

# RECREATIONAL FISHING MINISTERIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 16 FEBRUARY 2006

9 am – 4 pm Pastoral House, Wellington

### **Present:**

Jim Anderton, Minister of Fisheries (Chair, morning)  
John Glaister, Chief Executive, Ministry of Fisheries (Chair, afternoon)  
Peter Ellery  
Sheryl Hart  
Max Hetherington  
Lorraine Hill  
Bob Meikle  
Geoff Rowling  
Kim Walshe

### **In attendance:**

James Palmer, Senior advisor, Office of Jim Anderton  
Mark Edwards, Manager Fisheries Policy, Ministry of Fisheries  
Lindie Nelson, Senior policy analyst, Ministry of Fisheries  
Robin Connor, Senior policy analyst, Ministry of Fisheries

### **Agenda item 1: Welcome and introductions**

The Minister of Fisheries, Jim Anderton, welcomed the Committee members to the second meeting of the Recreational Fishing Ministerial Advisory Committee. As Jim Anderton is the new Minister of Fisheries, a round of introductions was made. The Minister noted that the members were appointed for their experience—rather than as representatives of particular groups—and thanked them for their contribution.

### **Agenda item 2: Role and operation of the Committee**

The Minister reviewed and confirmed decisions made at the first meeting regarding the role and operating procedures for the Committee, including:

- The role of the committee is to discuss and advise on strategic, rather than operational, issues. It is not a decision-making body.
- The Minister will chair the meetings whenever available, and will endeavour to stay as long as possible at every meeting. In the Minister's absence, John Glaister will chair the meetings.
- Minutes will be taken, draft minutes will be circulated to members to correct errors, and, once approved by the Minister, the minutes will be posted on the MFish website

### **Confirmed:**

- Role and operating procedures agreed at meeting of 8 August 2005.

### **Agenda item 3: Introduction to shared fisheries project**

The Minister introduced the shared fisheries project, noting that the project is working toward enacting legislative reforms by 2008, or sooner if possible.

The Minister noted that this is a key strategic initiative of importance to the recreational sector. He expressed his interest in exploring options for alternative ways to make fisheries management decisions, emphasising the need to move toward a more cooperative approach where all players accept that they will face some gains and some losses. The decision-making framework needs to be reasonable and credible.

The Minister expressed his view that the fisheries sector—both the recreational and commercial components—has a lot of potential for growth. However, he also noted that there are tight fiscal constraints, and the fisheries sector cannot realistically expect any substantial increase in fiscal resources.

The Minister requested the Committee's input on the issues and realistic options to move toward a better approach for managing shared fisheries. He noted his determination to have all the issues on the table. To start this process, John Glaister will be chairing a discussion on issues and options this afternoon.

### **Agenda item 4: Vision**

The Minister provided a brief introduction to the vision exercise, noting that a vision would form the foundation for future discussions on how it could be achieved. The Minister set the scene by suggesting that the vision should:

- be inspiring and realistic (that is, you could expect to achieve the vision and it takes account of constraints)
- focus on where the sector would like to be in 10 years time—a timeframe that is not constrained by current tools, but is not in the distant future
- be a statement that the RFMAC could endorse (but recognise that we will not reach that position today).

Three committee members tabled documents to assist in the vision discussion. Comments and suggestions were sought from all members. Notes of the discussion were put up on the whiteboard. Themes emerging from the discussion included a recreational fishery that is recognised for its contribution to New Zealand and has strong public support, recreational fishers having a significant role in management decision making, and using fisheries in a sustainable manner with due regard to the needs and aspirations of other users.

### **Agreed**

- A draft vision will be prepared based on the discussion, and circulated to committee members for comment
- Draft vision is to be discussed at next meeting

## Agenda item 5: Issues and options for shared fisheries project

Mark Edwards described the scope of the shared fisheries project, noting that it does not include non-extractive use of fisheries and that the emerging framework must be cognisant of constraints set by Cabinet:

- Avoid undermining the Fisheries Deed of Settlement
- Recognise the legitimacy of other stakeholder rights
- Operate within fiscal constraints and rules
- Not compromise sustainability of fisheries
- Be consistent with outcomes of Oceans Policy and Biodiversity Strategy.

Robin Connor outlined the timeline for the shared fisheries project, and the following key issues to be addressed by the project:

- TAC setting
- allocation of the TAC
- more accessible management tools to enhance non-commercial values
- management measures to avoid overcatch, and
- information.

John Glaister clarified that MFish will be preparing, and consulting on, proposals to improve the management of shared fisheries. The role of the RFMAC is as an important 'sounding board' in identifying the issues and developing the proposals. The RFMAC will not be held accountable for what MFish produces.

John Glaister then sought comments from Committee members in the issues raised and on what is missing. In relation to the issues raised the following points were made:

### *TAC allocation*

- Fisheries such as SNA7 are making a recovery with consequential increases in recreational take—this should be allowed for.
- Total recreational take increases with population size, fish stock size, and technology.
- Illegal take is the biggest problem in some fisheries: shared fisheries project needs to comment on 'other sources of mortality'.
- The key issue is **how** the TACC/allowance is set: the recreational sector is not prepared to accept a 'line in the sand' without allowing for a mechanism to adjust the line.
- Could use trigger points such as population trends to prescribe a change in allocation.
- In moving towards proportionality, should first set the desired shares, then work out the process to get there.
- Where it is clear that one sector has caused a problem, that sector should bear the cost (rather than distributing the burden proportionally).

