

16 February 2007

To members of the Auckland east and west coast recreational fishing Forums

Reply to your request for extension to submission deadline for the shared fisheries proposals

The Minister of Fisheries has been invited to report back to Cabinet with a recommended policy framework for shared fisheries by June 2007. As part of this process Cabinet agreed that a four-month submission period be provided, with the deadline for submissions being set at 28 February 2007. The period from late October to late February was intended to provide sufficient time for a considered response from iwi and stakeholders.

The submission deadline reflects a very tight timeframe to complete the remaining steps of the policy reform (ie getting advice to Cabinet, having Cabinet make decisions, and enacting any legislative reforms by the end of this year).

While we appreciate the difficulty that some groups may face in getting a submission in by 28 February, the closing date for submissions cannot be extended without compromising the ability to meet the report back deadline set by Cabinet.

Nevertheless, we realise that some submissions are likely to be received after 28 February. Late submissions are unlikely to be included in the summary of submissions which must be prepared by the end of March. More importantly, the later a submission arrives, the less chance we will have to consider and evaluate any suggestions made.