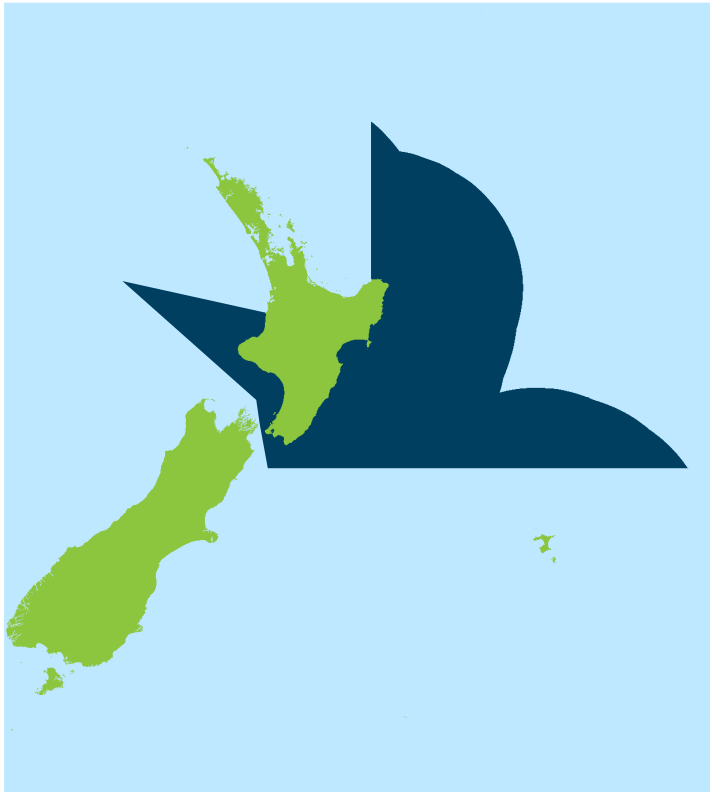




Recreational Fishing Rules CENTRAL

Effective from: September 2023 (subject to change without notice).



WANT THE RULES ON YOUR PHONE?

Use our free-text service.

Download our free smartphone app.

Check the back of the brochure for details.



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.

Tulafono mo Fagotaga i Niu Sila

Afai o e fagotaina po'o e aoina foi figota o le sami e tatau ona e silafia tulafono nei mo fagotaga i Niu Sila. Afai e le mafai ona e faitauina i le Gagana Peretania faamolemole faafesoota'i sē tasi e mafai ona ia faaliliuina mo oe.

O tulafono e aofia ai: le ituaiga ma le lapo'a o i'a e mafai ona e taofiina, o fea e mafai ona e fagota ai, ma le aofa'i o i'a e mafai ona e taofia.

E matua'i faasaina faaetulafono lou faatauina atu o i'a mo ni tupe maua po o se pōlōfiti.

O le lē usita'ia mai o tulafono nei e o'o ina molia ai oe, sala tupe ma aveesea faamalosi au mea totino. O le tausisi i tulafono ma fagota ma le faautauta lelei, e fesoasoani lea i le faamautūina o i'a mo le asō, taeao ma autupulaga o le lumana'i.

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 kolooa '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.

Finfish

Daily limits and size restrictions

In the Central FMA 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. Remember there may be local restrictions or area closures, check the 'Closed and Restricted Areas' section.

*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 daily limits within the combined daily limit

Finfish Species	Max daily limit per active fisher	Min fish length (cm)	Min net mesh size (mm)
Blue cod – Taranaki to Titahi Bay**	10	33 landed whole or gutted only	–
Blue cod – Titahi Bay to Cape Runaway**	20	33 landed whole or gutted only	–
Bluenose	5	–	160
Groper (Hapuku)/Bass***	2	–	160
Kingfish	3	75	100
Quinnat salmon	4	–	–
Snapper	10	27	100
Southern bluefin tuna	1	–	100

** Minimum pot mesh size for targeting blue cod is now 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.

*** The recreational accumulation limit for Groper (Hapuku)/Bass is no more than 3 per fisher when taken over two days or more.

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 (except Sand flounder)	25	100
Grey mullet	–	100
John dory	–	100
Kahawai	–	100
Red cod	25	100
Red gurnard	25	100
Red moki	40	115
Rig	–	150
Sand flounder	23	100
School shark	–	150
Tarakihi	25	100
Trevally	25	100
Trumpeter	35	100
All other finfish	–	100

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

Measuring finfish

Finfish length is measured from the tip of the nose to the middle ray or 'V' in the tail.



Finfish Restrictions

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;
- surface floats attached to any line must be marked clearly, legibly and permanently with the fisher's initials and surname. A phone number is also useful.

Eels

No person shall take any eels from Lake Horowhenua or the Hokio Stream unless that person does so in exercise of fishing rights pursuant to Section 18 of The Reserves and Other Lands Disposal Act 1956.

Netting restrictions

There are rules relating to the use of nets, please refer to the App, website, or your nearest MPI office for a copy of the netting brochure.

