

New Zealand Big Game Fishing Council

(Incorporated)

Patron:

President: J A Romeril

Secretary: R T Nelson



PO Box 93

Whangarei

Phone: 09 433 9648

Fax: 09 433 9640

Email:

nzbgfc@bordnet.net.co.nz

Website: www.nzbgfc.org.nz

4th May 2007

Honorable Jim Anderton
Minister of Fisheries
Parliament Building
WELLINGTON

Dear Minister

I wrote to you on 28th February regarding “The People’s Submission” and the endorsement of that submission by the Management Committee of the NZBGFC. We have now had time to get feed-back from our member clubs and I can report that “The People’s Submission document” has been fully ratified by our membership.

The NZBGFC has a national management structure that represents its membership. The delegates from fishing clubs in each region meet regularly at one of the 8 zone meetings (1 in the South Island, 7 in the North Island). Each Zone has a representative on the Management Committee which meets 5 times a year. Over 100 club delegates from 60 clubs attended last year’s AGM in Whitianga which you kindly attended.

Ratification of submissions by the NZBGFC is not normally a process that goes beyond the Management Committee or zone meetings. However, given the Shared Fisheries Policy and the work put into the Peoples Submission, it was decided that all affiliated clubs should be aware of what we submitted on their behalf. Each club committee was asked individually to endorse the Peoples Submission. This has been completed and all replies were fully supportive.

On a related matter I am aware that you were given a joint letter on the 19th April from SeaFIC, Te Ohu Kaimoana and the NZ Recreational Fishing Council regarding making progress on Shared Fisheries. This letter gives me cause for concern because it implies it has the support of all recreational representative groups and in particular the NZBGFC. While the NZBGFC were active in the preliminary discussion leading to the proposal we did not give our support to the proposal presented to you, nor was there any process to gain our agreement for the NZRFC to speak/act on our behalf on the proposal. The proposal has merit but needs to address fundamental representation issues.

Minister, there appears to be a misunderstanding with the authors of the 19th April proposal letter of the relationship the NZBGFC have with the NZRFC and their ability to quote our support. While we are a national affiliate of the NZRFC we do not accept them as the sole umbrella organization of all recreational fishers. The NZBGFC view the NZRFC as being too under resourced financially, with insufficient technical expertise and structurally inept to carry out this function. They have not enjoyed the full confidence of the NZBGFC membership for some time. This is why we have consistently provided our own advice and quality submissions on behalf of our 32,000 membership directly to the appropriate authority.

I believe it is important that you understand this relationship between the NZBGFC and NZRFC as we move forward with the shared fisheries issue. We do not claim to represent anyone other than our membership but we do participate and form strong alliances with like minded groups that have similar aims such as the Hokianga Accord and option4. Our long term relationship with the NZRFC has been difficult as we try to come to grips with their claimed mandate to speak for recreational groups and the general fishing public without conferring with them. Having said that a number of our clubs have also specifically indicated their own support of the NZRFC shared fisheries submission.

As we move forward the NZBGFC fully supports your shared fisheries initiative and look forward to the development of regulations that help resolve shared fisheries issues between commercial, non commercial fishers and ministry officials. We are cautious though on the need for legislation change to the current Act due to risks involved once this process is started and believe that the current Act, properly administered, is capable of delivering outcomes desired by our members.

I hope this letter clarifies the NZBGFC position with shared fisheries and look forward to moving ahead with the next phase.

Yours sincerely

Jeff Romeril
PRESIDENT

cc
CEO MFish
President NZRFC
Chairman Hokianga Accord
option4.co.nz
SeaFic
Te Ohu Kaimoana
shared.fisheries@fish.govt.nz
Management Committee