward of the high-water mark in an unmeasurable state;
- only hand operated loops or lassos may be used. Spring loaded loops or lassos are prohibited;
- spears or devices which could puncture the shell must not be used when taking rock lobster. Possessing any rock lobster which has been speared is an offence;
- external eggs or the egg-bearing appendages must not be removed from any rock lobster.

Rock lobster pots

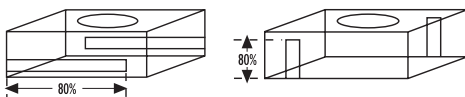
Rock lobster pot means any pot, baited or not, that is capable of catching or holding rock lobster; and includes any other device capable of catching, holding or storing rock lobster.

All rock lobster pots must have escape gaps (apertures). These are openings in the pot designed to allow undersized rock lobster to escape. No escape gap shall be incorporated in either the top or the bottom of any pot. Each escape gap must have an inside dimension of at least 54mm x 200mm.

Round or beehive pots: must have at least three escape gaps (other than the mouth).



Square or rectangular pots: must have at least two escape gaps (other than the mouth) in opposite faces of the pot. Each shall not be less than 80 percent of the height or length of the face of the pot in which the escape gaps are contained.



Mesh pots: any pot constructed entirely of unaltered spot welded mesh with minimum inside dimensions of 54mm x 140mm does not require escape gaps. Mesh pots may be used with covers or liners provided they leave unencumbered at least 80 percent of the surface area of each of two opposite sides.

Potting

In areas where potting is permitted the following general restrictions apply:

- individuals may use, set, or possess, up to three pots in any one day;
- all pots and surface floats must be clearly and permanently marked with the fisher's surname and initials;
- two or more individuals fishing from a vessel may use, set, or possess up to six pots in any one day provided they have their name on the pots and that each person is using no more than three of the pots;
- bobs and ring pots may be used to catch rock lobster but all other requirements such as marking and pot limits apply;
- pots used to catch rock lobster have specific escape gap requirements – see above;
- species specific pots (cod pots, crab pots etc) can be used. They are exempt from escape gap requirements but all other requirements (such as marking and pot limits) remain.

Closed and restricted areas

Restricted areas

Restricted areas are areas where the use of particular fishing methods (e.g. set nets) is restricted or where catch limits may be different. Some restricted areas are listed below. However, these are only a guide. Check for local restrictions and recent closures by contacting your local FNZ office.

Scallops: Scallop fishing is closed until further notice.

Blue cod restricted areas

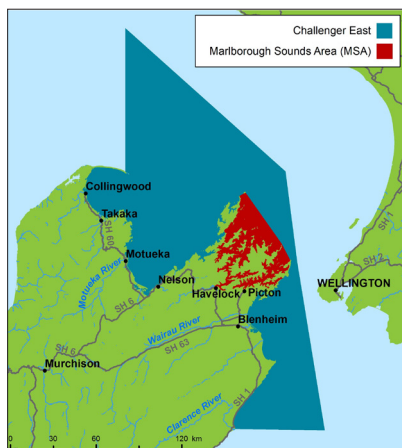
Map 1: Challenger East Area (includes Marlborough Sounds Area):

Daily limit: 2 per fisher. **Size limit:** 33cm minimum.

Closed season (Marlborough Sounds Area only)

1 September – 19 December inclusive every year.

You can possess up to 4 blue cod in the Challenger East Area if you can prove that no more than 2 blue cod were taken on any one day from the Challenger East Area.



