



Office of Hon Phil Heatley

MP for Whangarei

Minister of Fisheries

Minister of Housing

30 June 2009

H0298

Dear Stakeholder

This letter outlines my final decisions in the review of the regulatory measures to extend the blue cod amateur fishery closures for Milford and Doubtful Sounds. These decisions were outlined in the initial position paper (IPP) that was distributed for submissions between February and March this year.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge all submissions received regarding this issue and I appreciate the time and effort taken by submitters to prepare submissions. The information within these submissions was valuable in my consideration for this proposal.

In reaching my final decision, I carefully considered the available information from the Ministry of Fisheries (MFish), and all of the issues and information put forward in submissions on each proposal within the review.

I also had careful regard to the relevant legislative provisions for each of the proposals within the review. A summary of the regulatory decisions is attached.

A copy of the MFish final advice paper (FAP) to me is available on the MFish website at <http://www.fish.govt.nz/en-nz/Consultations/Archive/2009/default>

Milford & Doubtful sounds – proposal to extend the blue cod amateur fishery closures

I have agreed to amend the Fisheries (Southland and Sub-Antarctic Areas Amateur Fishing) Regulations 1991 to extend the existing closures of Milford and Doubtful Sounds with no specified end date. This will maximise the opportunity for blue cod stocks in these areas to recover. These regulations will come into effect on 30 June 2009.

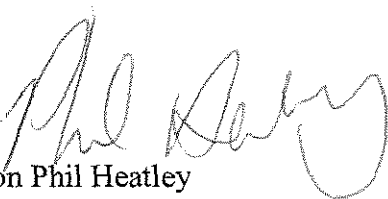
Although monitoring of blue cod stocks in Milford and Doubtful Sounds has been carried out since the summer of 2005/06, there is not yet evidence that the stocks are recovering. The areas are likely to be reopened whenever monitoring shows the stocks have either recovered sufficiently or will not improve further. Reopening the areas will probably be initiated by the Guardians, who are also likely to make recommendations on how blue cod should be managed in these areas.

I have also agreed to amend the Fisheries (Infringement Offences) Regulations 2001 to update a cross reference to reflect the amendments proposed above.

As Milford and Doubtful Sounds are the only ones that are accessible by road, while the closures continue, there will be reduced opportunities for recreational fishing for blue cod.

I would like to thank individual fishers and stakeholder groups for their huge input into the consultation process. This has provided me with valuable information on the fishery and users' values, and has assisted me in making my decisions.

Yours sincerely



Hon Phil Heatley
Minister of Fisheries