

**Office of Hon Parekura Horomia, M.P. for Ikaroa-Rawhiti**  
Minister of Māori Affairs  
Associate Minister of State Services  
Associate Minister of Education  
Associate Minister of Fisheries  
Associate Minister for Social Development and Employment

26 MAR 2008

Dear Stakeholder

### **Changes to the CRA 7 (Otago) and CRA 8 (Southland) Rock Lobster Fisheries for the 2008-09 Fishing Year**

The National Rock Lobster Management Group (NRLMG) is a national multi-stakeholder group comprising representatives from customary, recreational, and commercial fishing groups, environmental interests, and the Ministry of Fisheries (MFish). Since its formation in 1992, the NRLMG has been the primary source of advice to Ministers of Fisheries on New Zealand rock lobster fisheries.

On 12 December 2007, the NRLMG provided the Minister of Fisheries, Hon Jim Anderton, (Minister Anderton) with initial advice on rock lobster management interventions for the 2008-09 fishing year, beginning 1 April 2008. The NRLMG recommended that Minister Anderton:

- Adopt separate new management procedures to guide Total Allowable Catch (TAC) setting for CRA 7 and CRA 8; and
- Increase the TACs and Total Allowable Commercial Catches (TACCs) for CRA 7 and CRA 8.

This letter outlines Minister Anderton's final decisions on these proposals. In reaching his decisions, Minister Anderton has taken into account submissions received on the NRLMG's initial advice, final and supplementary advice provided by the NRLMG, and stock assessment information. He has also given careful regard to the legislative provisions and his obligations under the Fisheries Act 1996 (the Act).

Copies of the NRLMG's Initial Advice, Final Advice and Supplementary Advice are available on the MFish website at [www.fish.govt.nz](http://www.fish.govt.nz).

#### **Management Procedures for CRA 7 and CRA 8**

Minister Anderton has decided to adopt separate new management procedures to guide TAC setting in CRA 7 and CRA 8.

Ministers of Fisheries have been guided by a management procedure when setting TACs for the CRA 7 and CRA 8 rock lobster fisheries since 1996. The previous and existing management procedures were designed to rebuild the stocks to an agreed target level within a specified timeframe. This target level has now been achieved and exceeded.

Analysis has shown the existing management procedure is unsuitable as a tool for maintaining the stocks above the target level. Minister Anderton has therefore decided to adopt separate new management procedures and is satisfied the procedures will maintain stock levels at or above the stock level that can produce the maximum sustainable yield, whilst having regard to the interdependence of stocks.

### **CRA 7 and CRA 8 TAC and TACC Increases**

Minister Anderton has decided to vary TACs and TACCs for CRA 7 and CRA 8 as follows:

<b>Stock</b>		<b>Previous Catch Limit</b>	<b>New Catch Limit (as from 1 April 2008)</b>
<b>CRA 7</b>	TAC	140.20 t	<b>143.88 t</b>
	TACC	120.20 t	<b>123.88 t</b>
<b>CRA 8</b>	TAC	842.20 t	<b>1053.00 t</b>
	TACC	755.20 t	<b>966.00 t</b>

When varying the TACs, Minister Anderton has decided to be guided by the separate new management procedures for CRA 7 and CRA 8 discussed above.

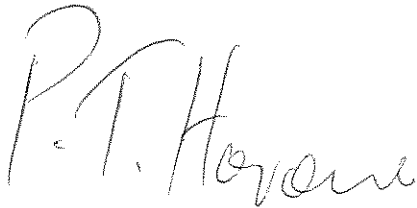
The best available information on stock status in CRA 7 and CRA 8 indicates current stock levels are greater than the estimate of the stock level that can produce the maximum sustainable yield. Best available information also indicates varying the TACs in a manner consistent with the operation of the separate new management procedures will result in the stocks moving towards a level at or above a level that can produce the maximum sustainable yield, having regard to the interdependence of stocks. Minister Anderton is therefore satisfied that using the output of the management procedures to set TACs for CRA 7 and CRA 8 is consistent with his obligations under section 13(2)(c) of the Act.

Given the importance of rock lobster fisheries to customary, recreational and commercial fishing interests, Minister Anderton considered the issues of allocation of the increased TACs very carefully. He has decided to increase the TACCs only because:

- best available information suggests that existing customary and recreational allowances in CRA 7 and CRA 8 are not currently being caught and therefore increased allowances to recreational, customary and other sources of fishing-related mortality are probably not required at this time; and
- catch reductions resulting from operation of the management procedure in 1999 and 2001 were achieved by adjusting the TACC only.

Minister Anderton acknowledges that current information on recreational catch for CRA 7 and CRA 8 is uncertain but is satisfied that this uncertainty has been taken into account when designing the management procedures to guide TAC setting. He also acknowledges that all participants in the CRA 7 and CRA 8 fisheries have contributed to the stock rebuild.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. T. Horomia'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P' and 'H'.

Hon Parekura Horomia  
**Associate Minister of Fisheries**  
**Acting Minister of Fisheries**