Map 1: Challenger East and Marlborough Sounds Area

Challenger East only

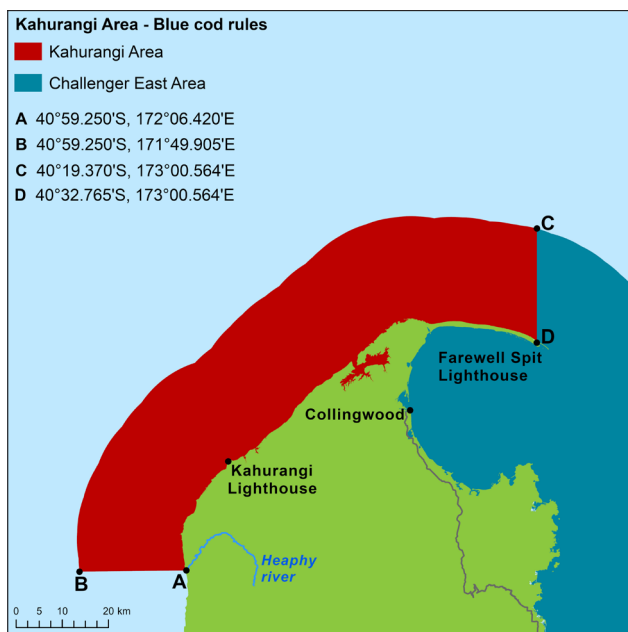
During the closed Marlborough Sounds season, you may transport blue cod from other areas into the Marlborough Sounds as long as you can prove where the fish were taken from.

When fishing in the Marlborough Sounds Area, use no more than 2 hooks per fishing line when fishing for any finfish species (excluding longlines).

Map 2: Challenger Kahurangi Area

Daily limit: 10 per fisher. **Size limit:** 33cm minimum.

You can possess up to 20 blue cod in the Challenger Kahurangi Area if you can prove that no more than 10 blue cod were taken on any one day.



Map 2: Challenger Kahurangi Area

Both areas – Challenger Kahurangi and Challenger East

- Must be landed whole or gutted only. Do not cut the throat or sever the spine.
- Blue cod cannot be filleted at sea unless you eat them immediately. Any blue cod eaten form part of your daily limit.
- Fishers staying at baches and aboard vessels are not exempt from these regulations and may only land or transport by sea, whole or gutted blue cod on any one day.

Set net restrictions

Map 3: Set netting is totally prohibited from Farewell Spit to Cape Soucis and from Cape Jackson to the Clarence River (extends out to four nautical miles and includes the entire Queen Charlotte Sound, Tory Channel, Port Underwood, Cloudy Bay, Clifford Bay, and Cape Campbell areas).

Set netting is totally prohibited on the West Coast from Farewell Spit to Awarua Point (extends out to two nautical miles). Check the regulations for co-ordinates.



- **Exemption:** Queen Charlotte Sound from inside a line from West Head Point (Ruakaka Bay) to Deiffenbach Point – refer to the red area on **Map 4**. Applies between 1 April and 30 September for Flatfish set nets only (a net that is 9 meshes deep or less, is anchored at each end, does not exceed a total length of 60 metres, has a mesh size greater or equal to 100mm and a monofilament diameter less than 0.35mm).
- **Exemption:** East Coast. Fishers must stay with their nets at all times and set no more than 200m from shore, between Cape Jackson and Rarangi Port Underwood and then Cape Campbell to Needles Point between 1 January – 30 April inclusive. (See purple line on **Map 4 page 16**).

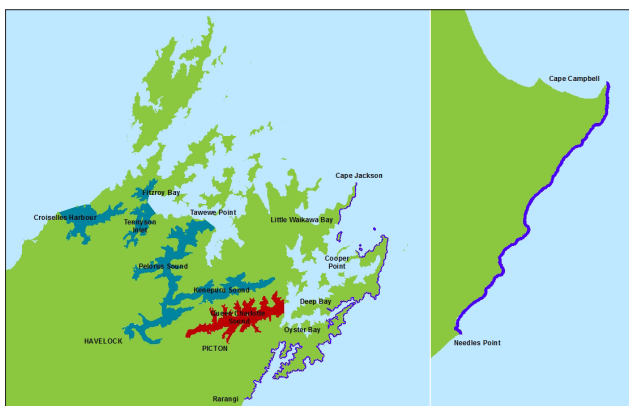
Map 4: Set netting may only be undertaken using set nets with a net mesh size greater than or equal to 100mm which do not exceed nine meshes in height and must be set in direct contact with the seabed. These restrictions apply to the following (all blue areas on **Map 4**):

Pelorus Sound: inside a line from Tawero Point to Opani-Aputa Point.

