

**Council of Outdoor Recreation Associations of NZ  
P O Box 1876  
Wellington**

**17 April 2008**

To [tracey.steel@fish.govt.nz](mailto:tracey.steel@fish.govt.nz)

**Submissions on Ministry of Fisheries Proposals for Blue Cod  
in the Marlborough Sounds**

**Introduction:** The Council of Outdoor Recreation Associations (CORANZ) is an apolitical, coalition of outdoor recreational national bodies, working together to identify and protect the common basic values of outdoor recreation for all New Zealanders. Among its members/affiliates are saltwater fishing interests.

CORANZ's Election Charter states:- **2.5.3 Recognise and Protect the Public Recreational/Sustenance Sea Fishery:** *All citizens have a priority right over commercial fishers for free access to a reasonable daily bag limit, this to be written into legislation. Require by law effective plans to ensure future generations enjoy the same or better quality of recreational/sustenance rights while preventing fish conserved for recreational/sustenance use being given to the commercial sector. Give full recognition to and protection of the public's right to the recreational/sustenance sea fishery. (ie Moyle Report 1987).*

**Submission:-**

CORANZ does not support the proposals put forward by the Ministry of Fisheries.

There has been inadequate consultation with no public meetings held by the Ministry, the research on which proposals are based is also inadequate and the measures proposed are impractical both for compliance and from the public recreational fishing

There is doubt that the blue cod fishery is in a crisis stage. Closed areas are not blue cod environment (i.e. rocky reef areas) and large, mainly sandy, bays like Tennyson Inlet and inner Queen Charlotte Sound are snapper, tarakahi, gurnard, flounder territory. Closing these areas will be of no benefit to blue cod and will unfairly bar those focusing on snapper, tarakihi etc.,

Therefore proposals to close areas like Tennyson Inlet, the Grove Arm and many areas of the Queen Charlotte Sound, are seemingly oblivious that it is not favoured blue cod habitat.

Many of the closures will not benefit blue cod.

It is necessary to look at Marlborough's blue cod population in its entirety. Along Marlborough's east coast is probably where the Sounds' cod spawn. Eggs are then carried northwards, by the prevailing current, into the Sounds. Because of the importance to the Sounds of this area, the Ministry would be achieving more by banning cod potting by commercial fishers as has occurred in the last year or two. These potters from Otago have caught 17 tonne in less than a fortnight. This is some 15,000 valuable breeding stock.

The claim of a 159 tonnes recreational catch is very suspect by its methodology, of counting boats at holiday time from the air, assuming all were fishing and using that.

CORANZ is surprised that the Ministry before now has not seen fit to designate a Recreational Management zone. This policy of recreational fishing zones is in CORANZ Charter clause 2.5.5. Such a zone needs practical definition and it should include all of D'Urville Island (currently the west side is exempt) and be far enough out in the Cook Strait to take in all outlying rocks and islands such as The Brothers. Thence the boundary could run to Cape Campbell.

The proposed reduction in bag limit to 2, is not justified and is unfair because the 20-bag limit exists in Cook Strait. CORANZ advocates a six (6) blue cod for the greater Sounds and Cook Strait area.

There are many other propose measures that fall well short of fairness and reality. The limit of 6 cod per boat irrespective of number of people aboard is a case in point. Each angler has a right by law to 3 cod (current dbl). Prohibiting hooks smaller than 6/0 is impractical since other species such as snapper, tarakihi, flounder and the humble spotty caught by the kid off a jetty require smaller hooks. Instead circle hooks with their lip-hooking characteristic are far more practical and effective.

CORANZ advocates promotion of ethical practices by way of strong education rather than a plethora of regulations and rules.

Changes in recreational bag limit (i.e. downwards) must be matched by a reduction in commercial quota. Too often in the past, the ministry has failed the Act by cutting back recreational and leaving commercial catches unchanged.

The Fisheries Act. Section 21 says the Minister/Ministry must give just consideration to the recreational sector as affirmed by the "Colin Moyle Promise." The high court decision over The Kahawai Legal Challenge confirmed this obligation.

**Dr Hugh Barr,  
Secretary, CORANZ**