



Reopening the Kaikōura pāua fishery – have your say!

MPI is seeking public feedback on the [Kaikōura Marine Guardians' recommendations](#) to reopen the Kaikōura pāua fishery. The Kaikōura Boating and Recreational Fishing Club lobby to preserve and enhance recreational fishing opportunities for our 458 Club members. In the first consultation (run by Te Korowai in 2020) [our submission](#) was counted as just one person, and our views were considered a minority by the Kaikōura Marine Guardians.

In this final MPI consultation round, the Club, therefore, needs its members to individually email a submission to FMSubmissions@mpi.govt.nz by **5 pm on 5 July 2021** with "Kaikōura Pāua Fishery Consultation" as the subject. The main points of our Club Committee's response to the [Kaikōura Marine Guardians' recommendations](#) are outlined below.

1. Do you support reopening the Kaikōura Marine Area (Clarence River to the Conway River) to pāua fishing?

Yes. The latest scientific information available shows pāua are now at very high levels of abundance and the complete life cycle has been observed, "*i.e., there is widespread emergence of post-earthquake recruits and a sustained increase in biomass observed across the fishery*" ([New Zealand Fisheries Assessment Report 2021/26](#), page 17).

2. Should this reopening extend further north from Cape Campbell/Marfells Beach to the Conway River? **Yes.**

The "*overall increase in pāua abundance is at a Quota Management Area-wide level in both QMAs,*" and the "*increased abundance was generally more pronounced in PAU 7*" ([New Zealand Fisheries Assessment Report 2021/26](#), page 1).

3. If the fishery is reopened, do you support the following proposed management measures for the recreational fishery:

a) an annual 1 December to 1 March fishing season? **No.** It is more sensible to close the fishery during the local reproductive season, mainly from June to August. A three-month closure over the spawning season is more justifiable and much less extreme than restricting access to just a three-month open season.

b) a lower daily limit of three pāua? **No.** Pāua stocks are currently at extremely high levels of abundance, and permanently slashing the recreational daily bag limit from six to three pāua per person is not justified by any scientific information or reasonable concerns about sustainability! There is also no equivalent proposed permanent reduction in the more extensive commercial pāua fishery, which is already considering "*the mechanism for how commercial catch limits are re-established because this will be through the release of shelving rather than the assignment of a new Total Allowable Commercial Catch*" ([New Zealand Fisheries Assessment Report 2021/26](#), page 15).

c) an accumulation limit of six pāua per person? **No.** If there is to be a closed season, people should have the opportunity to store pāua over that time.

d) vehicle and vessel limits? **Yes.** A vehicle limit would discourage overexploitation of pāua close to the shore where the Kaikōura Marine Guardians are especially concerned about a possible "goldrush".

e) a larger minimum legal-size limit of 130mm in shell length for black-foot pāua? **No,** it should remain at 125mm. Pāua have no blood clotting agent (*i.e., are hemophiliacs*) and highly prone to release mortality if cut when removed from rocks. A higher size limit will only exacerbate release mortality in the recreational fishery.

4. Are there any other measures you would like us to consider on the proposal to reopen the Kaikōura Marine Area/extended area to fishing? This could include reopening the kina fishery.

The Kaikōura Boating and Recreational Fishing Club Committee support reopening the kina fishery, the recommendations made in the Management Implications of the [New Zealand Fisheries Assessment Report 2021/26](#), and an independent recreational fishing survey in Kaikōura to estimate the recreational pāua catch if the fishery reopens.