

26 July 2010

To: trudie.macfarlane@fish.govt.nz

Hello Trudie

The Kaikoura Boating Club is strongly opposed to any increase in HPB3 TACC.

We have started a survey of all our members, but are a long way from completing it - we have 439 members, and it is taking about 10 minutes per member.

Preliminary results are unanimous that there be no increase in commercial tonnage. This accords with the unanimous vote at our last committee meeting.

Those members who do catch Hapuku report decreases in both size and abundance.

Just to put this in context, we also asked members about other species (BCO, KAH, CRA, PAU, & SPE) and there was unanimous agreement that CRA abundance and size are increasing. Management of CRA5 appears to be working well - all credit to CRAMAC5.

We will continue our survey, and the results will be available later if you wish access to them.

Hapuku were once abundant here. Large hapuku could be caught from the shore, and the shore angling club had a trophy for the largest hapuku. That trophy has been unclaimed for about 20 years.

In the last 10 years I have only caught one mature hapuku (over 20Kg). Most hapuku caught are just school fish - which are running at present.

One of the respondents to our questionnaire noted that the only hapuku he had caught was off a charter vessel, he had not caught any off his own vessel.

Hapuku appear to us to be a species that has been massively over fished, such that there are very few mature animals left in this area, though still reasonable numbers of juveniles passing through from elsewhere. Very few survive long with the combination of commercial and recreational pressure to catch them.

The economic value derived by recreational fishers (dollars spent per Kg of Hapuku) appears to us to be far in excess of any commercial return.

It seems to us that the overcatch and the deemed values associated with it is an artifact of the loss of ownership of quota locally.

The catch of HPB3 in the Kaikoura area has been remarkably stable since the inception of the QMS. What has changed significantly is the ownership of that quota.

Initially it was about 80T owned by Kaikoura locals, and now that is down to just over 36T, with Kaikoura Catch still being around 140T, with about 10% of that being deemed value last season.

There are many dynamics involved in this complex situation, and it is certainly not in the interests of recreational fishers to have any increase in commercial quotas.

If one translates the TACC of 335,100 Kg into fish weighing 10Kg each (very small juvenile hapuku) then it

is only 33,510 individual fish. There are probably at least 100,000 anglers who try to catch a hapuku at least once a year. Some few are very successful, most are not.

Our advice is to reduce the allowable commercial catch of HPB3, to allow a few more to grow to adulthood.

Ted Howard
President - Kaikoura Boating Club
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