### *Management tools to enhance non-commercial values*

- S311 is an inadequate tool to provide for finer scale management. The onus of proof falls on the sector with the least resources.
- 90% of the problems are due to local depletion.
- Encourage iwi to use taiapure/mātaitai to lead management for the local community: uniquely New Zealand way of doing things.

### *Information*

- Absence of information on recreational take leads to poor management decisions.
- A recreational fisheries commission could be used to obtain voluntary information on recreational take.
- Need better information on economic value of recreational fishery.
- Need to balance the level of information we want with what we can afford to buy.

In relation to what is missing the following points were made:

### *Recreational sector capacity*

- Results rely on structure and personnel that are not there—the fishing clubs are interested in furthering fishing not fisheries management.
- Need a professional organisation that can contribute to management discussions (development of fisheries plans).
- Could establish a statutory basis for regional organisations with elected boards. Statutory recognition gives members confidence of the durability of the organisation.
- Funding options include membership fees, Crown matching funds, levies under Commodity Levies Act.
- Need positive incentives for fisher contribution. If the prospective level of government funding (and its associated management) was indicated, people would have an incentive to chip in to achieve better outcomes.
- Needs to be transparent about distribution of revenue.
- Could be driven by delivery of services such as consultation, communication (not enforcement). Government would define service delivery objectives and performance standards.
- Set up a 'pilot' organisation for a fishery or area. (There was debate as to whether a national approach or a pilot approach would work better. No agreement was reached.)
- Essential to have public support—this will take time.
- Need to foster more interaction between regional recreational forums and iwi forums.

### *Other points*

- The importance and value of recreational fishing should be better recognised by Government and MFish. Need more focus on valuation of recreational fishing.
- Need to define the recreational right.
- Need to communicate with other stakeholder groups—commercial and customary.

### *Option4 discussion paper*

Kim Walshe tabled a discussion paper by option4 on proportional allocation, noting that their major concerns are setting the initial shares, providing for the future, lack of credible management of commercial overfishing, and ability to manage stocks for a high biomass. Robin Connor noted that MFish has read this document and recognise the merit of some of the issues raised. The shared fisheries project will not rule out options to set and adjust shares.

It was suggested that a useful way forward would be to address the 11 essential issues identified in the August 2005 version of the option4 discussion document.

### **Agenda item 6: Other business**

During the course of the meeting the following additional items were raised.

#### *Engagement with recreational leaders*

A member of the Committee expressed his concern that leaders of option4 and the New Zealand Recreational Fishing Council may feel alienated from the RFMAC, and that it is important to engage with these people before the RFMAC seeks views on the vision or MFish consults on the shared fisheries project. John Glaister noted that the RFMAC is an advisory group—the focus is on experience rather than representation. However, he noted that he would be happy to meet with leaders from option4 and NZRFC to help build better relations with key groups.

#### *Membership of RFMAC*

One committee member suggested that the RFMAC should be increased by 1 or 2 members to involve key players in strategic discussions for the recreational sector. The Minister indicated his willingness to consider expanding the RFMAC based on strong merit.

#### *Recreational information*

John Glaister suggested that it would be useful to have Peter Todd (Fisheries Sciences, MFish) attend the next meeting to brief the Committee on recreational research and discuss how we can improve information.

#### *Background information*

Members of the Committee requested the following background information:

- the Report from the Fishery Assessment Plenary, May 2005 ('2005 Plenary report')
- material on the accountability structures under the Maori Fisheries Act 2004
- report on how other jurisdictions raise revenue to manage recreational fisheries.

#### **Agreed:**

- John Glaister to invite recreational leaders (Paul Barnes, Scott Macindoe, Keith Ingram, and Jeff Romeril – if available) to meet with senior officials (John Glaister, Stan Crothers).
- Include a report and discussion on recreational research at next meeting.
- Lindie Nelson to contact individual members to determine whether they would like to receive the 2005 Plenary report as a paper copy or CD.
- Robin Connor to distribute material on Maori Fisheries Act 2004.
- MFish to provide a report on how other jurisdictions raise revenue to manage recreational fisheries.

## Agenda item 7: Meeting close

John Glaister noted the progress made during the meeting, and that he would be reporting back to the Minister.

The next meeting will be in May 2006, with the following proposed agenda items

- Review/discuss draft vision
- Discuss options to address issues in shared fisheries
- Recreational research report and discussion

John Glaister thanked Committee members for their contribution and drew the meeting to a close.

## Summary of actions from RFMAC meeting of 16 February 2006

Action	Responsibility
Prepare a draft of the vision and circulate for comment	Lindie Nelson
Meet leaders of option4 and NZRFC	John Glaister
Include report on recreational research and information at next meeting	Emma Taylor/Peter Todd
Contact Committee members to determine the format in which they would like to receive 2005 plenary report	Lindie Nelson
Distribute material on Maori Fisheries Act 2004	Robin Connor
Report on revenue raising mechanisms in other jurisdictions	Lindie Nelson/Emma Taylor