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**Hon Jim Anderton**

## **Minister to consider kahawai fishery decision**

The Judge's findings in the kahawai court case mean decisions around catch limits and allocations in the kahawai fishery may have to be reconsidered.

The recent court case arose because both recreational and commercial fishers were unhappy about how the previous Minister of Fisheries set catch levels for kahawai in 2004 and 2005.

Much of the hearings have been taken up with issues of procedure and information, but the heart of the issue has always been the question of "who gets the fish?"

"There has been a lot of passion around this case, with both groups of fishers challenging the previous Minister's decisions," Jim Anderton said. "The judge's ruling is that the catch limits and allocations made for kahawai will have to be reconsidered.

"I've requested advice from my Ministry of Fisheries and Crown Law on the implications of the judge's ruling and the options before the government for future courses of action. I expect this advice within the next few days, and then I will consult with my Cabinet colleagues on the way forward.

"The government is currently considering submissions on new Shared Fisheries policies that should spell out how fisheries that are important to recreational, customary and commercial fishers should be handled. This court decision should focus attention on how important this current consultation really is.

"The challenge before us is to manage these fisheries in a way that ensures all New Zealanders get as much value as possible from them; not only for today, but into the future as well," Jim Anderton said.