Tennyson Inlet and Hallam Cove: inside a line from Sheep Point to Camel Point to Cregoe Point.

Croisilles Harbour: inside a line from Cape Soucis, outside the Islands to Kakaho Point.

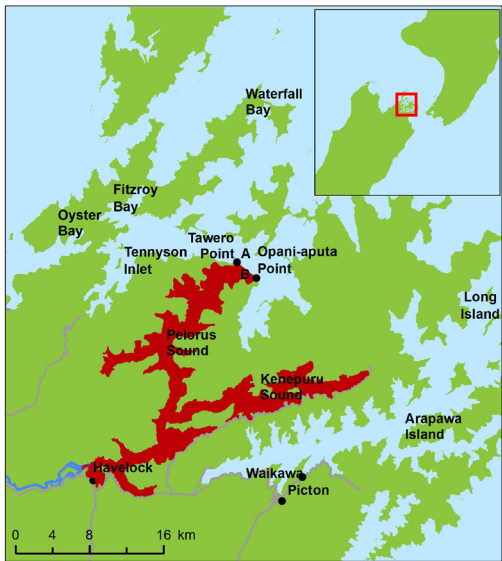
Within Kenepuru Sound: set netting is totally prohibited from 1 October to 31 March inclusive.



Map 4: Set net restricted areas

Set line restricted areas

Map 5: Possession and use of set lines is prohibited in Pelorus Sound inside a line from Tawero Point to Opani-Aputa Point and in Kenepuru Sound.



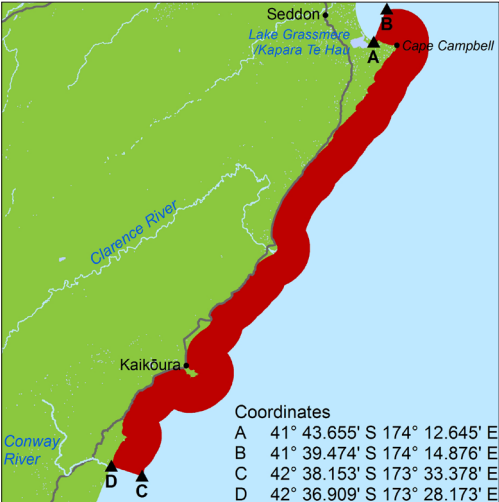
Map 5: Set line restricted areas

Closed areas

Closed areas are areas where no fishing is allowed. These may be closed by FNZ as prohibited areas or by the Department of Conservation (DOC) as marine reserves. For full details of marine reserves contact DOC.

Kaikōura earthquake shellfish closure

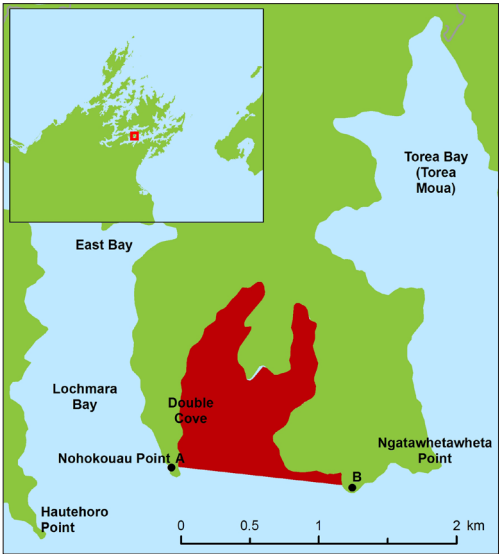
Map 6: The area from Marfells Beach to the Conway River is closed to the taking of shellfish and seaweed species (excluding rock lobster and scampi). This closure is necessary for the area to recover from the Kaikōura earthquake in 2016.