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.

Remember there may be local restrictions or area closures, check the ‘Closed and Restricted Areas’ section.

The Central FMA limits for taking and possessing shellfish are listed below.

Shellfish Species	Max daily limit per gatherer	Minimum size (mm)
Cockles	150	none
Kina (sea eggs)	50	none
Mussels	50	none
Oysters – Dredge*	50	58
– Rock & Pacific†	250	none
Pāua – Ordinary blackfoot*	5	125/85**
– Yellow foot*	5	80
Pipi	150	none
Scallops – Central +	20	100
Toheroa#	Prohibited	Prohibited
Tuatua	150	none
All others (combined) •	50	none

* Dredge oyster, pāua and scallop must be landed in the shell and cannot be shucked or shelled seaward of the mean high water mark. This does not include dredge oysters and scallops shucked onboard the vessel for immediate consumption within daily bag limits. A person may not possess outside the Amateur Taranaki pāua fishery area (any ordinary pāua that is less than 125mm in length taken from that area).

- ** Minimum size of ordinary pāua is 85 mm within the Taranaki pāua fishery area.
- † Rock oysters and pacific oysters must not be opened while they adhere to the object on which they grow.
- # Toheroa must not be taken, possessed, or disturbed unless an open season is declared by the Director-General of MPI.
- + Limited provision allows a diver on a vessel to gather extra bag limits of oysters and scallops for up to two other people acting in a dive safety capacity from that vessel. The safety people must be on-board the vessel, and acting in that capacity, when the diving is undertaken. If only one safety person is on-board the vessel, only one extra bag limit may be taken. A maximum of two extra bag limits may be taken per vessel, regardless of the number of people diving.
- 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 (koura).

Shellfish must be landed in a measureable state

All shellfish to which a minimum size restriction applies (including pāua, scallops 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 and scallops may be opened for immediate consumption on board the vessel. Any scallops and dredge oysters eaten form part of your daily limit. Any scallops and dredge oysters not eaten must be landed in the shell.

Pāua accumulation limits

When daily limits are accumulated the maximum number or amount of pāua that one person can have in their possession at any one time is:

- 20 pāua or;
- shucked weight (shell removed) of 2.5kgs of pāua;
- 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.

Scallops: measure the greatest diameter of the shell.

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

Open season for scallops: 15 July to 14 February inclusive.

Shellfish Restrictions

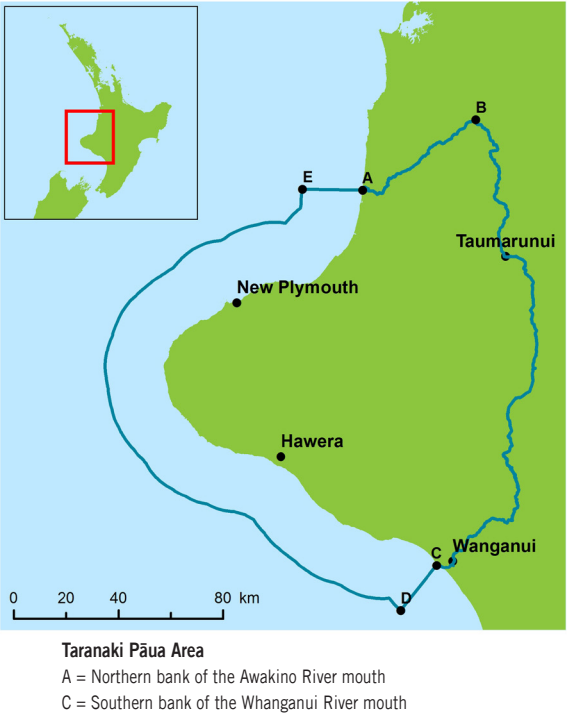
Underwater breathing apparatus (UBA)

- 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.

Taranaki pāua area

Within the Taranaki pāua area, ordinary pāua must be at least 85mm.

Outside of the Taranaki area, ordinary pāua must be at least 125mm.



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 ‘Rock Lobster’;
- 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.



Rock lobster

Daily bag limits

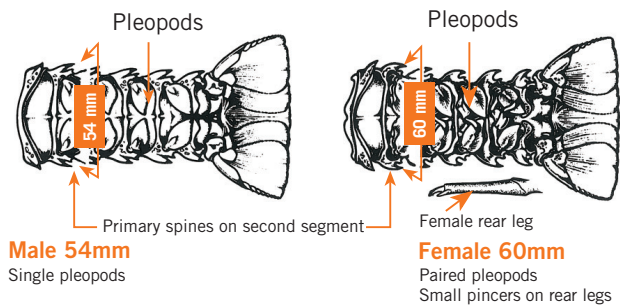
No person may take or possess more than six rock lobster (both species combined) with no more than three spiny rock red lobster per day in East Coast CRA2.

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

Spiny rock lobster minimum size

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

If you are unsure of the sex, use the 60mm measurement.