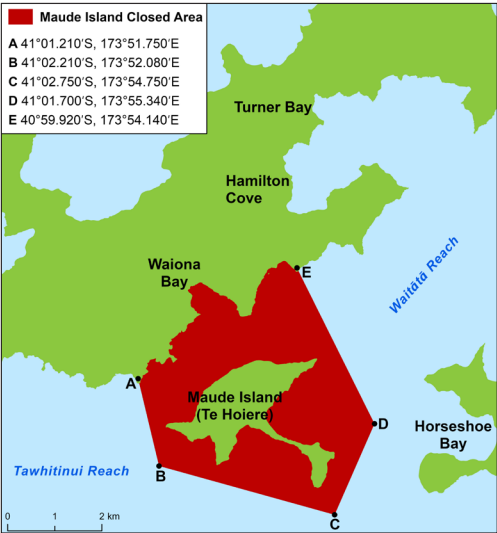
Map 6: Marfells Beach to Conway River closed area

Double Cove and Maud Island closed area

Closed year round. No finfish of any species can be taken.

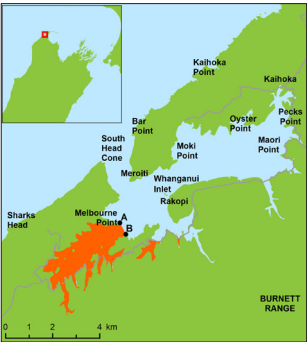


Double Cove finfish closed area

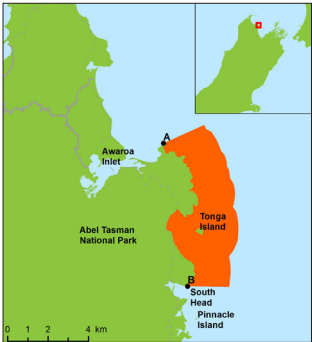


Maude Island closed area

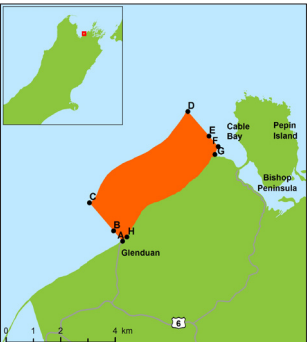
Marine Reserves: Whanganui/Westhaven, Tonga Island, Horoirangi, Long Island.



Westhaven Inlet Marine Reserve



Tonga Island Marine Reserve



Horoirangi Marine Reserve



Long Island Marine Reserve

Poacher prevention

Fisheries New Zealand's Compliance Team is responsible for protecting local fisheries and stopping illegal activities such as poaching.

If you see people acting illegally, taking more than their daily limit or undersized fish or selling or trading their catch, please report it. Any information provided stays completely confidential.

**Report poaching, suspicious or illegal activity
– call 0800 4 POACHER (0800 476 224).**

New Zealand's fishing rules at your fingertips

This brochure is a summary of the recreational fishing rules for the Challenger Fishery Management Area (East and Kahurangi areas). It is a guide only and may not include all local restrictions and rules or any changes made since it was printed. To keep up to date, check the rules each time you fish. It is illegal to sell or trade your catch.

Check the rules

Check the rules using our FREE app

Download our free NZ Fishing Rules app by scanning the QR code or visiting the app store. The app works even when you have no coverage.



Other services

- Free text the name of the species you are fishing for (e.g. “kahawai” or “kina”) to **9889** and receive a text with the legal size and bag limit.
- Visit www.fisheries.govt.nz/rules
- Email recreationalfisheries@mpi.govt.nz to subscribe to fishing related updates in your area.
- Follow us on Facebook



MPI Fisheries – Northland
MPI Fisheries – East Cape/Bay of Plenty
MPI Fisheries – Nelson/Marlborough/Kaikōura
MPI Fisheries – Canterbury/Westland
MPI Fisheries – Ōtago/Southland

Contact us 0800 00 83 33