Packhorse lobster minimum size

Measure the tail length along the underside in a straight line from the rear of the calcified bar on the first segment to the tip of the middle fan of the tail.

Must have a tail length of at least 216mm (male and female).



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).

General restrictions

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

- only hand operated loops or lassos may be used. Spring loaded loop 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.

Telson clipping (applies to CRA2 East Coast area only)

Spiny red 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.

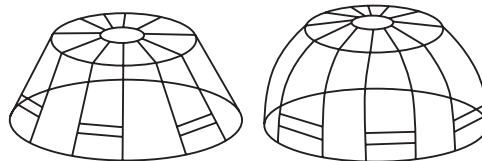
One-third of the central telson has been cut off.



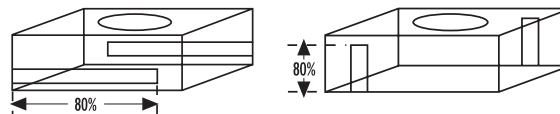
Rock lobster pots

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 2 opposite sides.

Closures and Restrictions

Mātaaitai Reserves

Mātaaitai Reserves are areas where tangata whenua manage non-commercial fishing through bylaws. Bylaws apply equally to all individuals. Reserves can only be applied to traditional fishing grounds which are of special significance to tangata whenua. Generally, there is no commercial fishing within these reserves. There are a number of Mātaaitai Reserves in the Central Area. For further information on please contact your nearest MPI Fisheries Compliance Office, or visit www.mpi.govt.nz.

Restricted areas

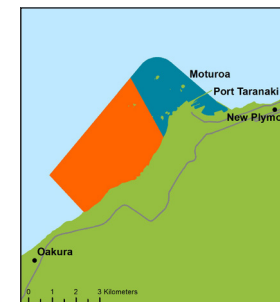
Restricted areas are areas where the use of particular fishing methods (e.g. set nets) is restricted or where catch limits may be different. Some restricted areas in the Central FMA are listed below. However, these are only a guide. Check for local restrictions and recent closures by contacting your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

Map 1: Pukerua Bay handlines only to be used. The taking of shellfish, aquatic life, seaweed and the taking of fish except by hand-held lines is prohibited.

Map 2: Tapuae Marine Reserve (orange) closed to all fishing and hand gathering. Ngā Motu/Sugar Loaf Islands Marine Protected Area. Lines with three hooks or less may be used.



Map 1: Pukerua Bay



Map 2: Tapuae Marine Reserve and Protected Area

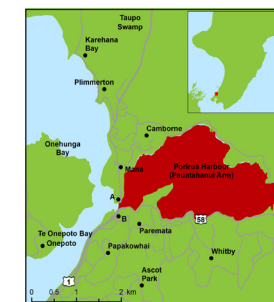
Net Restrictions

Map 3: Netting is banned in Pauatahanui inlet.

Map 4: Netting is banned around Cape Runaway

Map 5: Wairoa Hard closed to all nets.

Map 6: Net restrictions extend around Taranaki from Pariokariwa Point South to Hawera then from Pariokariwa Point south to the Waiwhakaiho River between two and seven nautical miles offshore. Closure out to seven nautical miles extends north to Maunganui Bluff. Restrictions also extend for four Nautical miles offshore from Hawera south to the Wellington Harbour entrance.



Map 3: Pauatahanui Inlet



Map 4: Cape Runaway



Map 5: Wairoa Hard closed to all nets



Map 6: Wellington Harbour entrance to Pariokariwa Point set net restrictions.

Closed areas

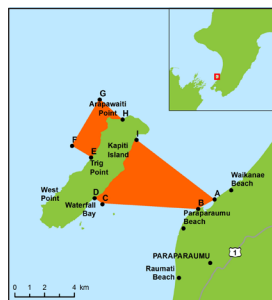
Closed areas are areas where no fishing is allowed. These may be closed by MPI as prohibited areas or by the Department of Conservation (DOC) as marine reserves. For full details of marine reserves contact DOC.



Te Tapuwae O Rongokako Marine Reserve



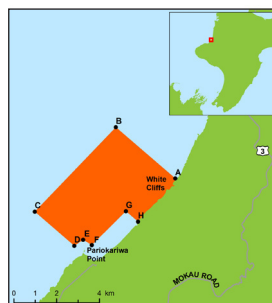
Te Angiangi Marine Reserve



Kapiti Marine Reserve



Taputeranga Marine Reserve



Parinihi Marine Reserve

Poacher Prevention

MPI's Fisheries 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 (800 476 224).

New Zealand's Fishing Rules at your Fingertips

This brochure is a summary of the recreational fishing rules for the Central Management Area (FMA). 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 snapper) to **9889** and receive a text with the legal size and bag limit.
- Visit www.fisheries.govt.nz/rules
- Email recfishingteam@mpi.govt.nz to subscribe to fishing related updates in your area.
- Follow us on Facebook



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Contact us 0800 00 83 33